REPORT ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN NEW BRUNSWICK'S COMMUNITY SECTOR

The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity

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Executive Summary

The Canadian community sector's volunteer and staff force is dominated by women. This is unsurprising, considering that the community sector largely performs 'caring work,' the type of work that women have traditionally provided society with for little compensation or recognition. In this sector, women are also underrepresented at the leadership level, particularly in organizations with large budgets and prestige. Additionally, those women who do ascend to positions of *executive* leadership face a gap between their earnings and those of their male peers.

Current leaders in New Brunswick's community sector have identified numerous reasons why women are underrepresented in positions of leadership within the sector. According to these leaders, women in the community sector must not only confront traditional systemic barriers and discrimination, but also feeling of insecurity and inadequacy that have been internalized as a result of society's consistent devaluing of their 'caring work.' This devaluation of 'caring work' is evidenced in multiple ways, one of the primary being the inadequate funding the community sector receives (and, subsequently, the inadequate compensation employees receive). It is not difficult to link the inequitable treatment of the community sector to the type of labour it provides and the gender make-up of its labour force.

Current leaders in the community sector are not only interested in seeing an increase in the number of women in positions of leadership, but also in ensuring that women are able to lead effectively and exert influence. This vision of effective and influential women's leadership includes significant emphasis on increased advocacy work to improve the treatment of the sector and its work force, particularly around the issue of compensation.

Introduction to the Report

The New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity (Coalition) is engaged in developing a mentorship-based project focused on bolstering women's leadership in New Brunswick's (N.B.) community sector. The intent is not only to increasing the number of women in leadership positions such as board member and executive director, but also to ensure that those women who are in positions of leadership (or who will be in the future) are able to lead effectively and exert influence. In other words, the *quality* as well as the *quantity* of women's leadership in the province's community sector is of concern to the Coalition's project.

This report is intended to be the primary research foundation of the project. The report focuses on women's leadership in the community sector and is divided into two main sections: a review of relevant information and research on the community sector, and a summary of information obtained during interviews conducted with leaders in N.B.'s community sector. Gender-based analysis informs the entirety of the report.

Defining the Sector

The community sector is often described by other terms, such as voluntary sector, third sector and nonprofit sector. The following explanation of the sector, from Idealist.org, is the definition the sector that this report will adhere to : "The [community] sector consists of everything done directly by agencies and organizations that are neither businesses nor governments and that are more or less supported by donations, program service revenues, and volunteers" ("Key Terms"). Furthermore, it "includes organizations that work to fill gaps left by government and business sectors by directly or indirectly working with communities. Unlike businesses which exist to make money for their owners or shareholders, nonprofit organizations exist to promote a cause or to provide a public service" ("Sector Knowledge: Non Profit").

It must be noted that while organizations with 'charitable status' (a.k.a. charities) are a part of the community sector, they are distinct within it as they are subject to strict guidelines that limit the level of advocacy in which they can engage to 10% of their resource allocation. These guidelines are imposed by Revenue Canada.

Finally, there are several quasi-governmental organizations (such as hospitals and universities) that are technically part of the community sector. These organizations are beyond the scope of the Coalition's interest due to their strong affiliation with the public sector and are not considered in this report.

Literature Review

Until the last 15 years or so, there had been very little data gathering or research on the Canadian community sector. Since the late 90's, however, more attention has been paid to the sector and there have now been multiple Canada-wide studies on the characteristics of those who work and/or volunteer in the sector and on the organizations that comprise it. Given that study of this sector is relatively new, there is little information on the subtopic of women's leadership in general, let alone information specific to New Brunswick.

