

HC
117
.Y8
.W666
1987

YUKON DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY WORKSHOP

YUKON ENERGY, MINES
& RESOURCES LIBRARY
P.O. BOX 2793
WHITEHORSE, YUKON Y1A 2C8

Y U K O N · 2 0 0 0

Building the Future

Yukon
Government

Y U K O N 2 0 0 0

Women in the Economy Workshop

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 24 - 26, 1987

WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY WORKSHOP

April 24 - 26, 1987

Haines Junction, Yukon

Thirty-three delegates from across the Yukon attended the YUKON 2000 Women in the Economy workshop. The participants represented a variety of Yukon women: rural, urban, older, younger, single, married, women who work in the home and those who work outside the home, business women, women who trap, employees, Indian and non-Indian women. Delegates came to discuss, to listen, to learn and to share their views on the subject of women in the economy.

The workshop dealt with three topics:

- * Defining the economy in women's terms;
- * What is working well and what is not working well for women in the economy;
- * What actions can be taken to address women's concerns in the economy?

The theme and format for the weekend was developed through a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of women's groups, the Yukon Government's Women's Directorate and the Economic Development Department. Delegates discussed each

of the topics in small group sessions and reported back on the discussions to the larger groups.

This report provides a summary of the discussions. It is organized according to the three topic areas. The summaries at the beginning of each workshop briefly describe the results for the whole section. More detailed comments are recorded below them. A summary of the presentation by Monica Townson on "Planning for the Future" is also enclosed.

This report will be used in future stages of YUKON 2000 work. It provides, along with other consultation, information on the issues facing women in the Yukon economy and possible actions to address these issues.

Women in the Economy Workshop

TOPIC 1: Defining the Economy in Women's Terms

Women contribute to all facets of the economy, and all women contribute to the economy. The contributions made by women vary widely. Some work as full-time homemakers who care for their children and run the home. Some follow a traditional lifestyle in a rural community; hunting, trapping, fishing or making crafts. Other women work for wages in offices, on construction sites, as waitresses or in practically any job setting. Others run their own businesses.

Women are involved in a range of "economies". At one end of this range is work for which no money is exchanged. At the other end is work for pay.

All the work women do contributes something of value to our society. The economy in our terms is almost everything women do, whether it is for pay or not. Volunteer work, work in the traditional Indian lifestyle and work in the home are of economic importance to the Yukon. Work in these areas, though no money is provided for it, saves families and other taxpayers money and often creates jobs and income for others. The pay women receive for wage work also may not reflect its true value to society.

One of the themes of the discussions was the desire for greater choice and options in our lives. An individual without options can feel trapped by the economy. Like other Yukoners, women want to feel they have opportunities and choices. This includes the availability of jobs in our communities, the types of jobs we can get and the opportunities for non-wage lifestyles. Women are also

looking for a balance between work in the home and work outside the home.

In addition to work, women contribute to the economy as consumers. When we buy goods and services, this results in jobs and income for others. As consumers, women want choices and options. Through our spending decisions, we exert some control over businesses. In rural areas, Yukoners have less choice and less control as consumers.

Government also makes economic decisions that affect women. Some participants at the workshop voiced the desire for greater control over the decision makers. Public consultation and reviews of government's economic decisions can help government be more responsive to the people's wishes.

Our social concerns and our economic concerns are often linked together. Childcare is an economic as much as a social issue, as it affects many women's participation in the economy. The government funding of volunteer projects can affect their success. And other government's decisions affect the home, which is the basic economic unit.

The economy has many interrelationships. We produce things of value through our work. We are consumers through our spending. Decisions made by businesses and government affect our lives. To varying degrees, we can affect the decisions made by government and businesses. Social issues of importance to us affect our economic lives.

As Workers in Traditional Activities

- People living a subsistence lifestyle are less affected by other people and events in the economy than those who work for wages.
- Traditional activities are a strong part of the Indian economy. Indian women would like to achieve a balance between traditional work and work in the dominant or wage economy.
- Using money as our value system is wrong. Many of the things we do which are of value do not have dollars attached to them. Also, sometimes the dollars attached to goods, services and work do not reflect its value very well.
- Some women felt that people should not have to make a choice between wage employment and traditional activities, but rather a balance between the two can be achieved. To do this we need more flexibility in the wage economy. Flexibility in time off from work and job sharing should be encouraged.
- Potlatches, hunting and gathering seasons and family and community commitments cannot be accommodated in the wage economy. This is unsatisfactory. More flexibility in wage work is needed.
- Self-government will allow Indian people to take more control over their work environment. This could assist Indian women to achieve a balance between tradition and wage activities.

