



MOVING FROM THE MARGINS –

Report from Women and Cities International to the National Crime Prevention Centre on lessons learned from the networking sessions organized by Women and Cities International at the World Urban Forum, Vancouver, June 19-23, 2006

ACTIONS FOR SAFER CITIES FOR THE FULL DIVERSITY OF WOMEN AND GIRLS: LESSONS FOR INCREASING THE VISIBILITY OF CRIME PREVENTION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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This report identifies actions that can be taken, and indeed have been taken, to create safer and more inclusive communities for the full diversity of women and girls. The report is based on the networking sessions organized by Women and Cities International at the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, June 19 to 23, 2006. There were four networking sessions:

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

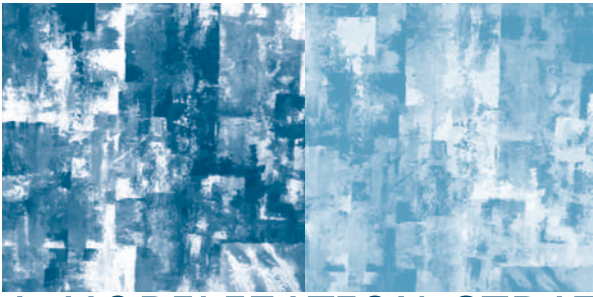
The report is based on the presentations, formal and informal, on questions raised and comments offered, on the full range of discussions – those in the networking sessions and those in the corridors of the World Urban Forum, in the corridors of the UBC residences, in the Interurban Gallery on the corner of Hastings and Carroll, in walks around Vancouver and in all the venues where the participants in the World Urban Forum talked, listened, worked and discussed how to achieve the goal of safe and inclusive communities for the full diversity of women and girls. Women and Cities International ensured, or helped to ensure that a wide range of participants were at the World Urban Forum. They were drawn from different networks and different continents, some of them talking specifically about crime prevention, some about techniques for mainstreaming gender equality, some about specific projects around the inclusion of Aboriginal or indigenous women, others looking at the inclusion of disabled women, others at that of young women and particularly of young women in poverty. The discussions were lively, the examples numerous and the learning palpable. This report records some of the many actions that were described that had been envisaged, planned and/or implemented in order to increase the safety and inclusion of women and girls in all their diversity.

This Report is also, therefore, about strategies for increasing the visibility of crime prevention activities at the local level. Crime prevention has often been understood from a fairly narrow perspective; in contrast, the strategies and actions described in this report situate crime prevention in a broad social development perspective. This reframing has come about as the result of focusing on promoting safer communities for the full diversity of women and girls. Focussing on doubly and triply marginalized women and girls has proven to be a successful route to creating safer communities for all.

Women and Cities International feels strongly that the actions described in this report have lessons for crime prevention in general. Gender equality can be seen as a mobilization strategy for communities, for governments, and for the organizations of civil society; it can be seen as an entry point to a wide variety of local policy arenas and it can also be seen as a fundamental element for building networks and establishing partnerships. In other words, gender sensitive approaches to crime prevention can be a way of making crime prevention activities more inclusive and more holistic at the local level.

The approach is gender sensitive and, at the same time, concerned with the intersections of gender and other dimensions of diversity. This was one of the major themes that ran across all the networking sessions – how to ensure that actions were sensitive to the ways in which gender intersects with race, poverty, Aboriginality, disability, age, language, immigration status, etc to contest conditions of marginality and vulnerability and therefore to identify approaches necessary for planning and implementing intervention strategies.

Our report is organized around four areas; gender, diversity, networks and partnerships. These are clearly not mutually exclusive categories but, by organizing them in this way, the multiple forms of action that emerge from a focus on gender can be clearly illustrated.



