

**Final Report
Violence Prevention Initiative
Results and Recommendations of
Community Consultations and Provincial Forum**

**Submitted to:
Violence Prevention Initiative**

March 21, 2005



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The purpose of this report is to present the findings and recommendations from the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) Community Consultations and Provincial Forum project. This project commenced in mid-January, 2005 through engagement of Jane Helleur & Associates Inc. through the Transition Committee, Violence Prevention Initiative. The goal of the project was to obtain community stakeholder input regarding the future role and mandate of the VPI. This was considered critical input in light of the conclusion of the established VPI mandate as of March 31, 2005.

The VPI is a five-year (2000-2005) multi-departmental, governmental-community partnership designed to find long-term solutions to the social problems of violence against those at risk in our society. The VPI builds on the work of the Provincial Strategy Against Violence (1995-2000) and is supported by guiding principles that act as the basis of the VPI's work.

A mid-term study of the VPI conducted by Goss Gilroy Inc. assessed implementation, and identified strengths and areas of improvement. In response to this report, a sub-committee of the Provincial Coordinating Committee (the VPI Transition Committee) was created with the goals of (1) creating a forum to bring together government officials and community partners of the VPI to track progress and identify future priorities, (2) develop objectives for the continuation of violence prevention work, and (3) develop indicators for progress.

However, given the tight timeframe for consulting with stakeholders and for planning a Provincial Forum in February 2005, the Transition Committee proceeded with consultations with RCCs and other key community stakeholder groups as a means of equipping these stakeholders for participation in the Provincial Forum, held on February 27-28, 2005. The goals of the forum included identification of future directions and priorities of the VPI, and included where possible, identification of best practices, gaps and needs, and recommendations for the future focus and infrastructure to address violence prevention.

Methodology

The Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) Community Consultations and Provincial Forum project gathered information from several sources including a review of significant documents; in-person consultations with RCCs (except for the Grenfell Region which occurred via teleconference because of weather interruptions); focused interviews with key community stakeholders; a meeting with representatives of government departments that participate in the VPI, and a facilitated provincial forum with community and government representatives.

Summary of Consultations

The RCCs and other community stakeholders report their strong support for the VPI and the RCC structure. The VPI brings together community and government department partners in a collaborative manner to address issues of violence. The RCCs are proud of the work they do and have developed strong partnerships and networking which help facilitate a continuum of prevention and intervention work. RCCs want to protect their regional autonomy and

consequent ability to design and implement violence prevention initiatives that respond to unique regional needs. This factor alone was cited as a significant best practice which must be protected.

However, RCCs also reported significant funding shortfalls which inhibit their ability to meet needs in large, geographically dispersed regions, often complicated by sub-regional cultural issues and complex needs. The annual grant funding of \$45,000 was also felt to fall far short of requirements to recruit and retain regional coordinators and to support travel and program development. RCCs reported feeling "cash strapped" and resultantly invest considerable time and effort securing project funds from other sources. It was also felt that provincially, the VPI also requires additional resources to support provincial initiatives.

RCCs strongly favour core funding rather than project funding. Project funding, while still playing an important role in violence prevention work, compels RCCs and community partners to focus on projects rather than sustainable initiatives aimed at addressing the root causes of violence.

Several other community stakeholder groups consulted reported they would prefer a shift away from an exclusive focus on women to include children and youth. All RCCs agreed that the complex factors that contribute to violence in Aboriginal communities require separate focus and funding, supported by a plan that is developed in collaboration with Aboriginal communities.

It was acknowledged that several exceptional programs have been developed, including *Violence Awareness and Action Training* (VAAT) and the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*. However, RCCs and other community stakeholders feel that stronger support, commitment and involvement is required from Ministers and senior government officials to ensure these programs are implemented within government departments and boards. In addition, stakeholders felt that government departments also need to demonstrate stronger accountability for departmentally-based violence prevention work and for achieving higher degrees of policy coordination among government departments.

Community stakeholders and RCCs also reported the need for increased research capacity to support a deepened understanding of the prevalence and nature of violence in the province. This research must build upon the vast amount of information which already resides with community-based organizations.

The themes identified through the community consultation process were reinforced during the Provincial Forum held February 27 and 28, 2005. Of particular note, successes and best practices were highlighted in the following areas:

- Integrated collaborative approach which creates shared ownership, community and government participation, and respectful relationships;
- Successful networking at the regional and provincial level;
- Structure and process of VPI supported by a dedicated government mandate, gender inclusive analysis, and the RCC structure which enables responses to unique regional differences;
- Committed resources for the regional coordinator positions who play a critical coordination role in leveraging resources and capabilities of RCC members;
- Development, implementation and sharing of education, awareness, and prevention resources and materials, both regionally and provincially; and

- There is a growing acceptance among the general public that violence is an economic and social issue.

In addition, a number of key gaps and needs were reinforced, including:

- Insufficient financial and human resources both at the central VPI and for RCCs;
- Lack of strong leadership, commitment and support of the VPI at Ministerial and senior government official levels;
- Insufficient government support at all levels, including in government agencies and boards (e.g., education boards);
- Need for increased collaboration between government and community;
- Need for additional education, awareness and prevention initiatives, especially in rural and coastal areas;
- Need for additional intervention resources as well as acknowledgement of the interrelationship between education, awareness and intervention;
- Need for policy and legislative changes to support VPI initiatives and for greater coordination of policy and program development and implementation among government departments;
- Need for realistic accountability mechanisms for community-based organizations;
- Need to leverage existing research and information in community-based organizations and to and fill gaps with additional research;
- Need for violence prevention initiatives and accountabilities to be embedded in the strategic plans of government departments; and
- Need for a VPI strategic plan to support a longer term focus and work plan, both provincially and regionally.

Stakeholder Recommendations for a Future VPI

Stakeholders made a number of recommendations regarding the structure, process and focus of a future VPI. The main themes of recommendations are as follows:

Structure

1. Affirm VPI as a permanent government program, supported by increased and stable long term funding (a minimum of five years);
2. Continue to coordinate the VPI through the Women's Policy Office, with the same organizational structure, but with revised membership and selection criteria for the PCC;
3. Boost government accountability through incorporation of violence prevention initiatives within departmental strategic plans, through allocation of a fulltime position responsible for violence prevention within each partner department, and through greater integration of policies and programs;
4. Protect the autonomy of RCCs to develop their own focus and work plans based upon identified regional needs;
5. Demonstrate stronger Ministerial and senior government official leadership and support for VPI; and
6. Maintain the RCCs within the broader community to reinforce community ownership of violence prevention issues.

Process

7. Ensure a future VPI is developed in conjunction with organizations who have a longstanding record of working on violence and equity issues;
8. Ensure a gender inclusive analysis forms the basis of violence prevention work;
9. Focus on accountability through both qualitative and quantitative measures;
10. Ensure the VPI continues to have as its foundation values, objectives, coordination and leadership, research and policy development, public awareness and education, and training and advocacy;
11. Develop and implement a communications strategy;
12. Build upon existing VPI successes and best practices through their documentation and sharing with stakeholders;
13. Ensure processes are in place to be inclusive of all vulnerable populations;
14. Develop a strategic plan to support VPI work;
15. Respect cultural relevance, the role of the women's movement in violence prevention, and the needs of women, families and children;
16. Provide an annual forum for stakeholders to meet together; and
17. Continue to build upon the collaboration which occurs between government and community organizations.