As Income Earners

- Women have the potential to be involved in all types of activities. This includes owning and managing businesses and working as paid employees in all areas of the economy.
- Working outside the home can give a sense of accomplishment. Some women feel better about spending money paid directly to them.. Many women must work if their families are to survive economically.
- Women in the Yukon are perceived to be more active in management and as politicians than women in other parts of Canada.
- Often an individual's choices are limited. Economics and the way we earn our livelihood influence the choices we have. Education, training, family environment and economic needs influence what options a woman has.
- Cost of childcare limits some women's options. For some, after paying childcare, little money is left to meet other needs. For some, high childcare costs and low wages do not make returning to work a paying proposition.
- Government provides many of the jobs for women.
- Indian bands are contributing to the economy. Monies that go to the bands are spent in the Yukon.

As Volunteers

- Volunteer work has an economic value although it is not measured in dollars and cents.
- Volunteer activities have economic spin-offs associated with them. They create jobs and income for people in the workforce. For example, volunteer activities in recreation can result in work constructing and running facilities, and manufacturing and selling of recreational equipment.
- We could not afford to pay for all the services provided, if volunteer work had to be paid. Volunteer work saves the taxpayer money.
- Time is our most valuable resource. It is a resource which is truly non-renewable. Time constraints determine what we can and cannot do for pay.
- Volunteering provides us with a way of "paying" for services we want. We direct our efforts into those areas we feel are of value. If we paid for these services through taxes we would have less control in directing money to areas we feel are of value.
- People learn and grow from volunteer work. We get something back for what we give. Volunteer work gives skills that can be used in the wage economy.
- Time spent getting government support for social services projects is frustrating. Too much effort is required to get government support.
- Administrative expenses are high. This makes the effective volunteer contribution less.

- The contribution made by volunteers could be increased if expenses and honorariums were paid. Childcare costs, transportation and other costs to the individual make it more difficult to do volunteer work.
- Decisions made by volunteer boards are often more sensitive to people and the economy than decisions made by government staff.
- Volunteer burn-out is a problem. There are only a few people who do most of the work in a volunteer organization.
- By participating in volunteer work, we can increase the quality of life and help to shape the community in which we live.
- The value of volunteer work should be recognized.
- Public funds are not allocated to activities in a fair or effective manner. Individual Yukoners need more control.

As consumers

- As consumers, women help businesses survive and through spending, women indirectly assist in creating jobs, profits and wealth.
- Consumers voice their preferences through their spending patterns.
- Through local buying and the purchase of Yukon made goods we can increase employment and the business success of other Yukoners.
- It is as consumers that we first learn the importance of budgeting and basic economics. The balancing of income and spending is usually learned first in the home.
- It was felt that women often have the major decision-making influence as consumers.
- Increasing the types and volume of locally produced goods can be difficult given the small market size in the Territory. High transportation costs of goods to the Yukon may make it possible to produce some local goods at competitive prices.
- In rural areas, consumers have less choice and control. There are few businesses and the consumer's power is lower.
- In the north, the small population and limited number of businesses, means that we have less control and power as consumers. At times our only options are to take it or leave it.

- The situation facing consumers in rural areas is worse than in Whitehorse. In rural areas, consumers face high costs and often the quality of goods, especially food items, is lower.

- Retailers in rural areas often have limited choices as well. They face higher costs and when lower quality goods, especially food goods, are delivered their option is to take it or leave it.

- Women as consumers contribute to almost every facet of the economy.

As Workers in the Home

- Child rearing, maintaining the family and home has a value and is an important job.
- The children we are raising today will form the basis of the economy in the future. They will be the employers and employees, self-employed, unemployed and those working in non-wage activities.
- Some delegates felt women should stay at home to raise their children.
- Sometimes women cannot stay home and raise their children. The family's economic needs may require that the woman works outside of the home. Some women find it difficult to stay home and need other challenges in addition to the home.
- Women have more choices now than they had in the past.
- The home and family unit is the foundation of the economy. The household provides the workers, employers and employees who produce the goods and services in the economy and who purchase them.
- Childcare in the home has an economic value, just as paid childcare does.
- Conflicts and difficulties for women arise when child and home responsibilities conflict with wage employment. More flexibility in terms of time off is desired.

Relationships in the Economy

- The family is the basic economic unit. It needs goods and services. To get these it can buy, barter, share or produce these itself.
- More emphasis on the informal economy may be useful. The informal economy includes all activities which produce goods or services of value but for which no money is exchanged.
- There is a need for balance between family and work. We should try not to have either/or situations, but rather find ways to accommodate both the family and work.
- Women would like to see an emphasis on having choices, in both the home and at work. It is important to keep involved with the whole world not just work or home.
- Women cannot work in isolation, and need to retain strong values.
- We both give and receive from the economy.
- It seems that society views the family unit as less important than a business venture. We must look at and question society's values.
- Where does quality of life come in? Quality of lifestyle includes participation in the development of the community.
- We exchange things of value through buying, selling, bartering, building, teaching, learning, playing and earning.