New Brunswick's Community Sector

The *National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations* (conducted in 2003) states that in New Brunswick there are 3 890 community organizations (Rowe, 6) and that 68% of these organizations are registered charities (4). When compared to other provinces, New Brunswick organizations are slightly less reliant on government funding (Hall, *Cornerstones* 12) than organizations in other provinces. It was also found in the *National Survey of Non-profit and Voluntary Organizations* that New Brunswick had some of the country's highest rates of volunteering (Hall, *Caring Canadians* 46). The *Canada Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating* reports that in Atlantic Canada (as with the rest of the country) "The likelihood of volunteering tended to increase with the level of formal education attained. Atlantic residents with university degrees accounted for a disproportionately large percentage of total volunteer hours..." (Hall, *Caring Canadians* 23-24). The same survey indicates that volunteers engage in a number of activities with the organizations they work with, including fundraising, organizing and supervising events, coaching, collecting or delivering food or other goods, and so on (24). Of course, volunteers also sit on boards, filling an important leadership role (24).

New Brunswick is a bilingual and largely rural province, which presents unique challenges. The study *Serving New Brunswick* (which, it must be noted, only examines charitable organizations working in the human service sector of the province) found that Francophone organizations were "far more likely to be located outside of a major centre and therefore experience greater problems with geographical isolation in addition to possible linguistic barriers" (18).

<div align="center">*Issues in the Community Sector*</div>

Across Canada, the community sector is facing significant challenges, many of which stem from the fundamental issue of workload and funding. As governments cut back on 'social safety net' services they have traditionally offered, much of the work of providing these services is falling to the community sector (McTiernan 3, 5; New Brunswick *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* 23; Saunders 3). This shift in the "institutional division of labour" (Reed, 2), however, is not being accompanied by an increase in funding, respect or recognition.

 Despite its growing role in service-provision, the community sector is rarely 'invited to the table' with government in any meaningful sense; the community sector is welcomed to consultation after consultation, but is rarely involved in crafting the government policies it must function under or acknowledged for its expertise (New Brunswick, *Blueprint for Action 52)*. Core-funding from the public sector has also largely disappeared and been replaced by unstable, short-term, project-based funding (New Brunswick, *Blueprint for Action*, 15; New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women 12; McTiernan 9, 12; New Brunswick *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* 1, 13; Saunders 3). This funding-model means that organizations must chase funding, spending countless hours preparing applications that may never bring in money and pitching projects that are built around funding-appeal, not on community needs (New Brunswick, *Blueprint for Action* 32-33; Mailloux 13-14; New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women 12; New Brunswick *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* 2, 13).

These conditions greatly affect the employees of the community sector. As the sector takes on more responsibility (within the context of an increasingly complex society

with increasingly complex issues), so do its employees. Employees in this sector are expected to be well-educated and to perform a wide-variety of tasks in an environment in which employers have little ability to offer training or adequate compensation (McTiernan 9; New Brunswick, *Blueprint for Action* 21-23, 40; Mailloux 2, 13-14; New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women 15; Guy Levesque 9, 14; Hall, *Cornerstones 5;* New Brunswick *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* 16; Saunders 2). Long-term planning for better working conditions falls to the wayside as organizations struggle to simply subsist. Employees in front-line and leadership positions feel under-appreciated and powerless and many move on from the sector due to burnout or in search of better-compensation (McTiernan 9; New Brunswick, *Blueprint for Action* 21-24, 40-41, 45; New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women 1, 6, 15-16; HR Council for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector, "Money Matters" 1; HR Council for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector, *Toward a Labour Force Strategy* 31-32, 37; New Brunswick *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* 2, 14, 17, 27-29; Saunders 3).

The community sector also faces issues that are not related to government's downloading of responsibilities. One such issue is the racial and cultural homogeneity of its workforce. According to an article in the Vancouver Sun, the HR Council for the Non-profit Sector (which has launched an initiative to attempt to address this issue) has found that "the non-profit sector today is less diverse than the population at large" (Saunders). In Toward a Labour Force Strategy for Canada's Voluntary & Non-Profit Sector, it is reported that 89% of employees in the sector identify themselves as white/Caucasian (HR Council for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector 3). The Vancouver Sun also reports that the HR Council for the Non-profit Sector has found that "turnover rates for new immigrants and members of visible minorities in the first year of employment are higher than turnover rates for workers from other groups" (Saunders).

