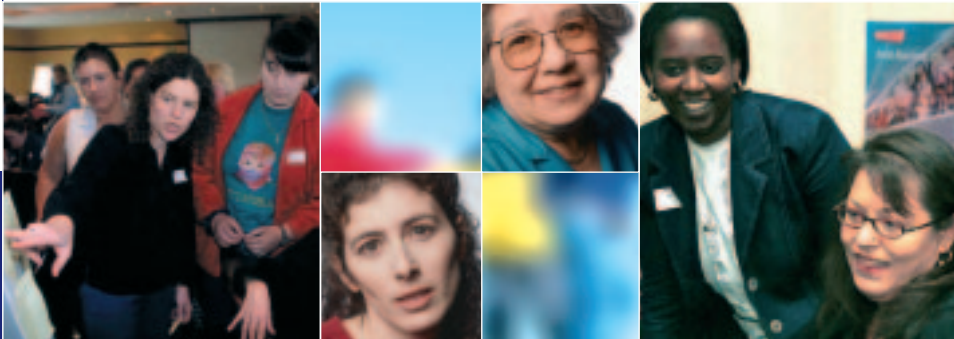




National Women's
Council of Ireland

Comhairle Náisiúnta
na mBan in Éirinn

Annual Report 2002



“making a real
difference”

National Women's Council of Ireland Annual Report 2002

About the NWCI – OUR MISSION

Working as the national representative organisation of women in Ireland, our mission is to achieve women's equality, empowering women to work together, whilst recognising and mobilising difference, in order to remove structural, political, economic, social/cultural and affective inequalities.

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Registered Office

The NWCI, 16-20 Cumberland Street South, Dublin 2.

The NWCI – who we are and what we do

The National Women's Council of Ireland, Comhairle Náisiúnta na mBan in Éirinn, is the national representative organisation for women and women's groups in Ireland. We are working to make Ireland a better place for women; to create a society where women participate equally in all aspects of social, cultural, economic and political life.

Founded in 1973 as the Council for the Status of Women, the role of the NWCI has expanded and changed over the last 29 years. The NWCI uses its role as a nongovernmental organisation to address many complex and often controversial issues affecting women - at local, regional, national and international levels. A member of the Community and Voluntary Pillar, appointed by government to participate in Social Partnership negotiations of Programmes for Government, the NWCI is also committed to working with its affiliates to increase their capacity to effect emancipatory social change for women. We provide an information service, promote policies on women's issues and organise projects, events and campaigns.

The organisation currently has 160 affiliated members, who comprise women's groups, women's sections or committees of larger national organisations such as trade unions, political parties and organisations where women comprise a majority of members. We represent well over 300,000 women in Ireland.

Structures

The NWCI is a membership organisation whose affiliates give their mandate for our work at Annual General Meetings. Each affiliated organisation has one vote at the AGM, where motions submitted by affiliates are debated and voted on.

The Executive Board is a voluntary committee, elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. Each voluntary member of the Board is elected to two years on the Board; and the Membership also elects the Chairwoman of the Board. The role of the Board is to ensure good governance and to oversee the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan.

The NWCI holds quarterly Panel meetings for its affiliates, providing opportunities for affiliates to network, exchange information with each other, as well as receive

information from the NWCI and participate in the development of NWCI policies.

Staff

The NWCI employs a professional staff of fifteen people, organised into five teams overseen by the Director: Policy, Projects, Communications, Finance and Office Administration.

During 2002, we bade farewell to:

Emma Calvert
Angela Ramsbottom
Maeve Healy
Carol Baxter
Anne O'Donnell

And we welcomed to the staff team:

Helen Farrell
Elaine Mullen
Bridget O'Sullivan



The Executive Board

Directors

Gráinne Healy
(Chairwoman)
Mary Kelly
(Deputy Chairwoman)
Mary Allen
Frances Byrne

Philomena Harrington
Deirdre Healy
Tess Murphy
(missing from photo:
Mary Leahy and
Rhona McSweeney)

“making a real difference”

Foreword

2002 was a year in which the staff, Board and affiliates of NWCI engaged in both reflection and activism to meet the challenges facing women in Ireland and globally.



The work of NWCI has become more focused and linked as we develop our understanding of the intersectionality of women's oppression – how class, race, ability, sexual orientation, ethnic origin and age, amongst other factors, intersect to undermine and trap women into situations where they are unable to exercise their economic, affective, cultural or political rights.

Having the clear framework of analysis contained in our strategic plan allows us to make the connections in our work so that we can see how our anti-poverty work of *In from the Margins* is linked to our anti-racism work. We can see how absence of legislation on reproductive matters denies women their full human rights and how so much of women's exclusion from full participation in society is connected to our absence in significant numbers from almost all decision making arenas.

This year, NWCI made a significant contribution and provided campaigns and commentary on women in decision making through our International Women's Day seminar presenting research on the absence of women in local development and regional and national politics. The pressure and debate continued at the Annual Conference where the NWCI photographic exhibition 'Put More Women in the Picture' and further research was launched. Without parity democracy where women and men share and

exercise political power with equality, democracy is incomplete. NWCI is committed to working with women, political parties and decision-making structures at all levels to see a significant increase of some 30% of women in those structures. We are also committed to changing the political structures which exclude so many from engagement and representation.

This focus at local and national level was complimented by our work at EU and UN

level where important policy work on the future of Europe focused on the absence of women from the debate, while violence against women, increasingly a persistent barrier to women's equality was also prioritised through the launch of the national observatory on violence against women and its links to the EWL Observatory. With one in four women EU wide experiencing violence at the hands of a male partner, violence against women is having major negative impacts on women's lives – the forms seem to be multiplying and increasing in both severity and complexity. Trafficking and prostitution of women, a modern form of slavery is flooding Europe. Despite an increase in the incidence of rape and sexual assault, we are witnessing a decrease in the number of convictions of perpetrators for these crimes. Only by globally working together on these issues can we hope to see their demise.