A MOBILIZATION STRATEGY

1

ENGAGEMENT OF THE POPULATION

One of the points that came up across the networking sessions, as well as in other sessions at the World Urban Forum is that gender-based actions can have a mobilizing effect at the level of the population. Creating safer communities for the full diversity of women and girls has cross-class and cross-region appeal. Violence against women, both in the private and public spheres, is increasingly understood to be something that societies should not accept. Campaigns and programs are developing across the world and their existence is the result of community mobilization led by women, but increasingly supported across the community. Representatives from Montréal spoke eloquently of the impact of the Polytechnique massacre on the understanding by the entire population of the extremely negative societal consequences of violence against women. Examples of the same phenomena came from all around the world. To cite only two of the many documents that were circulated at the networking sessions and that illustrate the world-wide concern, are the South American guide published by CISCSA: [Herramientas para la promoción de ciudades seguras desde la perspectiva de género](#) and the document coming from the Horn, East and Southern Africa: [Preventing Gender-based Violence](#). Seeing the elimination of violence against women as a central issue for crime prevention is a way of mobilizing the community around the goal of creating safer communities.

2

MOBILIZING THE ORGANIZATIONS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Many actions are based around the coordination of activities at the level of the organizations of civil society. One such example comes from the coordinated activities of the Peel Committee against Women Abuse (PCAWA) and the Peel Committee on Sexual Abuse (PCSA). Each organization is composed of approximately 25 agencies, service providers and individuals and another eight to ten supporting or associate members who work to coordinate responses on issues of violence against women (women abuse and sexual violence). The two groups work collaboratively on a number of issues, including a recent media awareness campaign.

These actions help to create a common direction for a large number of organizations and therefore help to shape community resources and community understanding in a coordinated direction.

Another example came from a presentation on Hanoi in the networking session on big cities, where women's organisations work at all of the levels of the political structure. This multi-level involvement allows for the effective mobilization of women's organizations in a range of sectors and on a variety of issues, from health and safety, to those of the management of markets.

3

SENIOR LEVEL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR LOCAL ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY

Our focus is local action, but many of the presentations underline the significance of senior level government support. One interesting example came from the Philippines. Quezon City has a variety of structures, programs and activities that address women's needs, including programs against violence located within the police stations. The impressive level of activity of the municipalities is a result, according to the person presenting the case study, of the inclusion of gender in the National Government machinery and the leverage that this has provided at the local level. This inclusion came about as a result of CIDA support of governance activities in the Philippines.

Bellechasse Women's Centre has received funds from the Québec government's program [Égalité pour décider](#), a program created to increase the number of women in local and regional decision-making. Here again, support for the program stems from the inclusion of gender equality as one of the aims of the Québec Government for regional development in Québec.

Many of the projects presented had received support from Status of Women Canada and many of the International projects had been supported by CIDA funding that had included dimensions of gender equality. These examples illustrate the importance of national machinery for gender equality that can support and encourage local action.



MAINSTREAMING VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACROSS MUNICIPAL POLICY FIELDS

One telling remark made by a municipal manager, about partnerships with community-based women's groups to create safer and more inclusive communities, had to do with identifying two stages of partnership development. The first involved the creation of awareness on the part of the municipality about the value of incorporating the perspective of the women's groups; the second was the realization that this perspective was relevant to a large number of issues that the municipality was dealing with. In other words, these perspectives could be useful across a wide variety of municipal policy fields. Over the course of the networking sessions, and the World Urban Forum in general, this understanding was illustrated in a wide variety of areas.

[1]

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Increasingly, links are being made between violence prevention, safe and inclusive communities and public health programs. Some exciting examples of the health/safety link at the networking sessions came from the Australian participants who represented a variety of health agencies and local governments. In part, this orientation has been influenced by the work of the World Health Organization on the health costs of violence against women, and in part it has been influenced by front-line health service workers and women's health centre activists who deal daily with the links between violence and health. The Victoria (Australia) initiative is a particularly interesting example of an action that links health, violence prevention and the creation of safe communities. The benefits of this link for violence prevention (and crime prevention) work are multiple: the priority given to health by the population and by governments and the resulting public resources allocated to this area; the public attention that stems from the importance accorded by the population to health issues; the possibilities of calculating the health costs of violence and therefore adding important quantitative measures to anti-violence advocacy; the possibilities accorded by reframing the issue in a positive way in terms of health and well-being; the linking to fields of practice with experience

in relating to communities and, often, to diverse communities. There are, nonetheless, some potential disadvantages to this link or things to avoid, such as the potential of medicalizing the question of violence against women and thus reducing it to an individual illness to be treated without attention to the collective dimension of power relations in society. The public health model brings a more social conception of health, but the medical model has such strength in our society that it does represent a potential disadvantage. However, from a crime prevention point of view, this orientation does identify new partners and new possibilities for framing the central importance of crime prevention through a social development perspective.