- The value of culture is strong for Indian women. Quality of life involves traditional activities. The options for traditional lifestyles must be maintained for the future.
- We are victims of the economy in the north. We need more control over government and business.
- Needs and desire need to be balanced. Society should make sure all people's basic needs are satisfied first and then we can accommodate desires.
- Choice and control are the two keys. We need more choice and opportunities as individuals and as a group. We need more control over decision making and the economy and the priorities government sets.
- We should be working to get more choice in what we do, recognizing that different people have less or more choice or opportunity. Some groups need help to increase their opportunities.
- Must recognize that a value system which depends on money is wrong. Wage activity is not more valuable than unpaid activity.
- Government should be working for us, not telling us what to do.
- Government is too big. There is a separation between people and government which is not good.
- Government is stopping people from being more self-sufficient, doing what they want, doing a wider variety of activities.

TOPIC 2: Women's Issues in the Yukon Economy

What is working well in the Economy

Participants felt some aspects of the Yukon economy were working well for women. The small size of the territory provides opportunities for an individual to work in specialized areas and gain new experiences. These opportunities are not as readily available in southern Canada where there is greater competition for jobs and among businesses. Because the Yukon is small in size, the individual is more likely to be recognized for her abilities. Consultation by government and opportunities to participate in decision-making are also working well. In general, women felt the quality of life in the Yukon was good.

Indian women felt positive about their extended family and community support systems. The benefits of this are particularly important in the area of childcare. Childcare is not the major economic issue for Indian women, as it is with non-Indian women. The subsistence lifestyle of some Indian women was felt to be working well. Subsistence activities involve the whole family and strengthen family ties. Indian women also felt their culture provides them with unique opportunities for business ventures.

The volunteer sector provides women with opportunities for involvement. This can be used to develop a woman's skill in many areas and at the same time provides needed services. Some government programs are working well for women. Examples of these are: the Community Learning Centres which enable women to take training in their home communities, and the reduced emphasis on academic qualifications for government jobs.

What is not working in the Economy

The key issue for non-Indian women is childcare. The quality, availability, and cost of childcare is of concern and is especially critical in rural areas. Childcare services are an economic necessity and government should place a higher priority on this area.

The major issue for Indian women centred on education and training. Lifeskills courses and the building of self-esteem are needed to participate in the economy. Participants felt these courses need to be offered in the communities. Courses should be of a long-term nature with adequate follow-up work and resources dedicated to them. Support systems need to be in place if training and education courses are to be successful. The prevention of children from dropping out of school is another key issue.

Both Indian and non-Indian women wanted greater flexibility in wage work. This would enable women to balance their homemaking and traditional subsistence work with their work in the paid labour force.

Women's income levels are an issue. Some women's work is undervalued in the economy. Work which has been done by women, for example in the service industries and the making of crafts, pay poorly. The low incomes that women earn have negative effects on the family. In rural areas the lack of jobs is a related concern for women.

Women wanting to start a business and those with businesses felt that access to capital was an issue for women. Financial institutions are more reluctant to lend to women than men. Businesses owned by women however, have experienced lower failure rates than those owned by men.

In discussing issues associated with volunteer work, the workshop participants felt that government spending priorities need to be assessed. Basic needs should be met before desires and wants are satisfied. Social services should receive higher priority and more attention should be placed on this area by government.

Using money as a measure of the value of work results in some activities being undervalued. Work in the home is felt to be undervalued and its contribution to our society is not recognized.

Settlement of land claims was a priority issue. Some participants noted that the settlement of land claims will benefit all Yukoners and many of our industries.

Negative attitudes and discrimination toward certain groups, including women and Indian people, need to be questioned and changed.

What is working well in the Economy?

The Yukon

- Yukon provides us with a good quality of life. Some of the aspects of this are good standards of living, our natural resources and our sense of community.
- Because the Yukon is small we have more opportunities to gain a broad range of experience. Less specialization is needed. We can get experience in areas we would not have a chance to be involved in "outside".
- People in the Yukon are more receptive to giving an individual a chance. This can make starting a business easier as the individuals' strengths are recognized. Women have more opportunity here.
- In small business and small organizations the individual counts. Solutions to responsibilities outside work can be developed.
- The Yukon offers many special opportunities. For example, this "Women and the Economy" workshop is an opportunity for women to gain experience and share knowledge.
- Some felt discrimination in the Yukon is less than in outside urban areas. Yukoners focus more on the individual.
- Some felt they had the option to stay home and raise their children.

Volunteers

- The efforts of volunteers and the services they provide are working well. Volunteer efforts respond to needs and fill gaps in services.
- There are many opportunities to be involved in volunteer work.
- Volunteer work can help develop skills that are useful in the paid workforce.

Indian Community

- Native community has extended family ties. This provides a range of support for women in the economy.
- Family and community support in the area of child care works well for Indian women.
- Subsistence activities involve the whole family and help build family ties.
- Indian culture has the potential to provide opportunities for Indian women in business.

The Economy

- Isolation is working for us. There is not as much competition in business and there are more business opportunities here.
- The Mayo Band is successful at employing its women members. Full time and part time jobs are provided.

- The division of labour between men and women can work well.
- The Tourism industry is providing benefits to Yukoners.

Training

- Training opportunities help build self confidence and can open doors to good jobs.
- Community Learning Centres offer courses within the communities.
- CLC's provide training for women in non traditional areas.