Focus

18. Continue to focus on public education that emphasizes prevention, awareness and intervention, and VAAT;
19. Use an inclusion lens as a basis for fostering an understanding of violence issues;
20. Target certain groups such as community leaders, government personnel, and community professionals;
21. Ensure accountability and continued evaluation throughout all levels, but with an emphasis on government accountability;
22. Continue to develop regional priorities based upon RCC identification of regional needs;
23. Undertake legislative review to more adequately address issues of violence; and
24. Recognize the important integration of violence prevention and intervention work that occurs in the community, such as through transition houses and shelters.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

This report presents findings and recommendations of the Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) Community Consultations and Provincial Forum project conducted by Jane Helleur & Associates Inc. The purpose of the project was to obtain community stakeholder input regarding the future role and mandate of the VPI. This was considered critical input in light of the conclusion of the established VPI mandate as of March 31, 2005. This report includes the context of the project, including background information and rationale, evaluative methods, qualitative findings and stakeholder recommendations. Appendices are included with supportive documentation.

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Background

The Violence Prevention Initiative is a five year (2000-2005) multi-departmental, governmental-community partnership to find long-term solutions to the social problem of violence against those at risk in our society. While all women, children and the elderly are more likely to be victims of violence, factors such as ability, sexual orientation, economic status or racial origin can place individuals at even higher risk. The VPI builds on the work of the Provincial Strategy Against Violence (1995-2000) and is supported by guiding principles that act as the basis of the Violence Prevention Initiative (see Appendix A).

Further, the two main goals of the VPI are to:

1. Improve the coordination and delivery of services and programs by government departments and agencies with violence related mandates; and
2. Enhance the community and government's capacity to coordinate and promote violence prevention.

The VPI is coordinated by the Women's Policy Office in partnership with:

- The Departments of Justice, Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Health and Community Services, Education, Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs, Innovation, Trade and Rural Development, the Rural Secretariat, and Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation; and
- A Provincial Coordinating Committee (PCC) consisting of representatives from government, Regional Coordinating Committees as well as four provincial associations: The Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women, Seniors Resource Centre, and the Crime Prevention Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Six regional coordinating committees (RCCs).

2.2 Rationale for the Community Consultation Process

A mid-term study of the VPI was conducted by Goss Gilroy Inc. in 2004. The study assessed implementation and identified strengths and areas of improvement. It focused on processes and organizational issues with a preliminary look at outputs and short-term outcomes. The

report offered several recommendations aimed at improving collaborative processes with the community. It recommended, "The establishment of a contract facilitator position based in the community, to work with RCCs in helping them focus their work, share lessons learned among committees, and focus their support to local committees". The report also recommended "a facilitated process to plan for a longer term collaborative structure and process on violence prevention".

In response to this report a sub-committee of the Provincial Coordinating Committee, the VPI Transition Committee, was developed with the goals of:

1. Creating a forum to bring together government officials and community partners of the VPI to track progress and identify future priorities
2. Developing objectives for the continuation of violence prevention work; and
3. Developing indicators for progress.

However, as there were delays in securing the community facilitator position, the Transition Committee proceeded with securing consulting services in mid-January 2005. The goal of the project was to consult with RCCs and other key community stakeholder groups as a means of equipping these stakeholders for participation in a community-government forum which was held on February 27-28, 2005. The goals of the forum included identification of future direction and priorities of the VPI, and included where possible, identification of best practices and areas for future collaboration.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The Violence Prevention Initiative (VPI) Community Consultations and Provincial Forum project gathered information from several sources including:

- Review of significant documents;
- Consultations with regional coordinating committees;
- Focused interviews with key community stakeholders;
- A meeting with government department representatives; and
- A facilitated provincial forum with community and government representatives

The collaborative, participatory approach incorporated both community and government and supported development of the forum agenda, poster displays and recommendations.

3.1 Document Review

A review of significant relevant documents supported the development of the research process as well as guiding questions used in consultations. Documents reviewed included:

- Year-End Report: VPI Action Plan 2001-2002;
- VPI Action Plan 2002-2003;
- Collaborating with Community: Introduction, Rationale and a Guide for Government; Interdepartmental Anti-Violence Policy Framework;
- Goss Gilroy Inc.'s Final Report on the Formative Evaluation of the Violence Prevention Initiative (2004); and
- Violence Prevention Initiative website (<http://www.gov.nl.ca/vpi/>)

3.2 Consultations

Information gathering interviews were held with the VPI Transition Committee. Input from the committee provided general direction and focus as well as approval of the consultation questions and draft provincial forum agenda. This information was circulated to consultation participants in advance of consultation meetings.

The question themes which guided the consultations were as follows:

- Successes, significant learnings and/or best practices experienced in violence prevention initiatives and activities;
- Needs and gaps in violence prevention initiatives and activities;
- The realities of violence prevention issues and challenges (including unique constraints);
- Initiatives, projects and activities which might receive investments to make a significant impact on the incidence of violence, regionally and provincially;
- The level of investments required to achieve significant results;
- Elements of the VPI that should be protected and/or honoured; and
- Sufficiency of the principles and values of the current VPI.

In addition, the potential of a poster presentation from each stakeholder was explored and the tentative agenda for the reviewed as a basis for receiving feedback. In-person consultations were held with the following RCCs:

- Labradorians for Peaceful Communities
- Western Regional Coalition to End Violence
- Committee Against Violence, Inc.
- Eastern Region Committee Against Violence
- Regional Coordinating Coalition Against Violence - Eastern Avalon.

Given weather interruptions, a telephone consultation session occurred with the Grenfell Regional Anti-Violence Team. In most cases, the RCCs met prior to consultation to prepare for discussions.

Consultation meetings were also held with the following community-based stakeholders:

- Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre
- Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
- Canadian Mental Health Association, Newfoundland and Labrador Division
- Canadian Red Cross
- Seniors Resource Centre
- The Transition House Association of Newfoundland and Labrador
- Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Choices for Youth
- Child Youth Advocates Office

In addition, consultation sessions were anticipated with the Boys and Girls Club, the YM/YWCA, and The Crime Prevention Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, but did not occur as representatives of these organizations were away or otherwise committed.

Finally, a meeting was held with government department representatives as a basis for briefing them on the Provincial Forum process, including the poster presentations and informational displays.

Following the consultation sessions, a facilitated provincial forum was held on February 27 and 28, 2005. A final agenda (see Appendix B) was developed as a result of input provided throughout consultations with stakeholders and the Transition Committee. Forum participants included representatives from the Provincial Coordinating Committee, representatives from each of the Regional Coordinating Committees, provincial government representatives, individuals representing aboriginal communities, and other community stakeholders.

The Forum represented an opportunity to collectively identify best practices and successes, gaps and needs, and to offer recommendations for a renewed VPI mandate. This was accomplished through a panel presentation and small group discussions. The forum concluded with a presentation to Ministers and senior government officials regarding recommendations for the future direction and priorities of the VPI.

4.0 SUMMARY OF REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE/COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

The following summary reports the results of consultations with the six regional coordinating committees and other community stakeholders. It identifies overall successes and best practices, and gaps and limitations.

4.1 Summary of Successes and Best Practices

4.1.1 VPI Structure and Process

The current VPI structure and process was identified as a success. The collaborative approach between government and community has enabled coordination and partnerships, both provincially and regionally. Community stakeholders acknowledged that a solid foundation has been built which enables specific violence prevention initiatives. Indeed, the ability of RCCs to hire Regional Coordinators was felt to be a significant unifying and coordinating force within regions. Consequently, RCCs identified achieving successes in information sharing and networking among community-based organizations and frontline government personnel. In addition, regional visibility of violence prevention has increased and community ownership of violence prevention issues is occurring.

The regional model and process has enabled opportunities for regions to identify, develop and implement education, prevention, and awareness initiatives based upon regional needs. Each region's cultural, economic, geographical and social issues are considered unique and distinct and the ability of RCCs to exercise autonomy in designing responses was identified as a best practice.