Another example of an action that links health and violence prevention is the guide produced by the Region of Peel Department of Health (with the collaboration of the Peel Committee against Women Abuse and the Peel Committee on Sexual Assault). The guide is designed to be used by doctors in the region, to teach them how to ask the right questions about violence to their women patients. We know that once questions are asked, the reporting of violence increases dramatically and we know that many doctors feel ill equipped to ask the right questions. The guide was produced after a long period of discussions with doctors and front-line workers in areas of health and violence prevention.

Another example stems from the work done by NNEWH – the National Network on Environment and Women's Health – and was illustrated clearly in the networking session organized by the Network. Presentations at the networking session linked violence against women and the creating of safer communities with the intersections of gender and disability, gender and immigrant status and gender and Aboriginality. In all the presentations, the health-safety linkages illustrated strategies for community awareness and mobilization, for intervention and, very particularly, for creating knowledge networks to bring together coalitions with the most up-to-date information and research leading to evidence-based actions.

2

PLANNING AND SAFETY

The South American network CISCOSA has produced a document (referred to earlier) that makes the links, in an extremely attractive format, between urban policies and planning interventions, and the creation of safer and more inclusive communities. This network is at the beginning of a new three-year UNIFEM-funded project that will build capacity in areas related to violence prevention policies and gender mainstreaming.

One of the tools most used to link safety and planning has been the safety audit. A Canadian invention, it has travelled across the world, coming back with new lessons learned, new approaches and new contexts. The World Urban Forum was full of examples – someone from South Africa who had been at the 1st International Conference on Women’s Safety in Montréal in 2002, reported on her use of safety audits in the context of South Africa. Participants from Cowichan Valley, British Columbia refined the safety audit for use in rural communities. Indeed, there was a networking session explicitly organized around the use of safety audits. One important message is that safety audits, to be successful, have to feed into the planning process. They are an effective tool used to stimulate discussions with local stakeholders about their feelings of insecurity and security in public spaces. But following the safety audit, decisions have to be made about solutions and this requires a planning process to concretize and prioritize solutions. Two examples of safety planning processes that were presented at the World Urban Forum are from Charlottetown, PEI and from Williams Lake, BC. In Charlottetown, the Mayor’s Purple Ribbon Committee on Violence against Women learned about safety audits from Cowichan Valley during the Women in Cities International Awards ceremony in 2004 and decided to use this tool in Charlottetown. A safety audit was done of a local park and the City is now integrating the results of this safety audit into its plans for renovating the park. In Williams Lake, the Women’s Contact Society had received a grant to create safe spaces for women and this had involved questionnaires to the general public on the safe and unsafe spaces in the community. This had led to a safety audit, again in a park, and here again, the results of the audit were being integrated into the City’s planning for improvements to the park.

Women’s safety audits work from the perspective outlined earlier; that creating safer spaces for women, and particularly doubly and triply marginalized women, creates safer spaces for everyone, if the identification of issues is followed by implementation of actions to address them.

In addition, women, in general, find it easier than men to express their feelings of insecurity and therefore can initiate discussions about the problematic features of a particular space. Experience shows that this approach produces an environment where men then feel comfortable to express their feelings of insecurity too and therefore leads to a better community development process.

One of the safety audit’s most attractive features is its flexibility – safety audits can be used in a wide variety of contexts to achieve particular objectives: the planning of new buildings (particularly large public buildings like hospitals); the planning of residential communities; evaluating transportation systems or universities and colleges or improving the use of parks (as previously described). Another major advantage of safety audits is that it is a very simple technique – all it takes is a group of people who use the space in question and an animator to lead the group discussion. More complex processes are possible, but not necessary. As mentioned earlier, the crucial question is the implementation of the recommendations – safety audit processes can fall apart because of the absence or inadequacy of the link to implementation within the appropriate municipal government structure. The initial process is flexible and community-oriented, but unless it is converted to implementation, little is gained and indeed, the process may lead to frustration on the part of the community.