Government

- Yukoners are consulted by YTG and have opportunities to participate in decision making.
- Some felt the Business Development Office provided good support to women interested in starting a business. Government economic development programs (EDA, ARDA) were noted.
- Subsidized daycare has allowed some women to return to school or work.
- The Northern Affairs Program on-the-job-training program is working well.
- In some jobs, government is reducing academic and paper qualifications and considering experience. This is working well.

- Toll free number to YTC.
- It is easy to get information in the Yukon.

What is not working well in the Economy?

Childcare

- Lack of availability of quality childcare at reasonable cost. This is especially critical in rural communities. Government needs to put more effort and resources into childcare.
- Cost of childcare is too high. Single parent families, and families with low and middle incomes, find it hard to cover the costs.
- In rural areas there may not be a daycare. Much volunteer effort is required to set up a daycare. This is especially a problem in rural areas.
- For some Indian women, childcare services are needed seasonally. Although family members may care for children most of the time, traditional activities such as fishing may mean other childcare services are needed at certain times.
- Childcare is an economic necessity. The income from working women is often required to support the family.
- When childcare costs are too high and there are financial problems, this can create family problems and stress.
- Women would like to have choices in childcare arrangements.
- Childcare should nurture the child's emotional, physical and intellectual development. Good values must also be nurtured.

- We need more information on daycare.
- After school care is a problem as is part-time child care, care for infants, and care for children of shiftworkers.
- More strict enforcement over licensed daycares is needed.

Starting a Business

- Help is needed to fill out government grant and loan forms. Government procedures and requirements are like a maze of red tape.
- Need "how to" information on business management, budgeting, financial, accounting, marketing and other key areas.
- Special financial assistance for some groups is a problem. It results in reverse discrimination.
- There is a difference of opinion on whether or not it is easy to get information on how to start a small business, government grant or loan programs and what to do on the many specifics.
- If you have money and proven business experience you can get help from banks and government; otherwise no one will help you.
- It is not what you know, its who you know.
- Eligibility criteria for government programs are too narrowly defined.
- City bylaws can be a problem.
- Because of conditioning and stereotyping, women often feel they can't run a successful business. Women sometimes have problems with being the "boss" and delegating authority. Training is needed in this area.
- Government needs to support small business.

- Banks and private lending institutions are biased against women. Women often need to get their husband's or another male's backing to get credit. The decision making and power positions in banks are held by men.
- Many rural communities have no banking services.

Education and Training

- Too few Indian students graduate from high school.
- Women need greater self esteem. It takes confidence in oneself and one's abilities to work in the economy and try new challenges.
- Self esteem is critical. Need more life skills training. Government programs in this area are not long term and there are not enough resources for them.
- Education and training affect the options and choices women have.
- Training courses and support need to be flexible enough to meet the needs of trainees. Training subsidies are not flexible enough and are not available for part-time training.
- Education is not meeting cultural needs. Respect for the Indian culture should be taught in the school system and at home using elders. Local cultures should be taught before other cultures are taught.
- Methods to prevent youth from dropping out of school need to be explored. Support systems for helping youth stay in school until graduation need to be developed. This is especially important for Indian youth.
- Transportation to and from training courses is a problem.
- Paperwork and guidelines for manpower subsidies and on-the-job training are a problem and exclude many

people. It is hard to get grants or program money for training.

- There is not enough choice in the training programs offered.
- Time, funding and child care are problems for trainees.
- Personal and self development is needed before we can take advantage of opportunities, including training.
- It is hard to get training courses and career training unless you live in Whitehorse or work for government.
- We need more on-the-job-training.
- There is inadequate or no career counselling. This is needed.
- You often must come to Whitehorse for training. Women then have to leave their family behind. This makes it especially difficult for single parents.
- Classes offered one night per week are difficult for women from rural areas to attend.
- Education and training need to be geared toward community development. Local people need to be trained in this area.
- Qualifications and requirements prevent women from obtaining training.
- Hard for women to overcome lack of confidence in working in non-traditional areas.

In the Workforce

- Should examine wage parity among workers in non-profit social service facilities and government workers in similar social service jobs. Volunteer agencies cannot afford to pay.
- Money often does not reflect the real value of products and services. This is especially true for craft production. It is hard to charge for actual hours worked as this would price the article too high. Crafts people get too small a percentage of the selling price. The value of a craft should be determined by the time spent producing it, talent of the craftsperson and cost of materials. The public needs to be educated on the amount of work involved in making the craft. Crafts need to be recognized as an art.
- Business income may not reflect the hours of work put into the business.
- Women, especially rural and and Indian women, are often forced to seek work in low paying service industry jobs.
- Traditional women's work is undervalued. Wage rates do not reflect responsibility or contribution. For example, childcare workers do not make enough money considering their responsibilities (Babysitting vs. truck driving).
- Need to find a way to ensure we have equality of opportunity.
- Inadequate income reflects on the individual and family in a very practical sense: there is not enough food,

housing is poor and there is no security or backup when there are problems. Low income also affects a person's attitude about herself - its all my fault, I am not good enough.