Finally, I want to thank the Director of NWCI and her team who have worked so hard in 2002 with the Board and our affiliates to make a difference to women's lives in Ireland and globally.

Grainne Healy, Chairwoman of NWCI

Overview

2002 has been a year of transition for the NWCI, moving towards the implementation of the new Strategic Plan 2002 - 2005.

During this period of change, the organisation has continued to deliver and develop its information services, respond to queries, organise events, produce publications, and provide technical support to projects. We have acted as the representative voice of women in Social Partnership, consulted with our members on controversial issues and been an advocate for social change.

Our information services have been developed and expanded over the year by Helen Farrell, who has responded to enquiries from staff, affiliates, the general public and students. Feedback from users of our daily email service to affiliates has affirmed its usefulness in highlighting media stories concerning women's equality that otherwise might be missed. During the year, the web site has been reviewed, revised and expanded, and by the end of the year was being updated on a daily basis.

Our events this year include International Women's Day and the Annual Conference, both organised by Anne O'Donnell the Communications Manager who oversaw the popular 'Putting More Women in the Picture' Exhibition and accompanying publication. Womenzone, the NWCI newsletter, appeared 3 times during the year, keeping our affiliates informed of our work, as well as the work of other affiliate groups, reflecting the local, national and the international context of promoting women's equality. Press releases were issued during the year on a wide range of issues, maintaining the NWCI public profile.

Margaret Martin, the Projects Manager, has continued to oversee the project activity of the NWCI that includes both the Education for Equality Initiative (EEI) funded by the Department of Education and ZEST funded by ZONTA International. Annie Dillon has provided the technical support for the EEI during the year, responding to the range of needs of 18 groups at different levels of development; while Margaret has provided support to the 8 women's education and training projects grant aided by ZEST.



Our policy work during 2002 has included work on the National Plan for Women and involvement in the new round of National Negotiations for the next programme for government, as well as commissioned research in a number of areas: the individualisation of the social welfare system, women returners and women's accommodation needs. The policy team also carried out research in house, overseen by Carol Baxter the Policy Manager, on women and decision-making that resulted in 'Jobs for the Boys' and 'Put More

Women in the Picture'. The In From the Margin Project (funded under the NDP Equality for Women Measure), co-ordinated by Anne Brennan and supported by Policy Analysts Orla O'Connor and Maeve Healy, has successfully addressed the interests and needs of marginalised groups of women, attracting large numbers of participants to seminars on poverty and anti-racism in Limerick and Dublin. The Policy Team also developed and provided expertise to our affiliates and policy makers on employment issues and violence against women.

The NWCI has been involved on the management committees of 3 other projects funded under the Equality for Women Measure: the Women's Human Rights Project; the Aontas, Meitheal and CAN Community Development Consultancy Course; and the POWER Partnership Women's Political Development Programme.

The work of the organisation is underpinned by the less visible but crucial work of the Finance and Administration Teams. Bridget O'Sullivan replaced Angela Ramsbottom as Finance Manager during 2002 with Ann Kinsella providing the day-to-day administration of finances. By the end of 2002 a new cost centred budgeting system had been introduced. The Administration team, Elaine Mullen, Imelda Brown and Gertrude Hoey support the organisational teams, maintaining our IT systems, as well as overseeing the membership database and responding to the public.

Internal management mechanisms provide all staff with support and supervision on a monthly basis, staff meetings are held fortnightly, while senior management and operational meetings take place monthly.

Joanna McMinn, Director

A review of developments and activities

Strategic Plan 2002–2005

During 2002, the NWCi began to roll out its new Strategic Plan

Underpinning the NWCi Strategy is an inclusive equality framework, with four spheres – Affective, Social/Cultural, Economic and Political Equality – each with its own rights-based goal.

EQUALITY SPHERES

(RESPECT)

Affective Equality:

the right to love, care and solidarity

(REDISTRIBUTION)

Economic Equality:

the right to a fair share of our society's resources

(RECOGNITION)

Social and Cultural Equality:

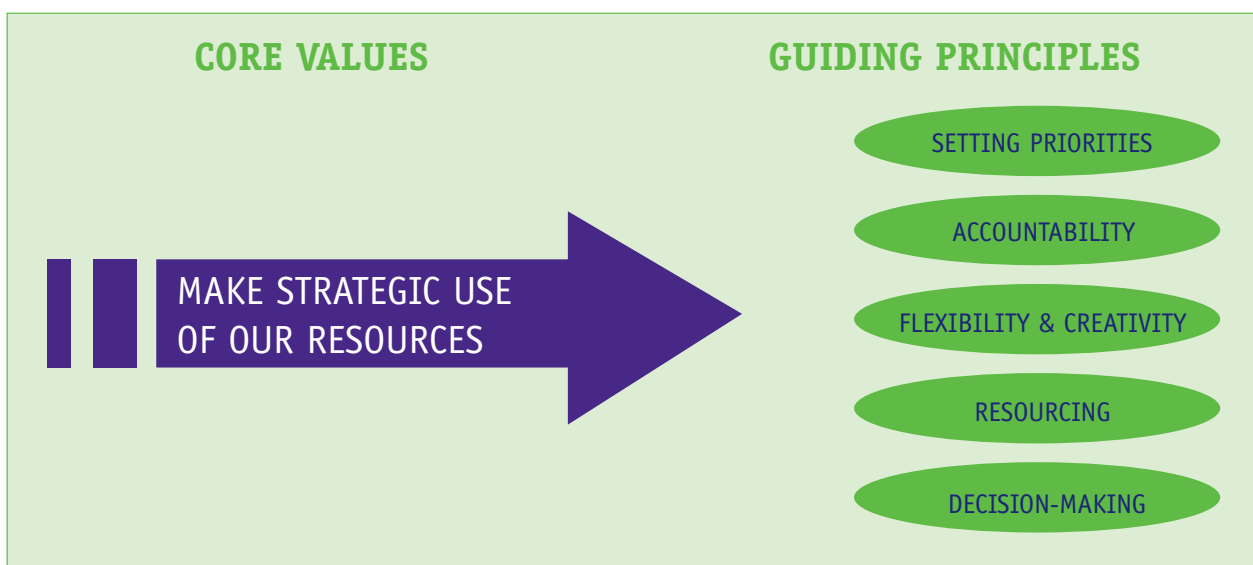
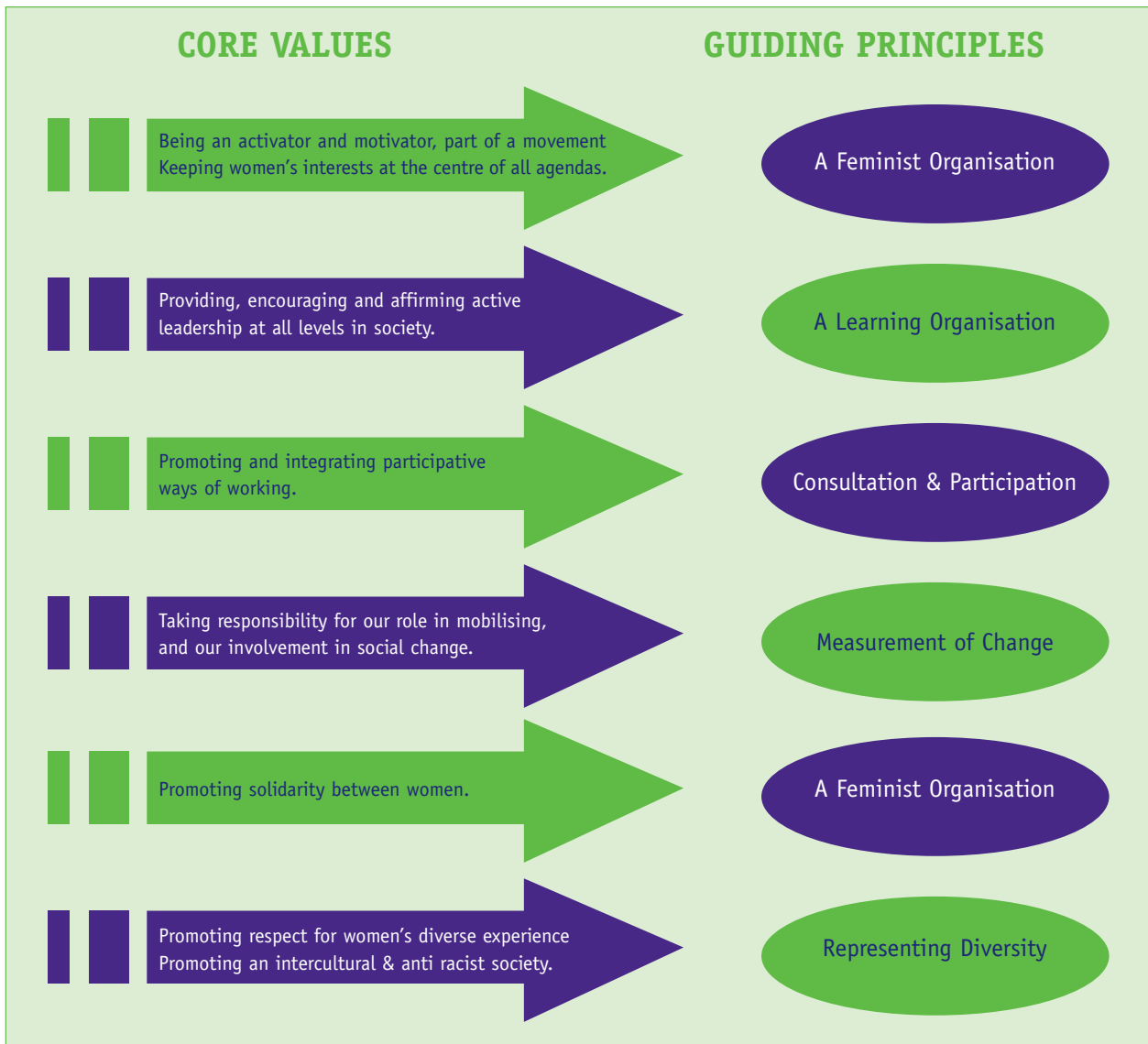
the right of everyone to autonomy
and personal freedom

(REPRESENTATION & EMPOWERMENT)