3

CULTURAL APPROACHES TO SAFER COMMUNITIES

The use of cultural expression to convey messages about the importance of safe and inclusive communities is yet another approach that was made visible at WUF3 and this approach appeared to be particularly geared to reaching youth, who are seen to be more receptive to cultural modes of expression. In Bellechasse, the Women’s Centre has a project working with local high schools to develop Charters for municipalities free from violence. The particular form of development of the Charters depends on what the high school students want to do, within a broad focus on cultural modes of expression.

Another example came from Sao Paulo, Brazil, where a participants in a University-based project worked with female adolescents from the poorest neighbourhoods of Sao Paulo. The project combined citizenship education, information about violence prevention and economic development, through the adolescents learning to make traditional dolls to sell. In this case, culture is linked to the creation of a citizenship-based sense of entitlement to personal and community safety and to the creation of economic independence.

A final example of linking culture to safety comes from Montréal and uses cultural expression to raise the consciousness of the population with regard to issues of safety planning. Huge banners depicting areas of Montréal that are clearly unsafe were placed in publicly visible places to graphically, and aesthetically, make the point about the importance of thinking about the city from a safety point of view.

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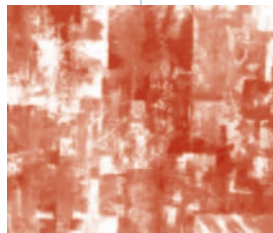
INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC WORKS

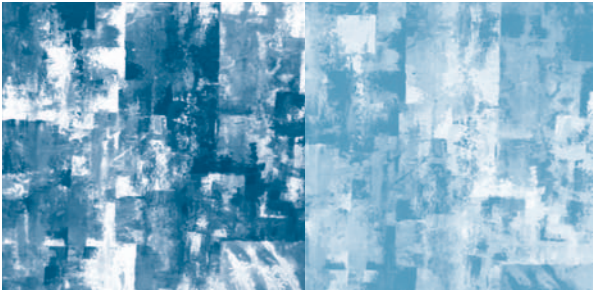
Another area of municipal activity where the preoccupation of community-based women's groups for safer communities supports municipal initiatives, is in the creation of safer places, be they specific buildings or safe public spaces. For example, the municipality of Kuujjuaq is planning a wellness centre where everyone in the community would be welcome, to participate in activities, to seek information

and counselling or to simply be in a safe place. The group of community-based women's groups and community agencies were planning the kind of programming that would be useful for the wellness centre, including material on violence prevention, equality of men and women, and so on.

In Williams Lake, the idea was to create safe spaces in the city, where people could go when experiencing situations that made them feel insecure. This initiative took place in collaboration with the municipality and therefore, it was seen as a part of building safe public spaces within a community that could feel safe and inclusive with a better quality of life.

We might also have included in this list, municipal policies relating to the inclusion of ethno-cultural diversity. However, we have chosen to highlight diversity as a category in and of itself.





Local governments across the world, as indeed governments at all levels, are facing the challenge of working across the intersections of diversity. Our focus on gender should not at all be seen as one that excludes other forms of diversity – quite the contrary! The whole question of the intersections of gender with, particularly, the ethno-cultural dimensions of diversity is a central focus.

One example comes from Regina and the work done by Women of the Dawn, an Aboriginal counselling service. As a result of their involvement with Women and Cities International, they are now planning to do a safety audit specifically linked to the national campaign around the missing Aboriginal woman. The representatives from Women of the Dawn learned about the safety audits from other participants in the Women and Cities International partnership project and realized that it could be used to good effect to highlight the issues of urban Aboriginal women, particularly as it links to the national campaign around these women.