- Living in the Yukon, some women have to choose between advancement in their job and staying here. There are restricted options in some fields.
- Although there are job opportunities, they may not be the kinds of work women want to do.
- It can be very difficult or impossible to get work in your own community if you live in a rural community.
- Government jobs rely too much on paper qualifications and titles.
- Low prices are paid for products made at home. Need better sales outlets for the sale of these products, education of people so they know the value of product.
- Wage rates in the service industry, where many women work, are too low to act as an incentive for women to go to work. Some women have no choice about whether to work and must accept these low wages.
- After a relationship breaks up, women are usually responsible for support of kids.
- Social service cheques are low. When someone on Social Assistance earns money, this is deducted from cheques; need greater incentive to work.
- People judge the value of activities and others by the money attached to this.

- It is difficult for women to overcome their lack of confidence when it comes to working in non-traditional areas. Some women who would like these types of work are afraid to try.
- Women have a harder time than men in getting promotions.
- Overtime work is difficult when a woman has home responsibilities.

Job Flexibility

- Part-time workers lose benefits, job seniority.
- There should be more opportunity for job sharing.
- The hours associated with paid work forces women to make decisions which may not be best. There is a lack of time to lead a balanced life.
- Need more flexibility. Indians balancing traditional activities with wage activities. Women balancing home life with wage activities.

Business

- Some feel government grants and loan programs work well for women. Some women however, are frustrated at not being able to get government aid.

Volunteer Work

- Since monies are limited, we have to be sure priorities for spending among volunteer services are established. More control by the people is needed over how government spending is allocated.
- Should look at redistribution of government funds, especially in the area of social services. For example the funds available for transition homes are too low while MLA's salaries are too high.
- It is a constant battle to get governments to recognize the need for funds in social service areas and get funding for these projects and services.

- Too much time is spent fighting among volunteer organizations for limited funds. Efforts should be directed at getting government to redistribute existing funds.
- The distinction between needs and wants is often lost. Let's address basic needs for all first.
- With increasing participation in the economy by women, there will be less time available for volunteer work. This could mean that money for services now provided by volunteers would have to be raised through taxes. If this happens people have less control over the contributions they make.
- Volunteer work should be recognized for the value that it contributes to the community.
- It is difficult to get information from government and the bureaucracy can seem like a maze of red tape.
- More work needs to be done in the social planning area.
- Volunteer burnout is a problem. Recognizing the value of volunteer work to the community can help somewhat.

Non-Wage in the Home

- Concern expressed about the lack of support for women who have made the decision to stay at home.
- Women's work in the home is undervalued and does not achieve recognition. Only work for money is felt to be valuable.
- Home, family and cultural responsibilities create added stress for women who work outside the home.

- There is a need for pensions and retirement benefits for women who stay home.
- There are financial pressures and pressures from other people to work outside the home.
- Traditional roles for men and women can be a problem. This can be especially so if men and women are from two different cultures.
- Hard to work overtime with family responsibilities. This becomes a problem.

Attitudes

- Attitudes that apply negative labels need to be questioned and removed. There is too much stereotyping of Indian people and women.
- Discrimination and prejudice exists. Anything off the norm is considered unacceptable.
- Discriminatory attitudes are found in: hiring practices, pay levels, promotion practices, bank financing practices. Both sexual harassment and cultural harassment are results of discrimination.
- It is more difficult for women to obtain and be promoted into higher paying, more challenging and interesting, higher status work.
- Assumptions are made about a woman on the basis of her husband's activities and income.
- Personal self confidence is a problem some women face.
- Negative attitudes on the part of people who hire has to stop.
- Because of our conditioning and training as women we can not compete effectively in business.
- Self esteem is critical. Need more life skills training.
- Women have to be better and work harder to compete with men.

- Traditional roles and responsibilities can place a burden on women; they often work outside the home and are expected to do most of the work in the home. When two cultures are part of the family, expectations can be too high.

Decision Making/Government

- Women are not in enough of the decision making and leadership positions.
- There is a lack of managerial opportunities for women.
- Need to find ways in which we as women can work together.
- Impact of a woman's partner's choices affect the options she has.
- Government cutbacks negatively affect Indian people and women more than others. These groups need the special programs or they have far fewer opportunities.

Other

- There is a lack of land available for land based activities. Need better policy on land distribution.
- Supplies for our economic activities have to come from outside. They are hard to get, more expensive and variety is limited. This affects us as consumers, and business operators.
- Transportation is a problem. It is a problem when going to work or taking training.
- Hard to get traplines.
- Land claims need to be settled.
- Need more flex with respect to being able to move into and out of wage economy especially for those working in traditional or subsistence activities.
- Women need to work together to arrive at solutions to the problems facing them.

TOPIC 3: Actions to Address Concerns

The actions proposed to address the problems identified cover a wide-range of subjects including childcare, women in employment and in business, volunteerism, land-claims and native craft-marketing. The possible actions are as wide-ranging as our backgrounds and experience, at the same time, they represent significant areas of agreement.