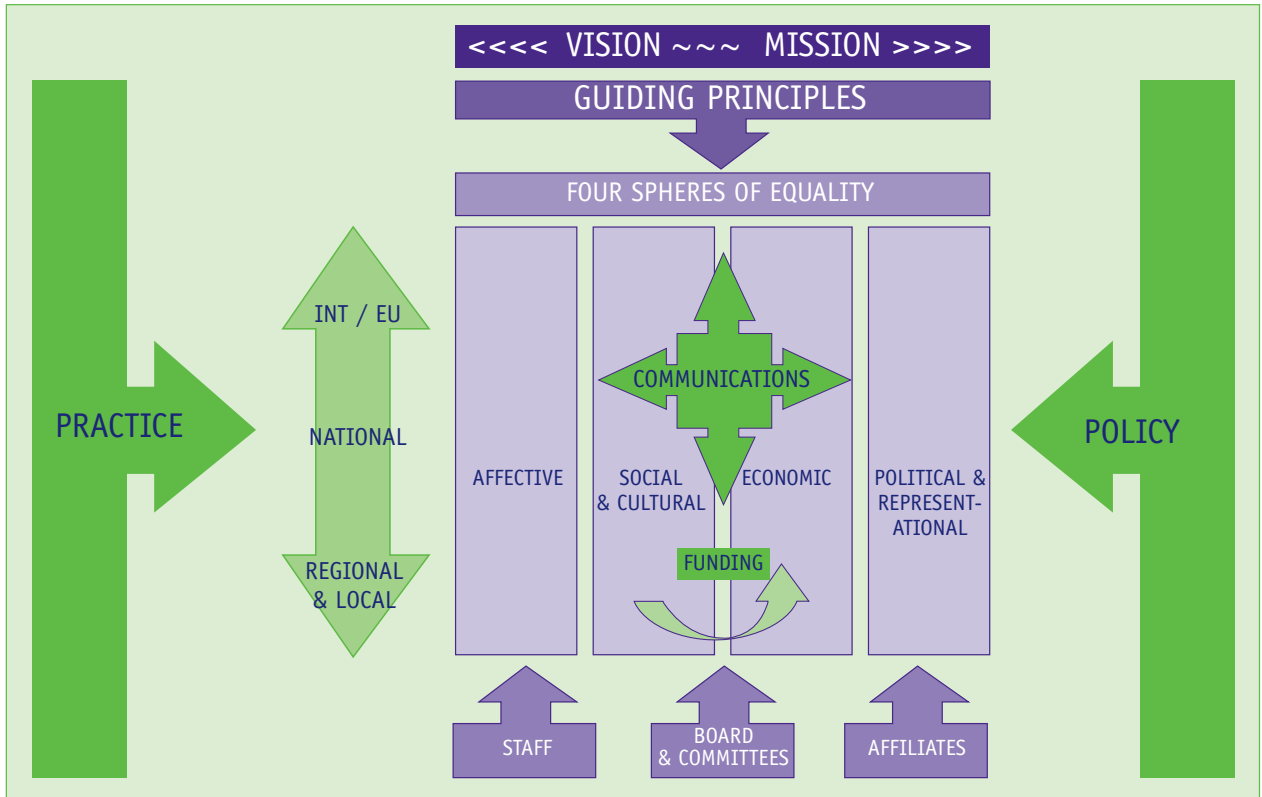
Political Equality:

the right to the protection of human
and political rights

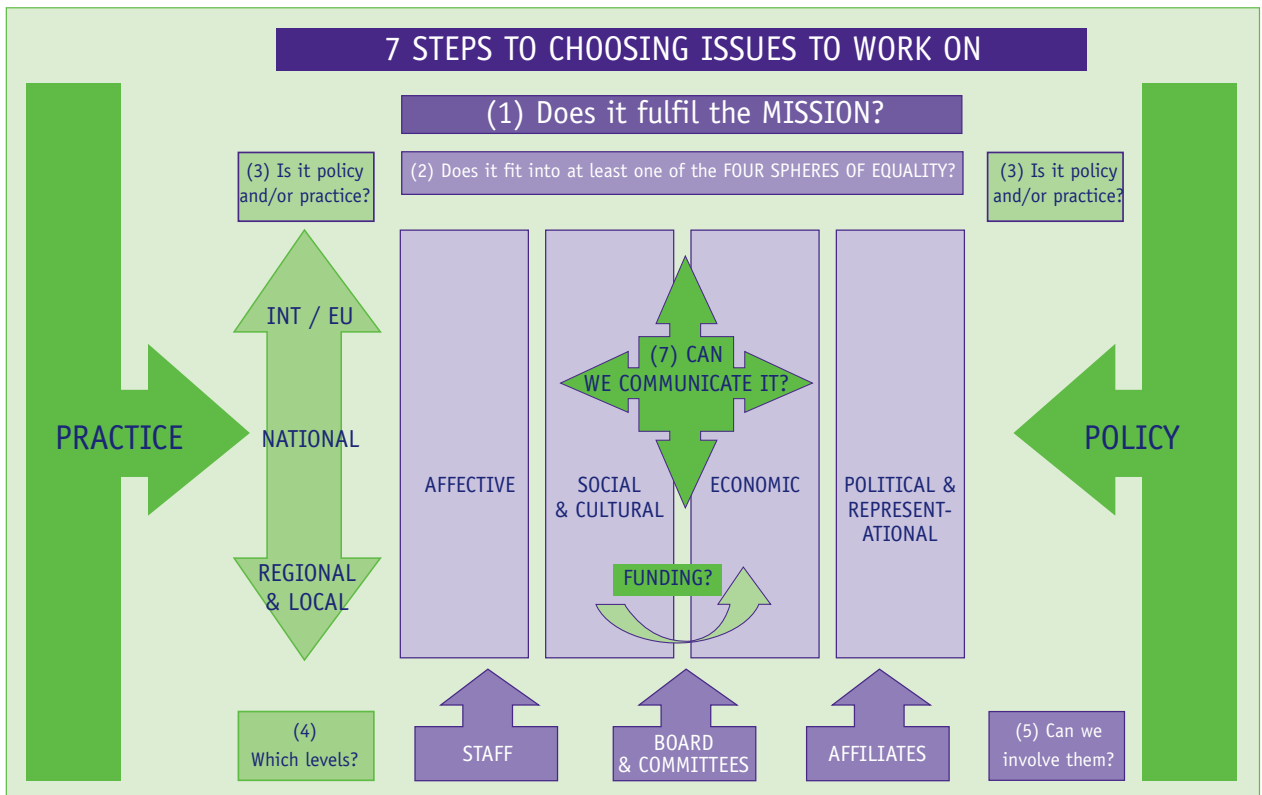
We are committed to carrying out our work according to certain values (that will guide the organisation and will form the basis upon which the Council decides how best to allocate its resources) and principles (the way that our strategic priorities are addressed by the organisation), which are set out below.