Another action illustrating the intersections of gender and diversity is the creation of the ‘Conseil des montréalaises’, an advisory group to the City of Montréal created as a result of community pressure at the time of the Montréal Summit in September 2005. The membership of the Council is very broadly diverse, particularly in terms of the ethno-cultural groups represented in the Council. This allows the work of the Council to be more sensitive to the issues of the full diversity of women.

A project from the Region of Peel, produced by the Peel Committee on Sexual Assault and the Peel Committee against Women Abuse also clearly sensitive to diversity, was aimed at small children, their families and their child care educators. This project involved the production of a set of blocks aimed at violence prevention and it used diversity-sensitive visual representations on the blocks. This educational/pedagogical kit was carefully designed to relate to the population of the Region of Peel, which is approximately 50% foreign-born.



CONNECTING FOR BETTER KNOWLEDGE AND ACTION

The four networking sessions were in themselves experiences in developing and reinforcing networks. Contacts that began via e-mail became conversations and allowed much more, and much deeper, exchanges around specific projects, general perspectives, funding possibilities and priority areas for action. Examples of social learning and stories of previous examples came out in each of the workshops – South Africa, where examples of safety audits from the Montréal First International Conference on Women’s Safety, were taken back for domestic application, and Charlottetown, where knowledge of safety audits were learned from the Cowichan Valley group. Both were winners of the Women and Cities International Safety Awards, and representatives from both projects were at the Awards ceremony. WICI learned about the new UNIFEM funded project that CISCOSA is undertaking in three South American locations; Rosario (Argentina), Bogota (Columbia) and Santiago (Chile) and agreed to maintain and develop links between the two networks.

The concrete results of networking can be understood as exchanges around concrete projects, knowledge diffusion and mutual support.

[1]

EXCHANGES AROUND CONCRETE PROJECTS

The examples of the networking between Women and Cities International and CISCOSA about ways for WICI to participate in, learn from and add to the CISCOSA project has already been mentioned; clearly, it is a concrete example of the benefits of networking. Contacts had been established since before the Montréal Conference and WICI, as the organiser of the Montréal Conference, had participants at the CISCOSA-organized Second International Conference on Women’s Safety in Bogota, Columbia. Vancouver, and particularly the networking sessions, allowed representatives from the two networks the occasion to exchange documents and ideas, as well as continuing to get to know and understand each other. This kind of personal contact is necessary for networking to function across languages, cultures and physical distances.

Another concrete example of a network exchange was the conversations between representative of the Canadian projects that were at WUF and the Australian representatives from a research project on partnerships between municipal governments and community-based women’s groups around links between health, violence prevention and the creating of safe and inclusive communities. The principal researcher of the Australian project is part of Women and Cities International, and WUF offered a networking possibility for representatives from the Canadian projects to learn from and exchange with the Australians (and visa versa). The health and violence prevention/safety links were clearly interesting to several of the Canadian representatives, and much exchange of information and resources took place.

The chance for the Canadian participants involved in the WICI partnership project to discuss with one another and also to share experiences with others who were engaged in efforts to mainstream gender in municipal governments, in crime prevention projects, in diversity planning, etc., also illustrates the benefits of networking in terms of the concrete exchanges that it enables. Our experience at WUF also illustrates the value added of face- to-face networking, in addition to electronic communications. We have already given examples of concrete results stemming from this, such as Regina deciding to do safety audits or Williams Lake learning from the Peel project, with the intention of reproducing this project in Williams Lake.

Another type of exchange that benefited greatly from face-to-face networking has to do with future collaborative projects. For example, there were discussions about potential joint initiatives between Women and Cities International and Safer Cities, UN Habitat around the feasibility of organizing the Third International Conference on Women’s Safety in Asia. This kind of event requires the collaboration of multiple networks and it illustrates the benefits of face-to-face discussions. with multiple partners in play.

2

KNOWLEDGE DIFFUSION THROUGH NETWORKS

One very specific example of this is the Women and Environment Magazine. As well as being a first-class source of information about the full variety of subjects relating to women's equal access to space and resources, the magazine is really a project of networks and, of course, of dedicated individuals. Linked to Women Plan Toronto and to the Toronto Women's Call to Action, the latest issue was distributed at WUF (thanks to the financial support of Human Resources) and its content illustrates the networking links of Toronto Women's Call to Action, including to WICI. The material contained in Women and Environment reinforces the value of networks and allows for social learning across countries and cultures.