The emphasis in all workshops was on childcare - or the lack of it - as a major barrier to women's participation in economic activity. There are therefore several actions proposed to address this issue. Generally speaking, all sectors of society should become involved in the childcare issue - Government, parents, private sector employers. The actions also address the need for a variety of childcare options to meet differing needs.

The actions proposed for Education and Training emphasize the need for lifeskills training and education in areas affecting women directly such as childcare, family violence and other social problems. Accessibility to training for women needs to be improved by providing opportunities in communities outside Whitehorse, and by ensuring the availability of financial and other support systems.

Women as entrepreneurs need information, and financial institutions and the business community need education about the role that women are already playing in the business world.

Actions are proposed to address the need for flexibility in the workplace and the need for government support for women entering decision-making.

The encouragement and recognition of volunteer activity is also a focus of attention.

The actions outlined show that there may be ways to address women's needs, and that women can suggest solutions to deal with issues that affect them. As mentioned in Monica Townson's presentation, some of the larger issues are being addressed nationally already.

Childcare

- Government should be encouraged to continue its efforts to provide accessible, affordable, high quality childcare to women pursuing training, in jobs and doing volunteer work. Individuals and women's organizations should lobby the responsible government agencies.
- Childcare services in rural communities should be a priority. Government should provide advice and financial assistance in organizing, setting up and running daycares, providing space and operating funds and assisting in local training of childcare workers.
- A range of alternatives to make childcare more affordable should be explored. This should include subsidizing parents, subsidizing childcare operations and other alternatives.
- The range of childcare services should be expanded to include infant care, after school care, drop-off childcare, care for children whose parents work seasonal or shift work and care for children with special needs. This should be accomplished cooperatively through government, businesses and parents.
- There should be more on-site childcare for those who work or are taking training. Both government and private sector employers should be encouraged to provide on-site childcare. Use of schools for childcare should also be explored.
- Funds for childcare should not come from Health and Human Resources or the Women's Directorate, but they

should come from the Department of Economic Development. Childcare is an economic issue.

- The Department of Economic Development should provide funds for the Yukon Childcare Conference. (This was done.)

- Government should ensure childcare subsidy cheques go out on time.

- Government should allow for flexibility and options for both licensed and unlicensed childcare.

- Better information on childcare options, how to set up a childcare center and resource materials need to be available in the communities. Workshops on childcare should be held in the communities. This should be done by YTG and the Yukon Childcare Association.

- A directory of available childcare services throughout the territory should be put together by YTG and the Yukon Childcare Association.

- There should be more parent participation and use of cooperatives in childcare centers.

- Training should be provided for those running family day homes.

- The HUB model for childcare should be explored. This could include a childcare facility with space for sick children, an infant home, and facilities and programs for six to twelve year old children, and counselling/parent training facilities.

Education and Training

- Lifeskills training should be a priority. Government should train a person in each rural community as a lifeskills teacher. This person could then transfer these skills to other members of their community. This would enable long term lifeskills training to occur in the communities.
- Lifeskills and self-awareness training must be accessible, offered within the communities, of a long-term nature and adequate funding must be available. Lifeskills training forms the basis for participation in the economy. This is the key issue for Indian women to better participate in the economy.
- Greater use should be made of mobile training units.
- Yukon College academic and vocational courses should be offered through correspondence.
- There needs to be easier access to financial assistance for education for adult women. Money can be a major barrier to training and education. Rural women sometimes must come to Whitehorse for education and this is costly. This is a special problem in the Yukon where adults sometimes need to obtain education by correspondence and are therefore not eligible for many existing financial programs. The Women's Directorate and the Department of Education should assess existing post-secondary funding sources and identify shortfalls.
- High school education curriculum courses should include course work on childcare, relationships, sexual abuse, sexuality and social problems.

- Guidance counsellors should be educated about the many possible roles and careers for women. Guidance counsellors should be placed in every school.
- Training programs need to be more flexible to the needs of trainees.
- More on-the-job training programs are needed.
- The schools should provide parents with a list of professional development days at the beginning of the year.
- Personal and career counselling are needed. Help in defining a career path is needed so women can move into more challenging and better paying jobs.
- Assertiveness training should be offered starting in the early grades at school. It should be offered in rural areas as well as Whitehorse and to both females and males.
- On-going workshops on economic issues should be conducted by the Department of Economic Development. They should be held for women only, and for men and women. A mix and cross-section of people should continue to be involved.
- Consideration should be given to the eventual transition of Yukon College to full university status.
- Stress management courses should be offered.

Business Development

- Government and women's groups should pressure banks to re-examine their lending practices and attitudes toward women.
- Banks should assess how much of their business comes from women.
- Government and community organizations should pressure banks to locate a loans officer in rural communities. This should be a local person who already resides in the community. Although a bank in each community is not feasible, a loans officer to deal with clients and the banks is needed. Chambers of Commerce, municipal and band councils and the Department of Economic Development should work on this.
- Better business education training and assistance should be provided for women.
- Workshops on starting a small business in your home should be offered by the Business Development Office.
- Government grant and loan forms should be simplified. The number of programs should be reduced and streamlined so they are easier for people to access. All government business assistance programs should be reviewed to ensure they do not set up barriers to women.
- Women in business should be encouraged. Pamphlets, information on successful business women and mentors are needed.