<center>*Women in the Community Sector*</center>

Across Canada, the sector's volunteer and staff force is dominated by women. A 2002 report, *Motivation at the Margins,* indicates that 50-75% of non-profit sector employees are women, 54% of all volunteers are women and in some areas women are 80-90% of staff/volunteers (Mailloux 1). A 2008 report, *Toward a Labour Force Strategy*, indicates

that 76.4% of employees in the sector are women (HR Council for the Voluntary and Non-Profit Sector 3). Specific to New Brunswick, the 2007 *Blueprint for Action* report indicates that within a sample 644 community sector groups in the province, women made up 1 627 full-time employees and 2 217 part-time employees, while 400 men were full-time employees and 351 were part-time employees (New Brunswick, Premier's Community Non-Profit Task Force 69). This would mean that, in this sample, women comprise 80% of full-time employees and 86% of part-time employees.

It is not difficult to link the inequitable treatment of the community sector to the fact that this sector is, in terms of human resources, dominated by women. When considering the "institutional division of labour" between the public, the private and the community sector, it is not surprising that the sector that provides the 'caring work' is also the sector that is largely powered by women and underpaid. This arrangement reflects how society has traditionally operated: with the expectation that women do the 'caring work' that is not considered prestigious and is poorly, if at all, compensated. The New Brunswick Advisory Council on the Status of Women suggested that the sector's low wages could even account for a portion of the wage gap between men and women in the province:

> Staff do not earn a lot of money – certainly not what they could make if they went to work for government. Many non-profit staff are women. Given the size of the non-profit sector in this province it is likely that the non-profit sector – with its relatively low wages – is a major contributor to the wage gap in this province (1).

It should be noted that several groups of women encounter barriers to their participation in the community sector. Immigrant women and women with disabilities were two groups that were mentioned in available literature as simultaneously facing unique barriers and unique advantages related to their participation in the sector. Regarding immigrant women, *Motivation at the Margins* reports that

> Institutional, social and cultural barriers render integration for immigrant women slow and difficult, or unattainable in some cases. Statistically, immigrant women are not well integrated, even though they often have

higher levels of education than Canadian-born women; their average earnings are less, and they are over-represented in lower status jobs and are often underemployed. (Mailloux 7)

The report goes on to suggest that the community sector can have a positive impact on the integration experience of immigrant women:

> A study on the integration process of immigrant women in urban centres in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and the organizational activities of immigrant women, assessed their significance in the integration process. Volunteering was a positive experience for these women, and was a strategy used to facilitate their integration. (7)

Women living with disabilities also have a unique relationship to the community sector:

> While there are no statistics for women with disabilities' involvement in the voluntary sector, it is important to note that the voluntary sector is more important to this community because people with disabilities are less likely to be formally employed, because of access barriers. There are extremely high poverty and unemployment rates within the disability community, making them more likely to volunteer in order to feel that they are contributing. Consequently, the participation rate of women with disabilities is very high. (Mailloux 7)

In order to participate in the community sector, women with disabilities must overcome obstacles related to accessibility and accommodation. *Motivation at the Margins* suggests that disability may, in fact, be of more concern than gender in the case of women with disabilities:

> Accessibility is the most important issue for women with disabilities, both as volunteers and staff. In many cases, disability overrides gender as a pressing concern for women with disabilities, having a greater impact then gender identity or discrimination... While other factors influence both men and women with disabilities as volunteers, women face additional barriers

when trying to so participate and contribute, having to deal with self-esteem more than men with disabilities and more than other women, as they feel extremely marginalized (Mailloux 11-12)

Women's Leadership in the Community Sector

Nationally, men are overrepresented at the leadership level in the community sector, given the smaller percentage of the sector's work force that they comprise.The HR Council for the Non-profit Sector notes:

> The nonprofit sector's labour force is predominantly female: three-quarters…In most areas of the sector, however, men occupy a dispropor-tionate number of senior management positions, while women are overrepresented in administrative and support-staff positions… A nota-ble exception to this trend is the Health and Social Services sector, where women are better represented in senior positions. ("Gender Mix" 1)

Motivation at the Margins also reports a deficit in women's leadership:

> While women have risen to leadership positions in the sector, they are still by and large under-represented in the upper levels of management structures, both as paid employees and volunteers, particularly for larg-er and more prestigious organizations. (Mailloux 17)

Even when women have ascended to the executive level, there is a gap between their earnings and those of their male peers. The HR Council for the Non-profit Sector also reports that "In 2006, the average compensation for a male senior executive was 43% higher than it would be for a female, while in 2010 this gap decreased slightly to 42%" ("Money Matters" 3).