4.1.2 Funding

The funding mechanisms have allocated equal core funding to each RCC. Additional resources are available to carry out specific projects aimed at addressing regional needs. In addition to core funding, RCCs submit funding proposals to a number of different organizations, such as the National Crime Prevention Strategy and regional Rural Secretariat committees.

The allocation of dedicated resources to support the VPI both provincially and regionally was identified as a success. While the level of funding currently provided was considered inadequate, the RCCs acknowledge the importance of funding to support regional infrastructure and education, awareness and prevention initiatives.

4.1.3 Education, Prevention and Awareness Initiatives

The RCCs and community stakeholders have identified significant and numerous successes in the provision of education, awareness and prevention initiatives. Each region has responded to unique regional needs, resulting in a broad array of educational materials and resources, in-services, forums, presentations, web sites (and in one region, an embedded database), and community awareness endeavours through media, video/teleconferencing, and the internet.

Provincial educational initiatives such as *Violence Awareness and Action Training (VAAT)* and *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* have also been identified as exceptionally strong programs. Additionally, resources through other partners, such as the DARE program administered through the RCMP, were identified as significant best practices as they have been leveraged through partnership arrangements which exist within RCCs.

4.1.4 Cooperation with Partners

The partnerships within RCCs have enabled the ability to maximize existing human resources, mandates and roles or partner organizations, and infrastructure to support and augment violence prevention initiatives.

For example, in Labrador, the increase in RCMP personnel, the presence of nurse practitioners, the opening of Hope Haven Women's Shelter and the Sheshatshui Women's Shelter, and the extension of the Nain Women's Shelter have all provided enhanced levels of direct intervention resources for victims of violence. While intervention is not within the role of RCCs, it was noted that through the process of education and prevention efforts, victims of violence are inevitably self-identified and these individuals require support to access appropriate services. RCCs noted these informal networks are vital for creating a continuum of violence awareness, prevention and intervention services.

Support is also demonstrated through collaborative relationships between community and government departments and agencies. These relationships have resulted in the provision of office space for some RCCs, including access to meetings rooms, supplies, and interviewing rooms.

4.2 Summary of Gaps and Limitations

4.2.1 Geographical Challenges

RCCs identified the size of their geographical regions as being a significant limitation for providing education, prevention, awareness and intervention of violence prevention initiatives. While resources tend to be centralized in larger centers, the ability to extend these resources to rural and coastal areas is significantly limited.

This reality is compounded in some regions, particularly Labrador, where there is difficulty accessing remote communities due to limitations of road infrastructure and weather which impedes flight, ferry and snowmobile services. Within the Grenfell Region, difficulties are being experienced servicing the southern coast of Labrador.

RCCs reported communication linkages as being a challenge. This challenge is being met in some regions through teleconferencing and videoconferencing to replace face-to-face meetings and consultations.

4.2.2 Cultural Challenges

Three regions (Labrador, Northern and Central) identified sensitivity to culture and diversity as a particular challenge for offering violence prevention initiatives. Appreciating, understanding and engaging with the Aboriginal peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador (Innu, Inuit, Metis and Micmaq) requires collaboration, respect and exploration to enable alternative approaches to addressing issues of violence prevention.

There are also implications for offering violence prevention initiatives as changes occur with the anticipated Nunatsiavut (Inuit) self-government.

4.2.3 Funding Levels

RCCs reported a need for additional funding to adequately support the regional coordinator positions and the expansion of programs and services, especially to rural and coastal areas.

The current RCC funding level of \$45,000/annum was felt to be inadequate to recruit and retain qualified individuals and was viewed as being a significant barrier in the sustainability of regional violence prevention programs. As "cash-strapped" entities, RCCs expend considerable effort to secure project funding from other organizations. The project focus of much of available funding sources translates into short term initiatives that may not be sustainable. Additionally, project funding requires high levels of accountability and reporting which in itself consumes considerable resources. The same level of accountability within government departments was not perceived by RCCs.

Finally, RCCs and their community-based partners recognized the need for sustainable core funding for community-based organizations which offer violence prevention and intervention services.

4.2.4 Additional Education, Prevention and Promotion Initiatives

While regional priorities are self-identified, RCCs report a need to expand education, prevention and promotion services and resources. For example, several RCCs reported greater attention is needed to issues such as elder abuse and caregiver support, housing and poverty. Community stakeholders also identified the need for additional educational initiatives specific to children and youth, as well as training for professionals who respond to victims of sexual assault.

4.2.5 Additional Human Resources and Infrastructure Support

The recruitment and retention of service providers is identified as a challenge especially in rural and coastal areas. RCCs identified lack of mental health resources, and access to the justice system as especially challenging. Additionally, recruitment and retention of social and health care professionals such as teachers, physicians, nurses, and social workers was reported as an ongoing issue.

Several RCCs reported that changes in health care regions over the last decade have resulted in less accessible and more impersonal services to victims. For example, social workers must respond to crisis situations on a priority basis, leaving little or no time for a focus on violence education, prevention, advocacy and awareness.

Gaps in services were also noted which disenfranchise victims of violence. For example, the absence of a transition house or women's centre in the Grenfell region results in women having to access services in other regions.

4.2.6 Increased Research Capacity

RCCs recognized that an understanding of the prevalence and severity of violence in the province is essential. The collection and reporting of quantitative and qualitative data in a meaningful way is required to ensure the vision and goals of VPI are successfully accomplished. For example, attitudes toward older persons (ageism) must be clearly understood and articulated in order to inform education, awareness and prevention initiatives.

The ability to undertake research was felt to support ongoing accountability, a results-based focus, and the development of initiatives to fulfill the VPI mandate.

4.2.7 Increased Collaboration and Support

While the RCCs and community stakeholders recognize the success of the collaborative approach to violence prevention, they also identify a lack of commitment by government to fully participate and support the approach. For example, the Department of Education has developed the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*. However, a general lack of support and integration of the program at the school board level was identified as a significant implementation barrier. In short, RCCs reported that the program is excellent, but not implemented within schools.

RCCs reported that the VAAT program is not being offered on a consistent basis to frontline personnel within government departments. Successful rollout of this training was felt to require stronger leadership from the Ministerial levels of government.

RCCs also identified a general lack of participation from schools at the regional level.

4.3 Recommendations for a Future VPI Initiative

The following summarizes the collective recommendations which emerged from consultations with RCCs and other community stakeholders. A future violence prevention initiative should embrace:

1. A long term commitment by government to address issues of violence in the province which is addressed through a collaborative community and government approach. A renewed violence prevention program should embrace current structure and process, but with expanded collaboration between VPI staff, government departments, RCCs and community stakeholders;
2. Strong Ministerial and senior government official involvement;
3. A focus on creating legislation and integrating policies, procedures and programs among government departments;
4. Support for implementation of VAAT and the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* within regions and schools through dedicated resources;
5. Sustainable and flexible financial and human resources to reflect regional differences. Resourcing levels must adequately support the recruitment and retention of regional coordinator positions and expansion of programs and services, especially to rural and coastal areas. Funding levels must also be increased for the provincial VPI office;
6. Acknowledgement of the need for autonomy to respond to regional differences including geographical, cultural, communication, literacy and other complex social issues;
7. Greater interdepartmental collaboration for policy development regarding violence and greater accountability within departments for implementing violence prevention initiatives;
8. Greater recognition of the complexity of social issues in the Labrador Region especially the impact of culture and pending governance changes;
9. Increased resources to support education, awareness and prevention initiatives;
10. Recognition and support of intervention-focused programs and services with consideration of specific gaps within regions, such as the absence of a transition house in Grenfell Region;
11. Greater incorporation of a gender inclusive lens;
12. Need for realistic accountability mechanisms for community-based organizations;
13. Need to leverage existing research and information in community-based organizations and to and fill gaps with additional research; and
14. Recognition that violence, poverty (including lack of appropriate housing), and the availability of health care services are closely linked.