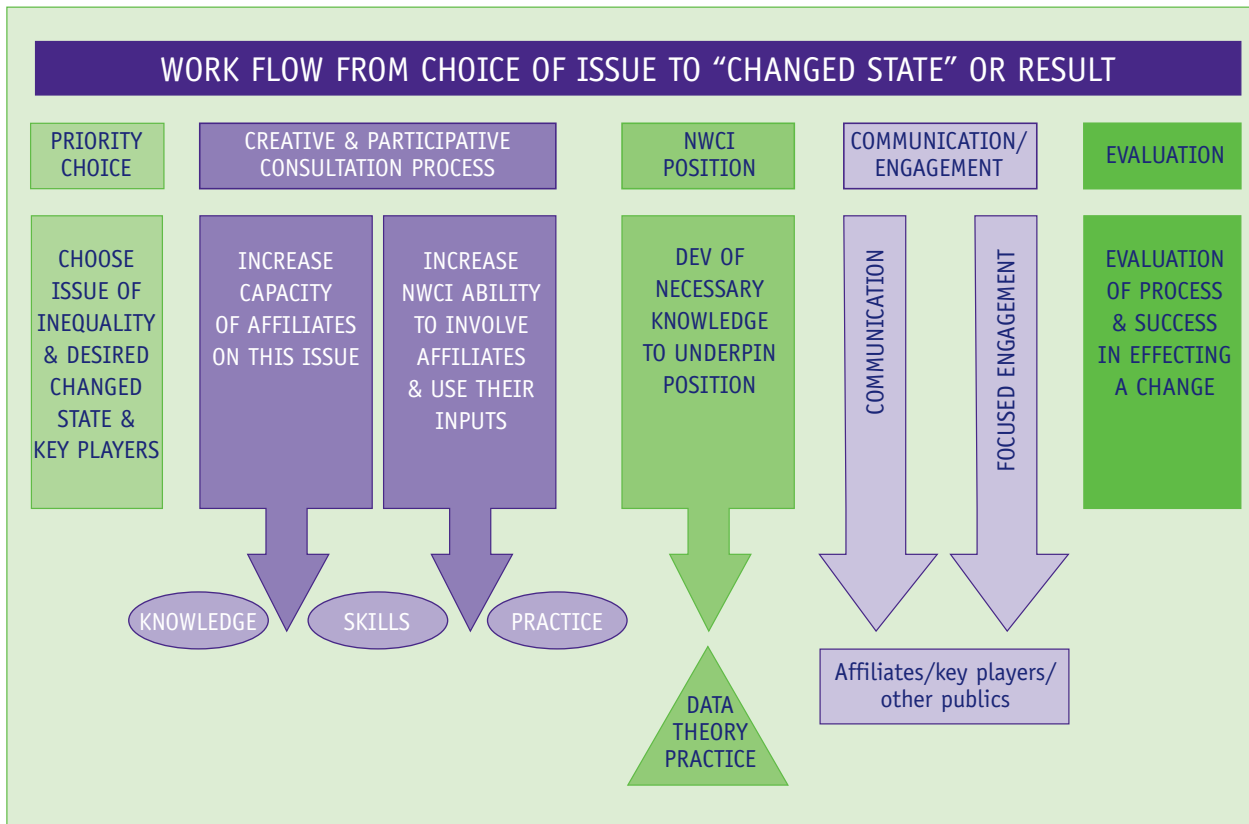
The diagram below illustrates what the overall Strategic Plan will look like. The issues that we work on will fall within one (or more) of the Equality Spheres. Our work on these issues will involve staff, Board and Affiliates; it will be informed by both policy and practice, and will take place at local/regional, national (including cross border), and EU/international levels.



Clearly, there are many issues that we could be working on (every issue is a woman's issue, they say), but we can't do everything and, if we try, we'll do nothing well. So, in order to prioritise issues, we will ask the questions set out below.



Once an issue has been selected as a priority, then we will follow through on it as illustrated by the work flow chart below.



2002 has been a year of transition to the new Strategic Plan, and our priorities for 2002 were as follows:

PRIORITIES FOR 2002

- Increasing the presence of women in decision-making arenas;
- Highlighting the value of (unpaid) caring work;
- Engagement with diverse women’s groups experiencing disadvantage/discrimination;
- Influencing outcomes of national negotiations to ensure fair share of society’s resources for women;
- Providing a support structure to education and training projects for marginalised groups;
- Devising and implementing a communications strategy to deliver our priorities;
- Making strategic use of our resources and managing organisational change.