- Banks should be encouraged to place more women in managerial positions.
- Loan officers working for banks and government should be educated about running a small business and about women's success in small business.

At Work

- Opinion of the workshop delegates was divided on pay equity. Some felt that more information on these issues should be provided to Yukon women and that discussion should be encouraged to enable women to come to a common understanding. Other groups felt equal pay for work of equal value should be encouraged in the private sector.
- Opinions were divided on whether the minimum wage rate should increase. Some delegates felt minimum wage should increase yearly based on the increase in cost of living. Some felt that private sector could not afford this.
- Job sharing and flexible job arrangements such as flex-time and part-time work should be encouraged. It should be ensured that benefits are not lost due to this flexibility.
- Affirmative action and positive employment should be encouraged.
- Some delegates felt that private and public sector pay rates should be equalized.
- Communication should be established between women's organizations and the tourism industry about the importance of the contribution women working in this industry make to tourism. Discussions should take place between the Women's Directorate, Department of Tourism and Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon.

Volunteer Activities

- Government should continue to recognize and support the value to the economy of women doing volunteer work. Yukon 2000 has been a good start to this.
- Government should ensure women are involved in all government boards and commissions. Rural women should be encouraged as well as Whitehorse women.
- For this to be a success women need access to transportation, childcare costs should be covered and orientation and training is needed for women. To encourage women to become involved, government should communicate what is expected from the volunteer and what the volunteer can gain from involvement. Government should strive for 50% participation of women on all boards and commissions.
- Government should consider secondments of individuals to the volunteer sector.
- Social service training should be open to those in the volunteer sector.
- Distribution of public funds for volunteer and social service programs should be reviewed for effectiveness and to assess whether they meet the priorities of the public. This assessment should involve those doing volunteer work.
- Women should be encouraged to register with the Women's Directorate Talent Bank.
- Government should undertake a study of the contribution made by volunteer work to the Yukon economy.

Land Claims

- The federal government, territorial government and Council for Yukon Indians should be encouraged to negotiate a successful land claims settlement.
- Land Claims Secretariate should undertake public education on land claims, aboriginal rights, and self government. All Yukoners need an understanding of these issues.
- The Yukon 2000 Strategy should review the possible impacts of land claims and self government on the economy.

Marketing of Native Crafts

- Yukon Indian Women's Association and Indian women should explore options for the marketing and retailing of Native crafts. Types of organizations to do this, possible business opportunities and a national marketing strategy should be undertaken.
- The hours spent in making crafts should be stated on the craft, along with the price.

Traditional Activities

- There is a need to educate Yukoners about the value and importance of subsistence and traditional activities.
- The Indian culture should be taught in the school system. This will help youth develop a respect for the Indian culture. Some delegates suggested elders be involved in this.

At Home

- Government could consider tax credits for parents who stay home to raise their children.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE
Highlights of Monica Townson's Speech

Women in the Economy Workshop

April 24 - 26, 1987

Haines Junction, Yukon

The issues raised here by Yukon women are issues that women are struggling with elsewhere in the world as well as in Canada. As we have heard, there is no one solution that will work for all women. For example, here in the Yukon, the priorities for Indian women may be different from those of non-Indian women. We need to recognize these unique needs, priorities and differences.

It is important to recognize that the world has changed, and these changes are not going to be reversed. As well, the need to earn an income is becoming more important for native and non-native women. Women are forming an increasing proportion of the workforce, and that is not likely to change.

Women in the Yukon participate in the workforce to a greater extent than anywhere else in Canada. One of the results of women participation is that a greater number of children are being raised in families where both parents work outside the home. Some would like to deal with that by turning back the clock, for example by introducing measures that would allow women to return to their traditional roles as full time homemakers. A more positive approach to the situation is to develop strategies to accommodate the new reality of family life for the benefit of women, men and the family. For Indian women, this may mean developing ways to combine paid work with traditional activities. For many women, it may mean the development of support systems to recognize that parenting is a responsibility to be shared by both men and women. Work could be organized to allow men and women to carry out their family responsibilities, instead of mothers having to worry about part time work and their flextime.

I would like to describe six major strategies which illustrate positive directions for dealing with changes in the family.

1. Developing a family policy

A family policy would recognize that support is needed for the changing nature of the family. Both parents are working outside the home in many families, and there are more single parent families in society. There is a need for better support systems in communities, including Indian and rural communities. A family policy would center around the areas of: childcare, parental leave and leave for employees with family responsibilities.

a) Childcare

There should be a national publicly funded childcare system, financed in a way similar to Healthcare and Education. The service would be available to all children as a matter of right, regardless of parents' income. It would include respite care, drop-in centres, family day homes, daycare centres and toy lending libraries and would accommodate shiftworkers' needs. It could be funded by federal and provincial governments with some parental contribution-which could cost \$3. billion which is expensive. On the other hand we already spend \$7. billion on tax breaks for investors and \$10 billion on defense.