5.0 PROVINCIAL FORUM SUMMARY

Fifty-five participants attended the Provincial Forum held on February 27 and 28, 2005. Participants represented RCCs, PCC, community stakeholders and government departments. The following provides a summary of key points made by panel members, small group reports of successes and best practices, gaps and needs, and recommendations for a renewed Violence Prevention Initiative.

5.1 Key Points from Panel Presentations

The forum began with a panel presentation which provided a number of different perspectives regarding issues and challenges in violence prevention work.

Heather MacLellan, Assistant Deputy Minister, Women's Policy Office provided an overview of the VPI. She indicated that the recommendations of the mid-term study by Goss Gilroy, Inc. create a greater imperative for interdepartmental collaboration, greater commitment to the community collaboration model, and more support for provincially initiated programs such VAAT and the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*. She discussed the need for a longer-term VPI, supported by a strategic plan which responds to limitations such as geography, cultural challenges, and the need to focus on longer term measures of the cost of violence.

Lorraine Hearn, Coordinator of the Central Regional Coordinating Committee spoke on behalf of RCCs. She reminded participants of the vision of the VPI “*...that the people of our province will live in safe, caring communities where there is an inherent respect for each other and violence is unacceptable*”. She highlighted challenges of geography, limited awareness of the degree and scope of violence, the lack of understanding of the dynamics of violence, and minimal degree of empathy for victims of violence and children who witness violence. She encouraged participants to focus on building a capacity to sustain focus and commitment, and to address issues and initiatives aimed at preventing and responding to violence. She also noted that policy and legislation that is relevant and responsive is required as well as increased capacity for RCCs to respond to unique regional differences, opportunities and needs. Finally, she supported an expanded VPI mandate to include remediation to victims, their children and effective programming for perpetrators.

Janet O'Donnell, Chair, Labradorians for Peaceful Communities and Administrator, Libra House spoke about violence prevention from the unique perspective of Labrador. An overview was provided of the successes of the region including a new RCMP detachment in Sheshatshui, a result of meaningful participation and collaborative decision-making of the whole community. She also noted that there are four shelters in Labrador for women who are experiencing abuse. While intervention is their main mandate, a significant component of their work is prevention-oriented and which is neither recognized nor valued.

The women's family treatment and youth treatment centres represent successes in Labrador as has been the commitment for Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) training. Through a partnership through a partnership between the Rural Secretariat and the RCC, there has been a focus on community safety and security. Successes also include numerous educational initiatives. She acknowledged that the challenges in the Labrador region are significant and

include geography, diversity of cultures, transportation, communication (including language barriers and technology) and cost of offering services to remote areas.

The future VPI mandate must take into account the impact of self-governance for Innu and Inuit as well as the changing health care board structure. She concluded by identifying significant gaps such as safe and affordable housing, accessible and equitable health care, cultural diversity, lack of a culturally relevant education and justice system, the need for a child advocate, and recognition of the value of prevention work. *“We need this violence prevention initiative to continue to be a major focus/central value for our government and sustainable funding is essential for the VPI and each region”.*

Heather Davis, Coordinator, Corner Brook Women’s Centre, reminded participants that women have been involved in violence prevention initiatives for many years. However, progress has been minimal. A focus has been on reactive rather than proactive approaches to address violence. Women’s Centre’s are overwhelmed with frontline services and needs. She identified several key issues including trust and recognition by VPI of the valuable work conducted by centres as well as a recognition of the unique differences between regions. Other issues include the need for appropriate and sustainable funding. She described the unique partnership in the Western region between the RCC and the transition house which enables extra funds to be allocated to specific projects. She also reminded participants that violence prevention belongs to the community as it is a societal issue. Challenges which must be addressed include regional autonomy to do work using a gender/diversity inclusive lens; the lack of priority and commitment given to VPI work and the consequent pervasive lack of resources; the need for research; greater attention to legislative and policy gaps, and inadequate integration of policies among government departments.

Tracy Duffy, Coordinator, NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre, gave an overview of the key challenges and issues from the perspective of a grassroots, volunteer-supported organization. She indicated that a sustained commitment for a continued violence prevention initiative is essential as is the need to collaborate with diverse stakeholders. There is a need to strengthen resources and funding to equality-seeking, anti-violence organizations through additional provincial and RCC funding. She also noted that the VPI’s Provincial Coordinating Committee structure should be constituted of members who are knowledgeable and involved in violence prevention. She noted that there are challenges specific to the NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre, including chronic funding issues, burnout and workload volumes of staff and volunteers, and the absence of a standardized procedure for sexual assault response.

5.2 Summary of Successes and Best Practices

In small groups, participants identified the following successes and best practices. These successes and best practices closely mirrored those identified through consultations with RCCs and other community stakeholders.

- Government funding for VPI; committed resources for prevention and other proactive approaches
 - Funding for face-to-face meetings at regional and provincial levels enables RCC/PCC to understand and move forward on issues
- Collaboration, partnership and networking between all stakeholders, including government; there is an ability to build on relationships among partners at the

community level; collaboration occurs provincially and regionally; there is shared ownership; improved responses at the community and departmental levels

- Mandated by government to help ensure violence prevention is a provincial priority
- Acknowledged uniqueness and differences among regions
- Ability to use VPI process to bring about significant legislative and policy changes, e.g., HRLE policy change
- Raised awareness and attitude shifts regarding violence
 - Within government departments
 - Within communities that violence exists and is not acceptable
 - Awareness has been promoted at all levels and regions – forums, youth camps, presentations, training, etc.
- Creation and sharing of resources e.g. VAAT, bullying programs, though VAAT does require some changes
- The PCC and RCCs have developed a shared responsibility model
- Shift in focus from crisis intervention to prevention
- Gender inclusive analysis is cornerstone of violence prevention work, though there is room for improvement
- Initiatives such as care givers workshops, seniors information sharing, safety plans, Roots of Empathy, VAAT and Bars and Booze and Sexual Violence
- Current structure which leads to better accountability at all levels; Allows regions to have autonomy to determine the needs and gaps in their areas and develop effective and appropriate responses
- Location of RCCs within the broader community(as an opposed to solely within women's centres and other groups) has broken down barriers and led to more community involvement
- Strengthened collective ability for profiling violence and equality issues
- Strong collective understanding of the root causes of violence, leading to effective and appropriate violence prevention work
- VPI has good, clear objectives , i.e., coordination and leadership, research and policy development, public awareness/education, training and advocacy
- Creation of supportive printed materials and other resources
- Designated Violence Prevention Month (February)
- Changes in services as a result of policy changes (e.g., HRLE) and formation of Justice Committee
- Creation of mechanisms to influence/ develop legislation

5.3 Summary of Gaps, Needs and Recommendations

Through small group discussions, participants identified areas where there are unmet gaps and needs in violence prevention work undertaken at both a regional and provincial level. The following summarizes the identified gaps and needs.