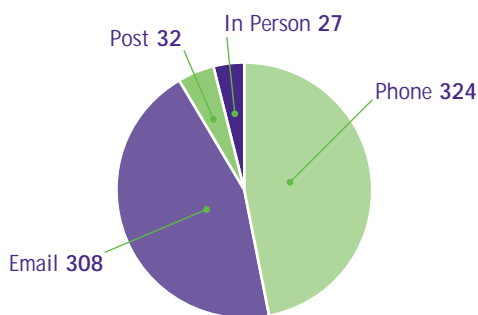
Information

During 2002 the Information service concentrated on the following key areas:

Information Services:

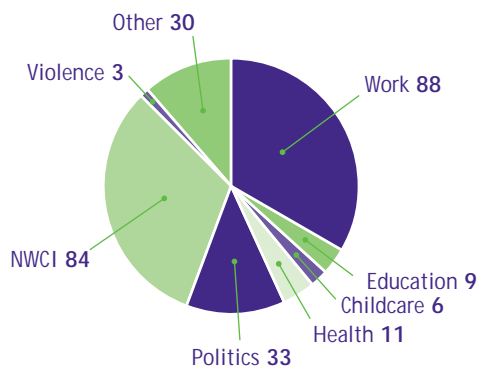
- Provision of a tri-weekly e-mail newsletter to staff, affiliates, organisations & individuals.
- Regular management and updating of the NWCI website.
- Managing & responding to information queries by phone, e-mail, fax, post and in person – see Fig.1 below.
- Organised & staffed Information Tables at NWCI events in 2002.
- Dissemination of media coverage and selected subject areas to staff.

Figure 1: Received by



As you can see from Fig. 1, the total number of information queries received in 2002 was 691, with the majority (324) received by phone, closely followed by e-mail. The volume of queries looks set to increase considerably in 2003.

Figure 2: Topic



The most popular query topic was on the work of the NWCI (see Fig.2), with paid work, politics, health, and education the next most popular topics.

Library Services

- Periodicals holdings reorganised.
- Non-NWCI collection weeded for out of date materials.
- Cataloguing of items in the collection.
- Book ordering & dissemination to staff.
- Work on a new classification scheme for both the NWCI collection & general collection begun.

Website Development

The website has been updated both extensively and regularly which has resulted in a steady increase in users throughout 2002. Data regarding website usage is only available from April 2002, but usage increased during the year with a peak in November 2002, due to the interest in the launch of **Jobs for the Boys**. The most popular web pages are "What's Up and What's On", "Who We Are" and "Useful Links". Work commenced in late 2002 on planning a redesign and improvement of the website. This work will be implemented in 2003. The aim will be to bring the website in line with National Disability Authority guidelines for accessibility, as well as improving the layout and speed of download.

For more information please contact Helen Farrell, information officer (helenf@nwci.ie)

Events and Exhibition

NWCI Panel Meetings

February

Consultation on the Referendum on the Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy Bill

Consultation on the National Plan for Women

June

Consultation on the National Action Plan against Racism

Consultation on National Negotiations for a new Programme for Government

September

Discussion of NWCI research on a model of women's social welfare and NWCI policy document on women's unpaid caring work

December

Open house in the NWCI offices

International Women's Day March

The NWCI and Women In Local Development (WILD) jointly hosted the 2002 International Women's Day event, which focused on the under-representation of women in local and national politics and launched two research reports:

- *Áit ag an mBord - Representation of Women in Decision-Making Structures for Local Development in Ireland* (based on research commissioned by the Women in Local Development and carried out by WERRC) and
- *Politics Needs More Women - What the Irish Political System Must Do* (based on research carried out by the NWCI).

There was a very lively and heated debate between representatives of WILD, the NWCI and leaders of all the main political parties, chaired by Olivia O'Leary, seeking specific commitments from the politicians about how each party intends to increase the representation of women in political life.

Annual General Meeting May

The 2002 AGM was held in the Gresham Hotel and proved to be a lively and participatory event. There was a substantial increase in the number of motions for debate

(18 in total), which reflected how active the NWCI affiliates are in putting forward the issues and concerns of their organisations.

Launch of Survivors of Symphiotomy self help group May

Survivors of Symphiotomy (SOS) is a group of women who approached the NWCI for a meeting space to assist them in establishing a self-help group for women on whom Symphiotomy operations were performed during the 1950s, 60s and 70s. (Symphiotomy involved sawing through the pelvis during childbirth, so it opened like a hinge. Many of the women have suffered lifelong incontinence, difficulties in walking and other physical and psychological effects from the operation). Almost none of the women had been consulted before the performance of the Symphiotomy and none had been asked for their consent. At the launch, the group declared its determination to explore the legal and compensation routes for the pain and suffering experienced by the women.

In From the Margin

2002 was the first year of activity for the new NWCI project *In From the Margin* with two seminars on the themes of poverty and anti-racism organised in different parts of the country. *In From the Margin* (IFM) is a project for local women's organisation and community groups working with women experiencing disadvantage. *In From the Margin* is about Women Creating Change and aims to support locally-based women's groups to make their voices in the areas of Anti-Racism, Poverty and Health. Interculturalism and the participation of women



"Poverty is about people – involving people experiencing poverty in solution finding".

with disabilities are also central to the work of the project.

Poverty Seminar - Creating Change to End Women's Poverty! April

This poverty seminar involved over 200 women from 60 community organisations in the South who came together to talk, learn and plan action around women's poverty and the issues involved. Women in these workshops identified discrimination as a key issue that restricts women's access to accommodation, education, health services and employment.

Anti- Racism Seminar - Women Together Celebrating Diversity - Challenging Racism! September

The seminar was a great success and brought together over 125 women from 55 community groups, anti-racism organisations and representatives of minority ethnic women's groups in Dublin. The seminar explored the issues of racism and the media, accommodation, health, education and art for action on racism. The workshops all produced information on the issues confronting women, what needs to change and how can we work together to achieve this change with each group declaring action statements at the close of the conference.



All IFM events are co-organised by the NWCI with a focus group of women from local women's and community organisations who meet before each seminar, to help shape the content and methodology of the event, with the aim of making it more participatory and relevant to work being done locally. Thank you to all the women who helped make *In from the Margin* a success in 2002!