There is very little information on women's leadership that is specific to New Bruns-wick. *Serving New Brunswick* does address the topic, but, again, it only considers chari-table organizations working in human services. The report supports the assertions of the HR Council for the Non-profit Sector, stating:

While the sector is powered by women, their level of influence appears to decrease proportionately to the status of the positions within an organization. In this analysis we are assuming a hierarchy within organizations (with staff and volunteers at the lower end of the scale, and managers and board members at the higher end)… the ratio of women to men is lower among leaders and board members than it is among volunteers and staff. (McTiernan 15-16)

Serving New Brunswick also reports that "Results from our survey also show that organizations with larger budgets tend to have (proportionately) fewer female board members than do organizations with small budgets…" *(McTiernan 15-16)*, echoing the observations made by the *Motivation at the Margins* report. *Serving New Brunswick* (16), breaks down their findings regarding human resources by gender:

Table 10. Gender Representation Among Volunteers, Staff, Leaders, and Board

Positions within an organization	% female	% male
Volunteers (median, n=279)	71	29
Staff (median, n=279)	91	9
Leaders (total responding leaders n=218)	69	31
Members of the board (median, n=279)	57	43

Table 11. Gender of Board in Relation to Budget

Annual budget	% male board members	% female board members
Less than $100, 000	35	65
$100, 000 to $499,000	42	58
$500,000 or more	48	52

N=223 f=4.85 p<.05

(16)

Serving New Brunswick, however, notes that this trend is not reproduced (in their data) when considering positions such as CEO's and Executive Directors. The report found "there were no significant differences between the relative budget size or staff size of organizations led by men and those led by women" (McTiernan 15-16). The report, however, does acknowledge that this particular finding differs from results in other studies.

Only one report, *Motivation at the Margins*, offers some suggestions as to why more women are not ascending to positions of leadership. The report suggests:

because they were women, they had to be indirect and non-confrontational in their approach to exercising influence. Many expressed a need or preference for a low-profile approach and often downplayed their own accomplishments. Internally, many of the women, even the most skilled and recognized, expressed a surprising amount of self-doubt and uncertainty with regards to the value of their work and their actual accomplishments. (Mailloux 8)

Women's underrepresentation in positions of leadership (as well as the struggles encountered by those women who are in positions of leadership) should not be solely, or even primarily, attributed to individual women's insecurities or internalized devaluation. Systemic barriers and discrimination relating to gender must be considered as well.

Glass Ceilings, Glass Escalators

Scholar Christin L. Williams suggests that while women entering traditionally male-dominated professions encounter a glass ceiling that limits their professional upward mobility, men who enter traditionally female-dominated professions are placed on a glass *escalator* that quickly elevates them to higher and better paying positions. Though Williams does not address the community sector specifically, her theory could be useful in attempting to understand why women are underrepresented in positions of leadership in a sector that they otherwise dominate as employees and volunteers.

She explains that "Men take their gender privilege with them when they enter predominantly female occupations; this translates into an advantage in spite of their numerical rarity" (263). In the female-dominated professions that her research considers (nurse, librarian, elementary school teacher, social worker), Williams observes that male employees are steered toward certain roles or areas of specialty that are viewed as more appropriate for men. These 'appropriate' roles often pull men away from the front-line and place them in positions of leadership. Williams explains, "Those specialties considered more legitimate practice areas for men also tend to be the most prestigious, better paying ones" (256).

Williams also notes that men in these female-dominated professions often have male supervisors (258). Williams points out that because men in non-traditional professions are valued for their difference, "they have an incentive to bond together and emphasize their distinctiveness from the female majority" (259). The result of this is that entry-level men in the non-traditional professions Williams studied are often mentored by men in higher-up positions and benefit from a sense of solidarity. The men Williams interviewed even stated that they were at no time discriminated against by their male supervisors, but that in some cases they could "report that their male bosses discriminated against the females in their professions" (259).