5.4 Gaps and Needs

- Provincial VPI office requires adequate resources to address provincial responsibilities
 - Position required within departments to coordinate violence prevention initiatives such as VAAT, at least one person dedicated within each department
- Increased attention required to regional differences

- Education of Ministers regarding violence and VPI. Recognize these individuals are subject to the same biases as the general public. Requires an orientation process
- The Department of Education's Safe and Caring Schools Initiative requires stronger support for implementation within schools. Two days of in-service is not sufficient. Implementation at the school level requires attention to educational representation on each RCC, availability of teachers for in-service, increased accessibility to schools, and attitudes changes of school leadership aimed at achieving greater awareness for violence prevention education
- Professional education curriculum should include greater emphasis on the pervasiveness and dynamics of violence
- RCCs require increased resourcing for RCC Coordinators
 - Inadequate job descriptions and pay and benefit for professional nature of work performed (not comparable for equivalent social work positions)
- Qualitative outcomes must be considered in addition to quantitative outcomes
- More research and statistical data regarding the incidence of violence
- Strengthen recognition of the impact of government restraint measures on Women's organizations, as these organizations tend to experience increase demands
- Need to recognize the impact of the restructured health care boards upon the work of the VPI must be considered
- PCC membership needs to be examined with a view to ensuring the right representation, commitment and skill mix; ensure consistency of involvement and that representatives have authority and influence in their organizations/departments
- Need more comprehensive work plans for the VPI
- Violence prevention initiatives need to be embedded in departmental strategic plans
- Require stronger, more effective communication between RCCs and government
- Recognize that awareness of violence is no where near where it should be
- Maintain a focus on violence as a women's issue
- The Neglected Adults legislation needs to be changed and resourced

5.5 Recommendations Made to Ministers

Participants also identified what a future VPI initiative should look like considering its structure, process and focus. Then, through a large group discussion, a consensus view of best practices, needs, gaps and the features of a future VPI were developed.

The following is a consolidation of key points which participants presented to the Minister Joan Burke, Minister John Ottenheimer, Minister Tom Rideout and other senior government officials.

5.5.1 Structure

- Continue to Coordinate the VPI through the Women's Policy Office, the PCC and through at least the six existing RCCs. It should continue as an umbrella organization that brings provincial and regional groups together
- Ensure a more coordinated interdepartmental response to violence prevention
- Establish PCC membership/selection criteria to include:
 - Inclusiveness
 - Knowledge and understanding of root causes of violence and violence prevention issues
 - New delegate/replacement appointments to support consistency

- Degree of decision-making authority and influence within departments and community organizations
- Embrace additional community stakeholders such as the Canadian Red Cross, and the Boys and Girls Clubs; consider a “call for expression of interest” process for determining membership
- Membership from each RCC
- Consider youth representation
- Affirm VPI as a permanent government program
- Allocate one dedicated, fulltime position in every partner government department to coordinate violence prevention work
- Establish visible violence prevention initiatives within the strategic plans of partner government departments. Initiatives should be supported by measurable actions and outcomes
- Provide continued core funding; a minimum of 5-year resourcing for VPI provincially and RCCs regionally
 - Funding should be based on regional differences/ and needs and not solely on population (e.g., the needs may be greater in Labrador)
 - Apply the principle of equity for determining the resourcing needs of regions (e.g., resourcing should consider differences in the costs of travel and outreach, face-to-face meetings, administration and overhead etc.)
 - Ensure sufficient resource to support work being performed at the grass roots level
 - Provide additional resources for outreach
 - Consider the size and geographical features of regions in determining the extent of outreach able to be achieved
 - Provide funding for translation of all materials for Aboriginal peoples, and for Braille and audio communication
- Protect the autonomy of regions to develop their own focus and work plans etc. based upon identified regional needs
- Continue and strengthen community and government collaboration
- Ensure there is a coordinated approach interdepartmentally for policy and program development and implementation
- Maintain the RCCs within the broader community to reinforce community ownership of violence issues (not situated within the women’s community)
- Ensure changes in departmental infrastructure (e.g., board consolidation in health/education) does not impact negatively on violence prevention work
- Ensure VPI has internal structure and process for its own long term planning
- Ensure stronger ministerial and senior government official leadership, e.g., regular meetings of Deputy Ministers with community representatives
- Provide enhanced financial and human resource/staffing to support RCCs and the PCC.
 - Implement the Goss Gilroy recommendation regarding the establishment of a contract coordinator position to support the work of RCCs)
 - Provide RCC coordinators with support staff to assist with advocacy and referrals
- Articulate the government versus community role

5.5.2 Process

- Ensure a future VPI is developed in conjunction with organizations who have a longstanding record of working on violence and equity issues

- Honour the autonomy of RCCs by respecting the knowledge and work provided by their members in the course of the work they do on a daily basis (e.g., women's centres and shelters)
- Ensure gender inclusive analysis forms the basis of violence prevention work
- Use a holistic approach versus a provincial focus on particular vulnerable populations
- Strengthen communication, from senior government to management, and from central government to regional offices and agencies
- Demonstrate accountability through qualitative and quantitative measures
- Build on best practices through their documentation, sharing and implementation
- Ensure a VPI foundation that consists of values, objectives, coordination and leadership, research and policy development, public awareness and education, training and advocacy
- Develop a VPI strategic plan that is ultimately integrated with departmental strategic plans and with a focus on achieving outcomes
 - Ensure the Ministerial Committee takes a stronger leadership role in developing a plan and formalize a process
 - Assign ownership
 - Build a mechanism for an ongoing monitoring and evaluation process
 - Hold an annual meeting with stakeholders/public
- Further enhance and build on existing collaborative approach
- Develop and implement a communications strategy
- Build on existing VPI successes to sustain momentum; modify where appropriate
- Create a venue for coordinators to meet (to identify and share best practices, lessons learned)
- Strengthen community capacity as a mechanism to reduce violence
- Honour the history of the women's movement work in violence prevention
- Continue community and government collaborative approaches
- Embed cultural relevance and respect within the VPI process
- Maintain relationships with other community partners and the ability to leverage additional funding and other resources
- Celebrate successes
- Capitalize on government's opportunity to use the VPI network as partners and consultations when required
- Respect the needs of women, families and children at the community level
- Ensure processes are in place to be inclusive of vulnerable populations
- Provide an annual opportunity for all stakeholders to meet together, such as for this Provincial Forum

5.5.3 Focus of a Future VPI

- Ongoing public education that focuses on prevention, awareness and intervention
- Emphasize awareness campaigns, such as bullying in schools
- Training such as VAAT
 - Ensure consistency, implement recommendations, improve facilitation skills and representation
- Through an inclusion lens, foster an understanding of violence
- Target "influence" groups such as government personnel, professionals and community leaders
- Develop and implement an orientation package for new community leaders

- Boost involvement, awareness and “buy-in” throughout all levels of government and community
- Ensure accountability and continued evaluation throughout all levels, but with an emphasis on government accountability
- Develop regional priorities based upon RCC identification of regional needs
- Recognize the important integration of violence prevention work with intervention work that occurs in the community such as through transition houses and shelters
- Engage in legislative review and change

6.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the community consultation process was to obtain community stakeholder input regarding the future role and mandate of the VPI. This was considered critical input in light of the conclusion of the established VPI mandate as of March 31, 2005. The consultations were also instrumental in helping stakeholders to formulate their focused participation in the Provincial Forum.

Community stakeholders strongly endorse the VPI. It is acknowledged that while the VPI has experienced some growing pains, the foundation for building collaborative approaches to violence prevention has been firmly established. There is remarkable collaboration and networking among members of RCCs, much of which extends beyond a focus on prevention to support a continuum of services for those at-risk for being a victim of violence, and for those who are victims.

RCCs and government departments eagerly prepared interesting and engaging poster and informational displays at the Provincial Forum. Clearly, the many violence prevention initiatives which have been undertaken represent significant successes and best practices. Many of these initiatives can be harnessed for the benefit of other regions. Others, such as VAAT and the *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative* require additional Ministerial and senior government official commitment and support for full implementation.