In 2003 the project will run 5 seminars which will lead to a final conference and three publications in the autumn of 2004.

If you are interested in getting involved in *In From the Margin* or would like copies of the seminar reports please contact the Project at ifm@nwci.ie.

In From the Margin is funded by the Equality for Women measure of the Regional Operational Programmes of the National Development Plan, 2000-2006.

Annual Conference November

The highlight of the Conference was the launch of the NWCI photographic exhibition, **Put More Women in the Picture**, and its accompanying publication, which illustrate all too clearly the fact that men still hold most of the levers of power in this country. We also launched our Research Report **Irish Politics: Jobs for the Boys**, which identifies some of the changes needed to change that situation, based on research into decision making in France, the Scandinavian countries and Belgium, where actions undertaken by Governments and political parties were critical in raising the percentage of women, particularly in national politics.

The keynote speakers were Marie Wilson, President of the Ms. Foundation for Women and the White House Project and Liz McManus, Deputy Leader of the Labour Party.

The first NWCI 'Make a Difference Award' was awarded to Kathleen Joyce who was nominated by Pavee Point for her work on the National Traveller Health Advisory Committee.

Conference workshops identified actions needed to inform a five-year strategy to achieve a 30% representation of women in politics and decision-making in key sites. Each workshop produced a prioritised list of actions to overcome the current barriers that prevent women moving into decision-making positions, to inform the NWCI strategy over the next three to five years to increase women's participation in politics and decision-making.

The Exhibition – *Put more women in the picture*

This remarkable exhibition, sub-titled 'a photographic tour through the corridors of power' was researched as part of a NWCI project on women and decision-making. It presents photographs of groups of people in decision-making sites including the Cabinet, Dail Eireann, Government Boards and Committees, Health Boards, County Development Boards and Regional Authorities. They say a picture is worth a hundred words, and the exhibition illustrates in a visually dramatic way the absence of women from these decision-making arenas. Following its launch at the Annual Conference in November, the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform took the exhibition on tour and will continue to manage it throughout 2003.

Project Activity

Education Equality Initiative (EEI)

EEI is an innovative measure funded through the NDP (National Development Plan) to address educational disadvantage for adults in Ireland. Phase 1 operates from 2000 to 2003 and 18 pilot projects were selected in 2000 to develop models of good practice which could be mainstreamed. They address a range of target groups and issues and are spread as far apart as Donegal and Sherkin Island in Cork. Full details of the projects are listed in the EEI project directory and an up-dated contact list is available on the NWCI website. NWCI provides technical support through site visits, project meetings and ongoing contact. The project meetings are a crucial aspect of the support work as they allow the projects to network, identify common concerns and barriers and to overcome the sense of isolation pilot project workers can experience. NWCI also monitors the projects and prepares half-yearly reports for the Department's EEI Working Group. The EEI projects illustrate the need for interventions at three key levels.

- 1 pre-development work such as neighbourhood and outreach work
- 2 development work such as consultation and needs analysis, recruitment of participants and course planning
- 3 course delivery including evaluation and forward planning

The need for supports throughout all three levels is vital and was identified as one of the most important means of promoting access to education and enabling adults to engage with education. Support covers a range of measures including care arrangements – both elder and childcare; provision of transport, literacy support, participant allowances, study skills and mentoring, and confidence building. The policy implications arising from the 2-year projects include the need for flexibility and support in provision, as well as continuity of funding for projects addressing educational disadvantage.

ZEST

ZEST is a funding initiative developed by the NWCI and ZONTA International. The name stands for ZONTA

Projects funded under ZEST 2 and ZEST 3

Project	Location	Target Group	Project Activity
Clare Haven Services	Ennis, Co. Clare	Women who have experienced domestic violence	12 week educational programme to address problem of domestic violence followed by 6 week programme exploring further education, training and work options
CWEI (Community Women's Education Initiative)	Cork City	Marginalised working class and traveller women	Support programme for women undertaking National Certificate in Humanities (Community Education and Development)
Longford Women's Centre	Longford	Isolated rural women with access to land	Organic Horticulture Course covering garden planning and design, organic and niche food and ornamental plant production.
Mary Immaculate & Limerick Travellers Group	Limerick	Traveller women	Training in research skills for research on educational experiences of traveller children
PARC (now An Doras Bui)	Coolock, Dublin	Young lone mothers aged between 16 and 25 years	Pre-vocational training programme with a range of supports provided
Rownanstown Women's Community Development Project	Clondalkin, Dublin	Women on 3rd level outreach course	Cross community initiative with Rowlagh, Bawnogue and Deansrath Women's groups to provide supports and mentoring to women undertaking a WERRC/UCD Women's Studies Course
Southill Domestic Abuse Project	Limerick	Members of Southill Domestic Abuse Project	Identification of training needs and delivery of appropriate training, e.g. supporting women who experience domestic violence and project management
SPIRASI	Dublin	Refugee women with the right to work	Personal development, practical skills training for accessing work, intercultural communication skills

Empowering Self-Development and Transformation and it supports projects providing education and training for women living in disadvantaged circumstances. ZEST funding follows an academic/school year and during 2002 two rounds of ZEST projects were in operation. The level of grant aid provided by ZEST at €25,000 approximately is not very large but it does allow some very interesting and worthwhile pieces of work to be undertaken. The table on page 12 gives an outline of the projects funded under ZEST 2 and ZEST 3 in 2002.