As a somewhat more general level, our networking sessions all gave rise to knowledge diffusion. All the participants felt that they had learned from the networking sessions and this in itself illustrates the knowledge diffusion function of networks.

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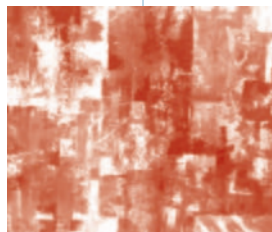
MUTUAL SUPPORT AND POLITICAL LEVERAGE

Another very concrete lesson to be learned from networks is the role they can play in both mutual support and political leverage. The local Ottawa project, A City for all Woman Initiative: Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes (CAWI-IVTF), makes use of its international linkages, through WICI and the networks of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) international work, in at

least two ways. These links are useful for its work with the City of Ottawa, both in representing civil society in partnership with local government when international projects come to Ottawa, but also in leveraging action from the municipal government by indicating the importance of following through on international commitments and projects. The links also play an important role with women from the community-based groups who are involved with CAWI-IVTF. The international networks allow them to feel part of larger global initiatives addressing questions of gender equality, violence prevention and the creation of safer and more inclusive communities and also, more concretely, these international networks can include the countries or regions of origin of the women and therefore valorize their linguistic and cultural skills.

On the other hand, the support of local projects is also important for national and/or international networks. The international program of the FCM needs to be able to call upon local municipalities and local civil society projects if it is to illustrate the benefits of partnerships with civil society for local governance. WICI is even more dependent on the support of local projects as its core membership is made up of people who also are involved at the local level. This local support is essential for leveraging funding as it is vital to show support from local organizations in securing funds for networking activities. Safer Cities UN Habitat is also involved in networking links with WICI and here again the support of WICI is useful to Safer Cities in indicating stakeholder support.

There are clearly links between the lessons to be gained from networking and those from partnerships. We have distinguished these two in order to clarify the more formal linkages identified with partnerships.



Numerous lessons can be learned about the types of concrete actions that have been taken through partnerships between local governments and community-based women's groups that work to create safer and more inclusive communities for the full diversity of women and girls, and therefore for all.

1

COMMUNITY PLANNING

The partnership between the Women's Contact Society and the municipality of Williams Lake has led to planning a safer and more inclusive community. The identification of places felt to be productive in this pursuit led to planning by the municipality for renovations to a central park.

2

TRAINING OF MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS

In Charlottetown, the Mayor's Purple Ribbon Committee has done extensive training on violence prevention in the municipality, starting with the municipal council and extending across the municipal work force.

In Ottawa, the City for all Women Initiative in partnership with the City of Ottawa is piloting a guide on integrating gender and diversity into the various phases of policy development and implementation. The guide is now being tested in Community and Protection Services, and this process has included training for municipal managers.

3

SERVICE COORDINATION

The work done in the Region of Peel by the Peel Committee against Women Abuse and the Peel Committee on Sexual Assault allows the coordination of a large number of programs and agencies involved in front-line intervention, including the Region of Peel Police and Health Departments. This ensures that an extremely important

sector of crime prevention activity is better coordinated and therefore able to provide more effective services in the Region of Peel.

4

SERVICE TO PARTICULARLY MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

The Regina Women of the Dawn Counselling Services works with Aboriginal women and particularly with those who have had experience with residential schools. As well as doing counselling work, it is linked to the Action for Neighbourhood Change program in central Regina and therefore to programs that involve the three levels of government in partnership with civil society. The full involvement of the Aboriginal population is obviously a crucial element for success in working in north central Regina.

5

DEVELOPING FACILITIES

In Kuujuaq, the partnership between the municipality and the community groups and agencies enhances the municipal planning for a wellness centre. The centre will add greatly to the safety, inclusiveness and health of the community. Community participation in planning the programming of the centre is crucial to getting strong community support. In turn, this community support is a crucial factor for ensuring the successful operation of the wellness centre.