Government has a clear desire to articulate priorities and target groups for a future violence prevention initiative. Community stakeholders and RCCs strongly feel this desire must be tempered by the need to address regional differences and regional priorities.

Community stakeholders also strongly caution against a focus on project funding as this derails a focus on root causes in favour of time-limited projects which are seldom sustainable. Community stakeholders also feel that VPI investments must be made where the expertise lies – in the community-based organizations where staff deal with issues directly related to violence prevention and intervention.

Community stakeholders also recognized that proportionally more resources are required in some regions, most notably Labrador. However, to enable this, the funding envelope must be expanded.

Finally, the commitment and passion of all forum participants is worthy of note. The process of coming together and planning for a future violence prevention initiative outstripped the time available during the Provincial Forum. This required, without hesitation, the willingness of participants to forego breaks and take a shortened lunch period. This was not at all surprising

to the consultants, as they had also experienced this commitment and passion first-hand in their meetings with RCCs and other stakeholders.

Appendix A The VPI's Vision and Guiding Principles

VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE

Vision

The vision of the Violence Prevention Initiative is that the people of our province will live in safe, caring communities where there is an inherent respect for each other and violence is unacceptable.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles were established for this initiative in 2000 and need to be better integrated in the planning and delivery of all aspects of the 2004-05 work plan:

- The elimination of violence requires a comprehensive response including prevention, public education, services and enforcement of the law.
- Criminal and other acts of violence and abuse require effective consequences including punishment under the law.
- People have a right to a safe and secure environment.
- Violence is a choice and is preventable. There is strong evidence that effective intervention can reduce and prevent violence.
- Prevention of violence is everyone's responsibility.
- Health, well being and productivity are enhanced in a violence free environment.
- The social and cultural roots of violence are based in inequality. While all women, children and the elderly are more likely to be victims of violence, factors such as ability, sexual orientation, economic status or racial origin can put them at higher risk.
- Society reinforces violence through expressions of sexism, ageism, classism, heterosexism, and their biased attitudes.

Goals

- To enhance the community's and government's capacity to coordinate violence prevention activities and service delivery in the regions.
- To improve the coordination and quality of services and programs provided by government departments and agencies with violence related mandate

Appendix B
AGENDA
VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION SESSION
FEBRUARY 27-28, 2005
HOLIDAY INN, ST. JOHN'S

February 27th – 7:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

7:00 Registration and Poster Display

7:30 Issues and Challenges

In this panel presentation, we will hear issues and challenges from a number of different perspectives. Following the panel presentations, there will be an open opportunity for discussion.

Moderator

Jane Helleur
Jane Helleur & Associates Inc.

Women's Policy Office and Provincial
Coordinating Committee Perspective

Heather MacLellan
ADM, Women's Policy Office

Regional Coordinating Committee Perspective

Lorraine Hearn
Coordinator, Committee Against Violence

Labrador Perspective

Janet O'Donnell
Chair, Labradorians for Peaceful Communities &
Administrator, Libra House

Women's Centre Perspective

Heather Davis
Coordinator, Corner Brook Women's Centre

NL Sexual Assault Crisis & Prevention
Centre Perspective

Tracy Duffy, Coordinator

8:25 Opportunity for Open Discussion

8:45 Opportunity for Networking

(Non-alcoholic beverages and light snacks will be served. Wine and other spirits may be purchased)

February 28th – 09:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

09:00 Overview of the Day and Introductions

Jane Helleur

9:15 Celebrating Successes and Best Practices

In small groups, participants will identify the regional and provincial successes that have been achieved in violence prevention. They will also identify best practices which have emerged and the features of the current VPI which must be maintained.

10:00 Nutrition Break

10:15 Welcoming Remarks

Hon. Joan Burke

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

10:30 Small Group Reports of Successes and Best Practices

11:00 Needs, Gaps and a Future VPI

Through small group discussion, participants will identify areas where there are unmet needs and gaps in violence prevention work undertaken both at a regional and provincial level. Participants will also be asked to identify what a future VPI initiative should look like considering structure, process and focus.

12:00 Lunch

12:45 Consolidating a Consensus View

Small groups will report their discussion regarding needs, gaps and a future VPI. Then, through a large group discussion, a consensus view of successes, best practices, needs, gaps and a future VPI will be developed. In addition, we will determine how key messages will be highlighted for presentation to Ministers and senior government officials.

2:15 Nutrition Break, Networking and Poster Displays

2:45 Presenting Reports

Small groups will present their reports to a larger audience including Ministers and senior government officials.

4:00 Responding Remarks

Hon. Joan Burke

Forum Wrap-Up and Evaluation

Appendix C
Results of Consultations
Regional Coordinating Committees

Labradorians for Peaceful Communities

Best Practices/Successes:

Increased human and material resources such as:

- RCMP detachment in Sheshatshiu
- Two RCMP highway patrol officers, one drug awareness coordinator and one Provost position for Goose Bay
- Nurse practitioners in Goose Bay, North West River, and Sheshatshiu
- Extension of Nain Women's Shelter
- Opening of Hope Haven Women's Shelter in Labrador West
- Sheshatshui Women's Shelter
- Charles J. Andrew Youth Treatment Center in Atlantic Region

Education, prevention and awareness of VPI through initiatives such as:

- DARE program through RCMP
- Mokami Status of Women's Council hosts learning circles regularly
- Libra House staff offering workshops on bullying in schools in Goose Bay
- Family Treatment program in Sheshatshiu
- Elizabeth Penashue has been doing a spring walk, and Tony Penashue taking youth on a lands base program in an effort to reintegrate youth to the traditional Innu lifestyle
- Community justice forums: alternative measures and restorative justice
- Orientation packages on cultural awareness offered to RCMP staff
- Safe Schools Initiative – Focus on Bullying
- Crime Prevention through Social Development conference
- Violence Awareness and Action Training (VAAT) program
- Interpersonal Conflict Resolution Training program
- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Diagnostic Training to begin
- SmartLabrador Videoconferencing
- Formation of GAPS (Giving assistance partnership and service)

Policy and other initiatives:

- Changes to HRLE policy regarding victims of violence
- RCMP/Community committee in Sheshatshiu
- Joint partnership of the Rural Secretariat and RCC in addressing community safety and security issues

Gaps/Limitations:

Geography

- Lack of roads
- Many isolated coastal communities
- Southern part of Labrador covered by Grenfell Region

Need for increased response from justice system

- Lack of policing in Postville and Black Tickle
- Legal aid services for victims
- Minimal judges
- No family court
- Reintegration of offenders back into communities/aftercare programs

Recruitment and retention of service providers

- Lack of mental health resources
- Need for more teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers etc

Communication

- Despite SmartLabrador Videoconferencing communication is very challenging

Governance changes

- Impact of Nunatsiavut (Inuit) self government

Diversity of Cultures

- Includes Aboriginal (Innu, Inuit and Metis) communities

Complex Social Issues

- Including high rates of suicide among Innu youth
- Substance abuse
- Lack of safe and affordable housing etc
- Under resourcing of community services

Educational system

- Access to schools
- Lack of culturally relevant materials

Suggestions for future:

- Maintain and expand VPI (both centrally and regionally) and with increased and sustainable funding
- Recognition of all preventative work in region
- Focus on proactive rather than reactive
- Increased educational programs on violence which are easily adaptable to fit individual and cultural needs.
- Increased programming in area of parenting and life skills
- Increased strengthening of ties to culturally diverse communities