Williams also diverges from discussing ascension to positions of power and prestige to address why there are so few men in these professions to begin with. She suggests the reason is a mixture of societal prejudice regarding appropriate gender roles and poor compensation:

> ...there are additional factors besides societal prejudice contributing to men's underrepresentation in female-dominated professions. Most notably, those men I interviewed mentioned as a deterrent the fact that these professions are all underpaid relative to comparable "male" occupations, and several suggested that instituting a "comparable worth" policy might attract more men. (264)

Of course, "comparable worth policy" is a functional description of pay equity.[1]

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[1] Pay equity is also mentioned by name in the *Blueprint for Action* report (40-41) and the *Motivation at the Margins* report (2-3). Though the term pay *equity* is not used, the report *Employment in the Voluntary Sector* addresses the issue of pay parity explicitly (25-26).

Sector Interviews

For this report, interviews were conducted with 13 executive-level managers working in New Brunswick's community sector. The intention of these interviews was to a) fill in the gaps in information on women's leadership specific to New Brunswick's community sector b) better understand the obstacles women face in terms of exercising leadership in the community sector c) ascertain what a mentorship program would have to offer and how it would have to be designed in order to help bolster women's leadership in the sector.

In selecting individuals to interview, care was taken to assemble a diverse group of interviewees. Interviewees were primarily women (one man was interviewed) and were selected from across the province and from both official language communities. One Indigenous woman and one woman working with new-comers and immigrants were interviewed. Interviewees represented organizations that were francophone, anglophone and bilingual and hailed from different fields of the community sector and different regions of the province (rural and urban). Some of the organizations provided front-line service to the public while others served or brought together other smaller, service-delivering organizations. Organizations specializing in literacy, heritage, social justice, early childhood care and education, transitional housing, and services to new-comers were amongst those selected (no organizations that focused on sports/leisure were included).

Across the board, interviewees agreed that the work force of the community sector, both paid and volunteer, is dominated by women. Some fields (e.g. early childhood care/education, literacy) within the community sector are reported to be even more female-dominated than others, to the point that there are few, if any, male staff, volunteers or board members. Many interviewees stated that the sector is predominantly staffed by women because men will not work for the low pay the sector provides.

When asked specifically about leadership, in terms of women being able to ascend to the ranks of leadership in New Brunswick's community sector, many of those interviewed agreed that the 'glass escalator' theory could be applied to the community sector, excepting in the literacy and early child care/education fields. In those two fields,

interviewees explained that there simply were not any men to be moved up to leadership positions.

In multiple interviews, Directors explained that they there was no glass ceiling in the community sector, but that there was a limit to how high they could climb due to the limited number of leadership positions available. Multiple Directors said that they had risen as high as they could within their organization and that to continue to move up (and to receive better compensation) they would have to move to the public sector. These Directors also noted that their staff would have to move to other organizations in order to move into high positions, or else wait for the Executive Directors to move on.

When asked what, beyond lack of leadership opportunities, prevents women from assuming positions of leadership, a few responses were often repeated. Mention was made numerous times of women who had the potential to be leaders simply not believing they had the necessary skills or abilities for the job. In some cases, interviewees reported that they had observed women were willing to assume leadership roles until they realized the roles involved public speaking and/or dealing with the media. It was noted by multiple interviewees that volunteers and support staff (even leaders) cannot be expected to value themselves appropriately when their work and sector is so undervalued (i.e. underpaid).

One Executive Director, working in the field of early child care and education, said that she'd observed that front-line staff (early childhood educators, for instance), simply did not have extra time to dedicate to professional development activities relating to leadership. Staff work exhausting hours and find it challenging to fit any extra activities into their limited personal and family time on evenings and weekends. In the case where activities take place during work hours, staff may not want to attend for fear of their absence will burden their co-workers or disrupt the children's routine. In some cases, she said that support to increase the level of literacy and/or numeracy skills is needed.