It is important to note that the provision of childcare services is not, as suggested by some of its opponents, encouraging women to enter the workforce and work outside the home. They are already working outside the home, and it is the children who are not receiving the services. It may be unlikely that a national system would be developed in the near future. The present federal government approach is to provide childcare assistance to

parents through the tax system. This fails to provide the additional childcare spaces which are so desperately needed, here as well as in the rest of Canada. The development of a national childcare system would benefit all of Canada - the Yukon included. Extensive lobbying may help to get the system established.

b) Parental leave

Paid parental leave could be delivered through the unemployment insurance program as is now the case for maternity leave. However, benefits are now payable for only 15 weeks and only to mothers. The time could be extended to perhaps 26 weeks, and benefits would be available to mothers and fathers. This may not be as radical as it sounds, given that fathers can claim benefits through unemployment insurance for the adoption of a child, but not for their own! This inconsistency has been challenged in court and may well disappear in the future.

Parental leave provisions need to be fitted in with a national childcare policy to establish a proper network to provide family support. The provision of parental leave would also recognize the fact that parenting is a responsibility to be shared between women and men.

c) Leave for employees with family responsibilities

Leave for employees with family responsibilities permit them to take a day or two off without loss of salary to deal with sick children or other family members who need assistance, for example to attend medical appointments. These provisions are not part of the Canada Labour code, although their inclusion has been recommended by several lobby groups. This type of leave has, however, been negotiated between some unions and their employers as part of their collective agreements.

2. Flexible work time options

Another option is to increase the use of flexible work time options. This may require a challenge to the traditional definition of work, in which the work-day is organized around the traditional family structure. This means that the work-day still reflects the traditional arrangements where the husband worked outside the home, and the wife worked inside the home looking after the children and the homemaking responsibilities. This traditional view is no longer appropriate with both partners working outside the home. Part-time work and job sharing do not take up the challenge of re-defining work. For many people, the sharing of a salary is not feasible. Part-time work opportunities are often available during periods when parents want to be home with their children, for example in the evenings, on weekends and during school vacations. These options therefore do not fill the bill.

Shorter working hours are provided in Sweden to employees who have family responsibilities, and the adoption of shorter working hours is a principle already adopted by the Canadian Labour Congress. Shorter working hours may provide a much better solution to both men and women than part-time and job sharing. These two options are restrictive to both men and women, as they assume that the husband has the full-time job (meaning he cannot accomplish his family responsibilities) and the wife has the part-time job.

3. Sharing of work in the home

Sharing domestic labour would help the situation of women who work full time outside the home and then come home and do the domestic work as well. There needs to be a recognition that homemaking is a responsibility to be shared. There is, for example, an extensive public relations campaign being conducted in Sweden to encourage men to take a greater role in completing domestic work.

4. Women's Incomes

Women's incomes are lower than men's, frequently because of the type of work that they do. Training women to take higher paid jobs in mining and construction may not be the answer, as the jobs in the service sector will still have to be done. It is unrealistic to expect the occupational changes that would be necessary to result from training alone; for example, a large number of men would have to become secretaries and nurses to replace the women doing "men's" jobs. Women must be paid fairly for what they do and can no longer subsidize business by accepting inadequate wage levels. As it is, society pays for the inadequacy of women's incomes through social assistance and guaranteed income supplements.

Some provinces such as Ontario and Manitoba have developed innovative policies to help women who are on social assistance. One is the provision of a lower "tax back" on social assistance which allows for the gradual decrease of social assistance payments when recipients start work, rather than cutting off welfare payments completely. Women may need help to build up their self esteem and self confidence before they can participate in more formal employment oriented training programs which will help them enter the workforce. to enter the workforce.

5. Access to capital

Women have problems accessing capital to finance businesses. We hear about discrimination by banks, yet banks have adopted equal credit guidelines, and discrimination in the granting of personal credit is against Human Rights Legislation in most jurisdictions. Banks perceive women as less capable of running businesses which creates discrimination in business financing. A lobbying program directed at banks could help, as could options to make sure that business assistance programs are accessible to women.

6. Training

The question of training should be treated with caution because it implies that once women are trained, they will be alright, and that the situation of women is because women are inadequate. The question that should be asked about solutions that rely on training, is "Training for what?" Women need to be trained for something, not just trained. It is also important to remember that training is no use if there are no jobs available for the trained people to take.

Conclusion

Some strategies mentioned here are quite long term. On the other hand they are positive and forward looking in their direction. They will benefit women, as well as men and families. It is time that women stopped having to adapt to a man's world, and time that men started to adapt to the world of women.

We have seen how important women are to the Yukon economy, and we also know that it will be to the benefit of all Yukoners if women are able to contribute and to participate on a fair and equal basis.