Grenfell Regional Anti-Violence Team

Best Practices/Successes:

Public awareness and education initiatives including:

- Placemats in restaurants during violence prevention month
- Elder abuse displays
- Active parenting program
- School presentations on dating violence, and bullying

- Making Waves retreat for teens
- Roots of Empathy program
- Teen Esteem Camp
- Community Forum
- Choices program – healthy relationship
- VAAT training

2. Collaborative relationships with Justice, HRLE and Health departments
 - Support through time to participate in VPI initiatives
 - Office space, meeting rooms
 - Supplies
3. Development of local committees spread throughout region

Gaps/Limitations:

1. No women's center or transition house in region
2. VAAT training not being offered to front line agency workers and often difficult to get staff to attend
3. Difficulty in engaging community in anti-violence work especially in small communities
4. No representative from educational system on RCC, an ongoing issue that impedes coordination
5. Lack of implementation of anti violence programs through government departments (e.g., education and *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*)
6. Services and programs need to be expanded.
7. Limited access to court (8 times per year) resulting in lack of security for victims
8. One victim services coordinator to cover region, a large region that encompasses from Port Saunders to the southern Labrador coast

Suggestions for Future:

1. Women's Shelter in Northern Newfoundland and Southern Labrador, an ongoing issue particularly since victims have to travel to Corner Brook
2. Additional human resources
 - Victim services
 - RCMP officer (currently short 25%)
3. Maintain and increase current budget with equal access to funds based on geographical realities.
4. Increased training for individuals and professionals in dynamics of violence. VAAT to be mandatory with commitment by government to support.

5. Increased recognition and support for role of Regional Coordinator to incorporate intervention elements such as education and support.
6. Long term commitment by government to address issues of violence in our community with greater collaboration between province and regions.
7. Need for ongoing research and accountability measures.

Western Regional Coalition to End Violence

Best Practices/Successes:

1. Central coordination of a regional structural model allows for:
 - Accountability
 - Networking
 - Knowledge sharing
 - Collaboration and partnerships
 - Visibility in communities
 - Community ownership of violence issues
 - Passion and commitment to prevention work
 - Sharing of financial resources through partnership with another anti-violence group
 - 4 regional meetings per year
2. Significant prevention and awareness initiatives including:
 - Numerous individual projects funded through RCC
 - Numerous workshops
 - 10 VAAT sessions in region
3. Success can be further measured through:
 - Increased knowledge level among members
 - Increased numbers of participants in RCC and sub-RCCs
 - Visibility of VPI has increased
 - Increased requests for information and assistance from non-traditional sources
 - Increased numbers at Transition House
 - Greater collaboration among stakeholders in community
 - Willingness of people to network

Gaps/Limitations:

1. Legislative implications:
 - Serious gap between legislation and application (ex. within CYFS an Act exists to assist, however it is not financially resourced)
 - Some pieces of legislation are no longer applicable and other pieces are long time being developed
 - Children are not supported through custody/violence/access
 - Sound legislation around violence prevention is missing
2. Policy implications:
 - Due to downsizing, point of entry for services are being minimized and impersonal

- Focus of RCC on community organizing becoming central taking away from prevention, advocacy and promotion
- Reduction in presence of police especially in smaller communities
- Centralizing of services resulting in small communities struggling and becoming more vulnerable.
- Deficit reduction on backs of social programs
- Lack of focus and priority placed violence prevention

3. Other realities:

- Inadequate resources
- Large, rural geographic area
- Lack of services
- Poverty/economic issues/
- Low literacy level
- Point of entry compromised
- Lack of support from community groups
- Denial of problem exists
- Burn out
- Aging population
- Out migration
- High child protection caseloads
- Complexity of social issues

Suggestions for future:

1. A violence prevention strategy with long term commitment to include:
 - Appropriate financial and human resources
 - Acknowledgment of violence as a serious and pervasive social problem
 - All government departments to have strategic plan and policies reflecting prevention as a priority
 - High level involvement at ministerial level
 - Visibility through legislation
 - Coordinated services with measurable outcomes
 - Maintain and increase prevention and promotion initiatives
 - Accountability provisions from both government and community
 - Need for accurate research methods to determine true costs of violence in our communities

Committee Against Violence, Inc. (Central Newfoundland)

Best Practices/Successes:

1. Increased educational, awareness and prevention initiatives:
 - Workshops on bullying in the schools in region
 - Implementation of "Trevor and the Bully" into school system
 - Production of play "Broken Heart-Broken Homes" to 14 schools (4800 students)
 - Resource material produced and distributed through region
 - Organization of VAAT for community members and front line staff
 - Presentations on violence throughout region
 - Emergency cards in public areas in region such as doctors offices, clinics, RCMP etc

- Creation of web site
- 2. Current structure supports work in region:
 - Funding allows region to develop and implement educational, promotional and preventative initiatives
 - Allows for regional and provincial collaboration
 - Regional committee approach is successful
- 3. Interventions:
 - Implementation of Women's Centre in Grand Falls-Windsor
 - Coordination of furniture and household supplies to victims of violence
 - Partnership with RCMP and Health and Community Services to provide space for interviewing children who are sexually abused

Gaps/Limitations:

- 1. Financial
 - Need for sustainable funding
 - Expanded resources for office support and enhanced services
 - Support collaboration and connections within region
 - Recognize geographic challenges
- 2. Increased human resources
 - To support outreach to rural communities
 - Paid facilitator for support group for victims of violence
 - Need for staff person to provide intervention with clients
- 3. Research
 - Need for research
 - Need to collect statistics and report in meaningful way
 - Need for accountability mechanisms
- 4. Intervention recognition and expansion
 - Intervention initiatives require formal recognition and support
 - Integration of safety component
- 5. Support for increased educational, awareness and prevention initiatives; Government needs to support implementation of VAAT

Suggestions for future:

- 1. Sustainable, expanded and flexible funding to reflect unique needs of region
- 2. Increased educational, awareness and preventative initiatives especially to rural areas.
- 3. Greater government and community collaboration with heightened commitment and support from government.
- 4. Support of provincial marketing/promotional coordination

5. Accountability and research component

Regional Coordinating Coalition Against Violence - Eastern Avalon

Best Practices/Successes:

1. Collaborative Process
 - The document entitled, *Collaborating with Community: Introduction, Guide and Rationale for Government*, which represents government/community collaboration
 - Increased networking between community groups and government departments
 - Strengthened collective advocacy for profiling violence and equality issues. Profiles and raises awareness of violence issues
 - Ability to draw upon the abilities of our coalition members, which leads to more effective strategies for profiling issues
 - RCCAV members/region has developed a strong collective understanding of the root causes (i.e., inequality) of violence
 - A key success is the multi-phase *Bars Booze and Sexual Violence* project, the development of key recommendations to deal with violence and harassment downtown, and the workshop guide for involving men and boys in anti-violence work.
2. Educational, awareness and preventative initiatives including:
 - Three phase project "Bars, Booze and Sexual Violence"
 - Conference on results of project after each phase
 - Variety of educational initiatives
 - Take Back the Night walk
 - VAAT program
3. Funding
 - Provides opportunity for RCC to identify regional priorities
 - Provides ability to coordinate and collaborate with a variety of organizations in violence prevention initiatives

VPI Recommendations for the Future:

1. Continuation
 - The VPI vision, goals and guiding principles are generally the right ones, and the Violence Prevention Initiative should continue in this capacity.
 - The next initiative should minimally be a five-year commitment.
2. VPI Staff and Resources
 - The VPI requires at least two full-time staff, one to coordinate activities and lend support within government while the other would be based in community to work with and support the six RCCs (training / community liaison).
 - Funding for RCCs needs to be increased.
 - Need to develop a strategy to address unique challenges of Labrador in terms of geography and Aboriginal peoples.
3. The Role of Government Departments

- The VPI needs to be embedded within government departments as well as communities and community-based organizations in order to move forward departmental action plans on violence prevention.
- Stronger senior level leadership and commitment to the VPI is required to move forward on violence and equality issues.
- Partner departments within the VPI should designate key individuals to work with and lend assistance to the VPI within government, as was the case in the former Provincial Strategy when each department dedicated 25% of a staff position to this work.

