



Women in Cities International

Annual Report Activities and Achievements 2006-2007

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About the organization

Women in Cities International is a non-profit organization based in Montreal whose mandate is to create, distribute, and exchange information world-wide regarding issues relating to the security of women and girls, gender equality, and the role of women in cities.

Its main objectives are to:

- Promote and organize the sharing of expertise and training activities, the use of good practices, and international seminars and conferences;
- Develop an international exchange network on women's participation in the development of cities and communities, and the inclusion of a gender-based approach to municipal planning and management;
- Promote local exchange of such topics within and between communities;
- Encourage exchange among diverse role-players (women's groups, non-governmental organizations, cities and municipalities, researchers, the private sector, the media, international agencies, etc) by producing and disseminating cutting-edge materials in user-friendly formats; and
- Advise local and national governments as well as international organizations on gender issues and the importance of mainstreaming gender in the management of cities and communities.

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Staff

MARISA CANUTO, coordinator

JOSÉE LAPLACE, communications officer

ANNE MICHAUD, expert consultant

SHARON GRAY, research assistant

Current projects

«Building Community-Based Partnerships for Local Action on Women's Safety»

The goal of this initiative was to increase the involvement of women's or community-based organizations in the public policy process. The aim of this pilot project was to promote women's safety in communities by providing tools with which to develop effective and sustainable partnerships between women's organizations and municipalities, or other public bodies such as youth organizations, schools, and health clinics. Emphasis is placed on engaging women in decision-making processes at the municipal level in addressing issues of violence against women.

Six pilot sites were chosen to test, implement, and evaluate a model for partnerships (Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Bellechasse, Quebec; Kuujuaq, Nunavik, Quebec; Peel, Ontario; Regina, Saskatchewan; and Williams Lake, British Columbia), and their feedback and experiences were incorporated into a guide and serve to illustrate the steps in creating and developing partnerships.

The guide 'Building Partnerships for Local Action on Women's Safety' provides a model for developing and sustaining effective partnerships between women's organizations and municipalities, or other public bodies (such as youth organizations, schools, and health clinics) in addressing issues of violence against women and women's safety. The guide describes the distinctive features of women's groups and of municipal governments, and emphasizes engaging women in decision-making processes. It has been translated from English to French, and five hundred copies have been printed in both languages. The guide is also available on our website, and a final report outlining the outcomes of the project was given to Status of Women Canada.

Capacity Building

A website was created to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences during the months of May and June 2006, before the Third World Urban Forum (WUF-III). The site allowed for the sharing of expertise between WUF-III participants and those who were unable to attend but who were none-the-less interested in the issues presented.

The site's content was made available in English, French and Spanish, and was based on the following themes:

- Develop a Model: Partnerships for Equality in Large Cities
- Sustainable Community: Government Partnerships on Gendered Violence
- Gender Mainstreaming and Local Governance
- Knowledge Networks for Women's Health and Safety

Information on WUF-III's programme and activities, contributions of invited speakers, and Women in Cities International's partners was also made available on this site.

From the site's statistics gathered on July 19, 2006, there were around 160 contributions to the website made by 195 registered participants, and 2 765 consultations of the messages made by various readers.

A report about this initiative, "Sharing our Knowledge for Action: An On-line Exchange Forum on Gender Equality in Cities", is available on our website in English, French, and Spanish.

WUF Participation

The Third World Urban Forum (WUF-III) was held in Vancouver, June 19-23, 2006, and reunited 164 international and national participants from community-based women's groups and organizations working on issues of urban safety. Women in Cities International had the task of securing and making arrangements for the participation of 13 people from Canada and 20 from countries around the world, as well as organizing 4 network sessions.

All told, the participation of 49 people (13 from Canada, 23 from developing countries, and 13 from other countries) was made possible by Women in Cities International through funding obtained from Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).

The HRSDC and the National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) provided funding for the 4 network sessions, which reviewed the following topics:

- Sustainable Community: Government Partnerships on Gendered Violence Prevention
- Developing a Template: Partnerships Models for Big Cities
- Gender Mainstreaming and Local Governance
- Knowledge Networks for Women's Health and Safety

Data gathered from evaluations of the workshops indicate that participants found the sessions satisfactory, and the information presented to be relevant to their own projects, though they were less inclined to think it useful to further their own work or to develop new collaborative relationships with other participants. None-the-less, participants reported being inspired by the content of the sessions and by the presenters, and stressed the importance of networking and sharing information.

Final reports regarding Women in Cities International's contribution to the WUF-III were submitted to HRSDC and the NCPC, and a summary of the networking events will be available on our website in August in English, French, and Spanish.

A report from Women in Cities International to the National Crime Prevention Centre on the lessons learned from the networking sessions at the World Urban Forum III was published. The report *'Moving from the Margins – Actions for Safer Cities for the Full Diversity of Women and Girls: Lessons for Increasing the Visibility of Crime Prevention at the Local Level'* is available on our website in English, French and Spanish.

Participation in conferences/seminars/meetings

Sharing Across Borders: the ICPC's Annual Crime Prevention Training Institute, presentation by C. Whitzman, "Violence Prevention and Urban Development", June 2006, Mont-Tremblant, Quebec, Canada. Available on line at: http://www.crime-prevention-intl.org/filebin/Generating%20Links%20for%20Website/Institute/Report_on_CPTI_-_August_30,_2006.pdf

Sixth Annual Colloquium on Crime Prevention "Communities in Action for Crime Prevention", presentation by C. Whitzman and T. Hayes, "The GLOVE Project: Gender, Local Governance, and Violence Prevention in Victoria Australia", September 2006, in Canberra, Australia.

Publications

ANDREW, C. (in press) Women in Cities: are these new spaces for the women's movement in Canada? in Sandra Grey and Marian Sawyer (eds), *Women's Movement Worldwide: Flourishing or in Abeyance?*

ANDREW, C. (2007) La gestion de la complexité urbaine: le rôle et l'influence des groupes en quête d'équité dans les grandes villes canadiennes, *Télescope*, pp. 60-67.

WHITZMAN, C. (in press) *The Handbook of Community Safety, Gender, and Violence Prevention*. London: Earthscan.

WHITZMAN, C. (in press) Gender, Fear of Crime and the Challenge of Creating Safer Space, *Environment and Planning A*.

WHITZMAN, C. (2007) The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Runner: long-term feminist planning initiatives in London, Toronto, Montreal, and Melbourne, *Planning Theory and Practice*, 8 (2), 203-225.

WOMEN IN CITIES INTERNATIONAL. (2007) Building Partnerships for Local Action on Women's Safety. Montréal: Women in Cities International

WOMEN IN CITIES INTERNATIONAL. (2007). Sharing our Knowledge for Action: An On-line Exchange Forum on Gender Equality in Cities. Montréal: Women in Cities International

WOMEN IN CITIES INTERNATIONAL. (2007). *Moving from the Margins – Actions for Safer Cities for the Full Diversity of Women and Girls: Lessons for Increasing the Visibility of Crime Prevention at the Local Level*. Montréal: Women in Cities International.