Deborah Wybou, Managing Director of the New Brunswick Multicultural Council was able to speak more specifically to the experiences of immigrant women New Bruns-

wick's community sector. Wybou shared that immigrant women are more often found in support staff positions rather than in leadership roles. She explains that some New Brunswick workplaces appear to be nervous about hiring immigrants as they are unsure of their qualifications to do the work and sometimes presume they will require special accommodations. She also pointed out that, like all of us, immigrants sometimes bring culturally-based social customs into the workplace, where they may be judged according North American standards or there may be a reluctance to address them if they prove problematic.

An interview was conducted with Barbara Martin, owner and senior partner of Han Martin Associates, to discuss Aboriginal women's involvement and leadership in the community sector. Martin stressed that many of the struggles that the community sector is now facing (such as a lack of core funding) are issues that Aboriginal women's groups have always struggled with. She spoke of the community sector's continuing existence as a matter of survival for society, stressing that those who work in the field need to understand this and, therefore, be passionate and courageous.

When asked about including Aboriginal women in community-sector projects that are not specifically aimed at Aboriginal women, Martin was supportive. She encourages organizations, such as the Coalition, to include Aboriginal women in their work and counsels against being held back by fears of making mistakes or appearing to include 'token' Aboriginal women. She did, however, carve out the caveat that these programs must allow for intersectionality[2]; programs must recognize that Aboriginal women struggle against racism, colonialism and patriarchy and that they cannot neatly separate their identities to address only one system of oppression at a time.

When interviewees were asked about what they would want to see in a mentorship program, they answered with a mix of concrete suggestions regarding mentorship models to adopt and discussions of the values and skills that should be stressed in the program. Multiple interviewees spoke of the importance of having passion for the work, of having a strong work ethic, of being 100% invested and present. The broad

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[2] Theorist Crenshaw writes in her 1989 work "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics" that intersectionality may be defined as a theory to analyze how social and cultural categories intertwine. The relationships between gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, class and nationality are examined (Knudsen 61).

skill-set required of leaders in the community sector was also touched upon repeatedly. The Executive Directors of two Moncton-based organizations explained that their roles required a multitude of competencies, including the ability to manage human resources, to act as publicists and media liaisons, to develop programs, etc. Wybou echoed this assertion, stating that for a mentorship program to attract her as a mentor, it would have to offer concrete skill-sharing opportunities. She gave the example that she would like to have training in conflict-resolution and other human resources issues while offering to share her own skills in information technology, finance, or governance.

Interviewees also spoke frequently and at length on the need for women to develop more self-confidence relating to their leadership abilities, as well as self-care, time-management and advocacy skills. It is worth taking a moment to link these particular skills (self-confidence, self-care, time-management, and advocacy skills) to the issues that the community sector is currently facing, as these skills directly relate to coping with and/or addressing those issues and challenges. Specifically:

-As a result of the current shift in the 'institutional division of labour' and the lack of necessary funding, the sector and its employees are overworked and feel undervalued and unappreciated. They are doing more work with less money (and for inadequate compensation) while constantly worrying about securing future funding and job security. In such circumstances, burnout is a very real concern; this is likely why interviewees insisted that the mentorship program impart the importance and value of self-confidence, self-care and time management.

-Almost every interviewee brought up the issue of pay equity (though in some cases, they described pay equity without using that exact term). Staff in this field, particularly those in positions of leadership, are being asked to perform multiple jobs and to be well-educated for little pay (while the sector itself is being tasked with a tremendous amount of work with little accompanying financial support). The need for a significant change in how this sector and its employees are treated is likely why the need for advocacy skills was emphasized. Those working in the sector recognize this problem and want to change it,

but may not have the advocacy skills or the savvy to navigate the necessary political waters. For instance, The Executive Director with the Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick, one of the younger executives interviewed, said that she believes advocacy work regarding improved compensation and treatment for those in the sector to be important and necessary, but she needs to be trained in how to do it.