4. Provincial Coordinating Committee

- Develop strong criteria for appointing members to the PCC, including an understanding of gender and equality issues implicit in violence (i.e., root causes of violence).
- Develop a description of the authority level and competencies members will be expected to bring to the committee.
- Implement a process for committee development to address any gaps identified (e.g. understanding of roots of violence and implications for policies).
- As turnover occurs, ask organizations to apply these standards in new appointments

5. Education

- Community organizations with an expertise and focus on violence and inequality need to be involved in all senior level discussions, including meetings with cabinet ministers, around the VPI.
- A shared understanding of the roots of violence is needed among policy makers and VPI community and government partners.

6. Collaborative Process

- The government-community collaboration process outlined in *Collaborating with Community: Introduction, Guide and Rational for Government* (VPI, September 2003). Continue with the current work to inject use of this model in government policy development work more broadly.

7. Gender Inclusive Analysis

- The application of gender inclusive analysis is required in all facets of the VPI
- All partner departments must apply gender inclusive analysis to the development and implementation of departmental action plans

Eastern Region Committee Against Violence

Best Practices/Successes:

1. Structure of RCC:
 - Collaborative community – government approach
 - The identification of a coordinator given the size and complexity of the region
2. Educational, awareness and preventative initiatives:
 - Implementation of provincial VAAT program
 - Development of interactive data base of on line resources (www.strategyforliving.ca)
 - Family Violence Conference

- Development and implementation of variety of resources and materials such as pamphlets, posters, sessions on bullying, essay contests on bullying, and promotional materials on radio

Gaps/Limitations:

1. Additional educational resources particularly in area of elder abuse and caregiver support
2. Minimal funding makes it difficult to provide service to large geographic area
3. Difficult to engage community in anti violence work
4. Health care providers are overloaded and tend to focus on intervention to violence rather than prevention

Suggestions for future:

1. A new VPI should include:
 - A well identified mandate
 - Leadership through the PCC by bringing together RCC coordinators on a regular basis
 - Sharing resources
 - Focus on awareness and education
 - Integrate research and accountability mechanisms
2. Increased collaboration:
 - Greater support from government developed programs such as VAAT and *Safe and Caring Schools Initiative*.
3. Increased regional resources:
 - Additional funding for staff
 - Ability to expand services

Appendix D
Results of Consultations
Additional Community Stakeholders

- Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre
- Coalition for Persons with Disabilities
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Canadian Red Cross
- Seniors Resource Centre
- NL Association of Transition Houses
- Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women
- Choices for Youth
- Child Youth Advocates Office

Summary of Successes and Best Practices

1. Educational, awareness and preventative initiatives include:
 - Changing Minds Project (CMHANL)
 - Project underway with HCCSJR and Legal Aid to develop a mental health course
 - Focus on attitudes and stigma associated with violence
 - RESPECT Violence and Abuse Program, Peer Facilitation Model, Beyond the Hurt offered through Canadian Red Cross
 - Life Skills, Literacy and Healthy Baby Club Groups (Choices for Youth)
 - Information Line, Peer Advocates in 14 communities (Seniors Resource Centre)
 - Elder abuse conference and Strategic Planning Forum
 - The Hurting Times, Looking Beyond the Hurt materials
 - Seniors Speak Out on Elder abuse workshops
 - Development of website with reference to materials on violence (www.seniorsresources.ca)
2. Collaborative relationships:
 - Align with like minded health organizations
 - Partnering with organizations with similar mandate
 - Grassroots origin of organizations
 - Elder abuse Interagency Committee
3. Intervention
 - Shelters provide safety to women and children in need
 - Sexual assault and crisis line (trained volunteers)
4. VPI Structure
 - Current support for the VPI has provided a good foundation for violence prevention in our province.

Summary of Gaps and Limitations

1. Need to move away from project funding; core sustainable funding is essential

2. Limited focus on prevention, education and intervention in areas of children and youth and older persons
3. Lack of commitment at ministerial level
4. Lack of accountability and need for research to determine levels of vulnerability as well as community response
6. More appropriate legislation and justice approaches to children/youth and older persons (Neglected Adults Act)
7. Organizations who primarily offer interventions also provide education; support, prevention and promotion however are funded primarily on numbers of beds while not paying attention to other components.
8. Need for more training in area of sexual assault

Recommendations

1. Sustainable core funding is essential for community organizations
 - Need to consider funding to organizations that primarily offer interventions but also provide education, support, prevention and awareness
 - Fund transition house on Northern Peninsula
2. Increased commitment at ministerial level – political will
3. Increased accountability
 - Mechanisms to ensure accountability
 - Research (address ageism, ableism etc)
4. Justice services need to be expanded and available to whole province
 - Incorporate victim services for children within VPI
 - Access to courts
 - Gender neutral police response
5. More appropriate legislation and justice approaches to children/youth and older persons (Neglected Adults Act)
6. Increase focus on prevention, education and intervention initiatives:
 - With children and youth
 - Sexual assault
 - VAAT needs to be supported and expanded to front line workers
 - Need standard protocols
 - Coordinated sexual assault team
 - Expanded 1-800- # at Seniors Resource Center
7. Increased collaboration
 - Network of organizations addressing violence
 - VPI should provide leadership and the community deliver services
 - Minimize duplication of services

- Clearer relationship between VPI and RCCs
- 8. Increased personnel within VPI – suggest one individual to focus on primarily violence prevention; maintain VPI within Women's Policy as violence is still primarily a woman's issue
- 9. Include ableism and elder abuse within VPI mandate
- 11. Recognition that violence, poverty (including lack of appropriate housing) and impact on health are closely linked

**Appendix E
Summary of Feedback
Violence Prevention Initiative Forum
February 27-28, 2005**

Participants were asked to complete an open-ended feedback form. Responses were received from 34 participants. The following summarizes responses and are grouped into three major categories: strengths, limitations and suggestions for future.

Strengths:

- Venue (location, food)
- Excellent panel to introduce topic
- Interaction at small group level
- Excellent opportunity to network and communicate especially with participants from outside of St. John's region
- Excellent opportunity for collaboration between community and government
- Final product was successfully delivered with ministers in attendance
- Excellent facilitation/consultation
- Positive atmosphere

Limitations:

- Time limitations! Very tight time lines both through the whole process and the forum itself.
- Limited involvement by other community groups and front line workers
- Limited time to organize and implement whole process
- Discomfort/difficulty/lack of preparedness/intimidation of community representatives to deliver message to government
- Reporting back process not effective
- Limited attention to aboriginal issues
- Too much focus on unique needs of Labrador at expense of other regions
- Lack of representation from justice (judges, lawyers, etc)
- Absence of ministers from many departments

Suggestions for Future:

- Two day session
- Summary of “what we heard” from regions in draft form to participants prior to session
- Consolidation and delivery of information by an outside party rather than participants
- Willingness of VPI to change in order to build on outcomes
- Draft report to be shared with participants for feedback
- Opportunity for participants to provide further input (reflections after the forum)
- Better prepare participants for process of delivery of messages as well content of message
- Further working together (all regions and government)