6

RESEARCH

The Australian research project will investigate the ways in which partnerships between municipal governments and women's health agencies and projects build safer and more inclusive communities. This research is a partnership-based project, which therefore increases the likelihood that

the partners will implement the results of the research. However, the lessons from the research are not limited to the partners. Through dissemination of the research results, other communities will be able to learn how to effectively build partnerships between local government and community-based women's health initiatives.

In Ottawa, a research partnership between CAWI-IVTF and researchers from the University of Ottawa and Carleton University is studying mobility patterns to and within Ottawa, for Aboriginal and foreign-born populations. This research will allow a better understanding of the factors that motivate these populations to choose to live in various locations within Ottawa. These factors include: price, location of community facilities, public transportation, and feelings of security. Subsequently CAWI-IVTF is in a stronger position to push for improvement to City policies that would improve the lives of the Aboriginal and foreign-born populations and make Ottawa a safer and more inclusive community. As with the Australian research, the results of this research project will also be diffused more widely so that other researchers and other communities will learn about the factors that influence the mobility patterns of marginalized urban populations.

7

PUBLIC HEALTH

The Women's Centre in Bellechasse has done a lot of work with different groups of women (breast cancer survivors, young women, general population) linking health, self-esteem, information about violence prevention, information about community services and, in this way, has been working to create a more inclusive community. In the Region of Peel, the work done against violence also links with the public health and policing work of the regional government by creating awareness of the links between violence prevention and the areas of public health and policing. In this way it creates a broader definition of crime prevention. The Australian example, as has already been described, makes a direct link between women's health, violence prevention and the creating of safer and more inclusive communities.

8

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Creating greater public awareness of a broad definition of crime prevention and the importance of taking concrete action to achieve safer and more inclusive communities is

one of the ways to apply pressure on the local governments to act. Many of the community-municipal partnerships we have been describing have included important components of public education as part of their activity. In Charlottetown, the Mayor's Purple Ribbon Committee has, for example, put stickers with messages about the costs of domestic violence on all the municipal vehicles. Therefore the message about the costs of domestic violence, in personal, social, political and economic terms is extremely visible in Charlottetown. In Williams Lake, the Women's Contact Society makes regular presentations on the progress on their partnership with the city at meetings because of the media coverage of these meetings. The message of the work being done jointly by the Women's Contact Society and the municipal government in creating a safer and more inclusive community therefore reaches the community on a regular basis.

9

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

One of the important lessons from the partnerships being studied was that, in some cases, these partnerships had become elements in overall community development. One such example is Williams Lake, a community which is vitally concerned with its ability to diversify its economic base from its present strong concentration on natural resources. One of the key elements in this diversification is creating a strong sense of the quality of life in Williams Lake, of it being a good community for families and for bringing up children. The present high levels of forms of violence within the community are one of the dimensions that need to change and, within this aspect of community development, the partnership between the municipal council and the Women's Contact Society can be seen to be central to the future of Williams Lake.

10

THE LESSONS OF PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships between municipal governments and community-based women's groups illustrate the point made earlier that work on violence prevention can lead to action broadly across municipal fields of action. It can therefore 'main-stream' crime prevention from a social development perspective across a broad range of sectors of municipal activity and create a more widespread and visible set of activities that are seen as linked through their impact on the creation of safer and more inclusive communities for the full diversity of women and girls and, therefore, for all.



CONCLUSION

The four networking sessions organized by Women in Cities International within the overall activities of the World Urban Forum were an important occasion to take stock, but also to better understand and better appreciate the ways in which the activities of groups and communities across the world are helping to create safer and more inclusive communities. The heightened awareness that necessarily comes out of such sessions allowed reflection on the links between different types of activities, in different cultural, linguistic,

political, social and economic contexts. This report is one expression of this reflection, of trying to draw out the lessons learned in terms of how to create greater visibility and greater action for crime prevention through social development, through the activities of community-based women's groups, through their networks, their partnerships and their dedication to the creation of safer and more inclusive communities for the full diversity of women and girls and therefore for all.