The need for leaders to be engaged in advocacy work aimed at improving treatment of the community sector and its employees was a recurrent theme. It was mentioned numerous times that while advocacy work is needed, many organizations are reluctant to engage in it for fear of offending funders and jeopardizing their already precarious and insufficient funding. Charities, which are only allowed to allocate a maximum of 10% of their resources to advocacy, may be uncertain as to what constitutes advocacy and, therefore, avoid engaging in any for fear of losing their charitable status with Revenue Canada. Seasoned Executive Directors also stressed that newer leaders needed to develop their political acuity, to be able to plan their advocacy efforts strategically, to be able to discern between worthy and unwinnable causes.

Many of the Directors described their management style as non-hierarchical (within reason), stating that they employ consensus-based decision making in their workplaces. Power is more evenly distributed, laid out in a horizontal model of power rather than a top-down, vertical version. Numerous Directors stated that they did this to empower their employees and because all of their organizational staff are leaders in their own way. Given this, it was not surprising when various Directors shared that they would enjoy participating in a mentorship program that was more horizontal in its structural division of power between mentors and mentorees. Directors were interested in participating in a mentorship program in which they could both mentor and be mentored themselves. These Directors recognized the importance of continuous learning and were interested in a program in which learn concrete skills, be it from other leaders or from future-leaders.

Conclusion

This research produces what may seem like an impossible quandary. Research reveals that women dominate the non-profit sector, but that they are underrepresented in positions of leadership and are, at all levels, inadequately compensated. Therefore, in order for women's leadership in the non-profit sector to advance, it is obvious that the sector itself needs to evolve. However, in order for the non-profit sector to evolve, its leadership and labour force, *women,* must lead the way and agitate for change—but women are underrepresented in positions of power, are fearful of engaging in advocacy, and are already overworked and exhausted.

This situation could be paralyzing. The difficulty of finding a concrete starting point for the work that needs to be done could derail efforts to address the situation. That, however, is not the lesson that should be taken from this research. The observation that should be taken is that all of the issues discussed within this report are connected. The lesson is that the situation of women's leadership in the non-profit sector cannot be addressed without addressing the situation of all women in the non-profit sector. In turn, the situation of women in the non-profit sector cannot be addressed without addressing the situation of the non-profit sector itself. In other words: the future of the non-profit sector is tied up in the future of the women who work within it.

Just as the issues are all connected, so are the solutions. Through a mentorship program built around skill-sharing, women leaders in the sector will not only educate each other, but share experiences. They will discover that their struggles are shared, they will grow solidarity, they will strategize for change. Bringing existing and future women leaders together *is* the concrete starting point from which the work can begin, and from which connections with other solutions will arise.

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List of Interviewees

Archibald, Clare (Executive Director, Moncton Headstart Inc.) and Debbie McInnis (Executive Director, United Way Moncton). Personal interview. 11 July, 2011.

Belanger, Jean-Luc (Executive Director, Association acadienne et francophone des aînées et aînés du Nouveau-Brunswick). Personal interview. 14 July, 2011.

Bozek, Natasha (Executive Director, New Brunswick Literacy Coalition). Personal interview. 13 July, 2011.

Foulem, Ghislaine (President, Société des acadiens et acadiennes du Nouveau-Brunswick). Personal interview. 11 July, 2011.

Gammon, Anne-Marie (Présidente, Société femmes équité atlantique). Personal interview. 12 July, 2011.

Landry, Fleurette (Executive Director, Early Childhood Stimulation Inc.). Personal Interview. 11 July, 2011.

LeBlanc, Sarah (Executive Director, Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick). Personal interview. 30 June, 2011.

Martin, Barbara (Owner/Senior Partner, Han Martin Associates). Personal interview. 11 July, 2011.

Matthews, Jackie (Vice-President, Fundy Region Transition House Board). Personal interview. 30 July, 2011.

Savoie, Elda (Professor of Social Work, Universite de Moncton). Personal interview. 11 July, 2011.

St. Pierre, Marjolaine (Executive Director, Early Childhood Care and Education New Brunswick). Personal Interview. 13 July, 2011.

Wybou, Deborah (Managing Director, New Brunswick Multicultural Council). Personal interview. 12 July, 2011.