Women's Health Project

2002 was a transition year for women's health work. A number of the Women's Health Advisory Committees continued their work but about of them half became inactive. The Women's Health Council (WHC) published the long awaited review of the Plan for Women's Health in the autumn. Called *Promoting women's health: a population investment for Ireland's future* it is available from the Women's Health Council (www.whc.ie). Health is such a key issue for women that it has been identified as a major area of work in the NWCI Strategic Plan and the need for developing an analysis of women's health and the Irish healthcare system will be a priority in 2003.

POWER

The POWER Programme received funding under the Equality for Women Measure to deliver two courses to women activists. POWER stands for politically organised women educating for representation. The aim of the POWER is to support women to become more active in the public sphere and give the poor levels of representation identified in **Jobs for the Boys** and **Putting More Women in the Picture**, it is a very timely project. Work on this project during 2002 involved preparing the Project Action Plan and preparing to recruit a Project Co-ordinator. Further information is available on the NWCI and WERRC websites.

For more information, please contact Margaret Martin (margaretm@nwci.ie)

Policy Work

National Plan for Women

The policy team of the NWCI assisted a range of affiliates with their consultations and submissions on the National Plan for Women. Based on a wide range of meetings and seminars the NWCI also made its submission to the National Plan.

Parental Leave Act Review

The review of the Parental Leave Act is now complete – it was not possible to reach consensus on many of the issues explored in the working group. However, a majority of working group members, including the NWCI, recommended the introduction of a payment for parental leave and for paternity leave and for the duration of leave to be extended. At the moment, a child must be under 5 for a parent to be eligible for parental leave – a majority recommended that the cut-off age be increased to 8.

Women and Decision-Making

The research for the project on women and decision-making was carried out by the Policy Team which resulted in the publication **Irish Politics: Jobs for the Boys** and the exhibition **Put more women in the picture** which was launched at the Annual Conference.

Individualisation Research

The NWCI commissioned research on the individualisation of the social welfare system through a social insurance model. Mary Murphy, an independent consultant, was contracted to carry out the research and to propose a series of recommendations for the NWCI. The research looks at how the social welfare system can be individualised in such a way as to provide women with a right to financial independence and offer recognition of the value of unpaid caring work. The research was funded by the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and the Combat Poverty Agency. The research will be published in 2003.

Valuing Women's Unpaid Caring Work

As the issue of women's unpaid caring work interlinks with many policy areas, it was decided to bring together all related policy recommendations in one publication on *Valuing Care Work*. This publication will be launched in 2003.

Housing Research

The NWCI and Threshold jointly managed a research project to identify women's accommodation experiences, data sources on women and accommodation and to identify research gaps in this policy area. The research was funded by the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and will be published in 2003.

Women Returners Research

Research on the needs of women returning to the labour force and on the barriers they experience was carried out by the ESRI and administered by the NWCI in 2002. The Minister of State Willie O'Dea launched the research *Getting out of the house: women returning to education, training and employment* in September.

Pre-Budget Submission

The key issues for the 2002 pre-budget submission related to valuing unpaid caring work and to the individualisation of the social welfare system, drawing on the recommendations of the research on which the NWCI has been working. The submission continued the NWCI emphasis on increasing investment in childcare, raising the level of social welfare entitlements and extending eligibility for the medical card.

For more information please contact Orla O'Connor (orlaoc@nwci.ie)

Campaigns and advocacy work

Throughout 2002, the NWCI continued to campaign on behalf of women and were actively involved in the following campaigns:

Referendum on the Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy Bill

At the 2001 AGM, in response to the Government announcement of yet another referendum about Abortion, the affiliates of the NWCI passed an emergency motion to carry out a consultation process with its members seeking to ascertain women's views on the implications of the Referendum and Bill for all women in Ireland, in particular its implications for women with crisis pregnancies.

This motion gave the NWCI a mandate to engage in a consultation process with affiliated groups. Following the AGM, the staff and Board discussed how best to proceed with the instructions in the motion and decisions were taken to set a date for discussion of the issue in an informed manner with affiliates.

We invited all affiliates to submit opinions or position papers to the NWCI for consideration. Meanwhile, because the Bill itself seemed so confusing and complex, the NWCI decided to seek an independent legal opinion on the potential impact of the package of proposed constitutional changes contained in the Twenty-Fifth Amendment of the Constitution (Protection of Human Life in Pregnancy) Bill, 2001 on women in Ireland with crisis pregnancies. The legal opinion identified a number of key concerns that were then incorporated into a discussion document, which was sent to all affiliates to assist in determining their positions on the proposed Referendum and Bill.

We invited all our affiliates to a Consultation meeting in February 2002 to:

- (i) give our affiliates the opportunity to feedback on the discussion document which is based on a legal opinion, and
- (ii) reach agreement on the NWCI opinion on the forthcoming Referendum and Bill

By the end of the discussions, affiliates unanimously decided that the NWCI should oppose the Referendum, and mount an information campaign explaining what the consequences would be on the lives of women, if the Referendum were passed. This we did, producing a clear explanatory leaflet on the potential impact of the proposed Bill on women's health and lives.

The Election Campaign

In the run up to the General Election 2002, the NWCI campaigned for women's fair share and produced a leaflet outlining the key issues for women in the election: childcare, economic independence, health and education; concerns of women in the paid workforce, as well as women in unpaid work; violence against women; the paucity of women in practically every level of decision making throughout Ireland and the virtual lack of meaningful funding for the women's sector are all urgent issues for women.

The NWCI leaflet produced in the run up to the election was coupled with meetings with the political parties and sent to affiliates to use the leaflet as a resource at the doorstep when politicians called seeking votes.

The NWCI called on women to use their vote, to elect candidates who support women's equality issues.

National Negotiations

Throughout 2002 the NWCI was preparing for the negotiations, for a new social partnership national agreement. The NWCI decided to work within the Community Platform for the negotiations so as to strengthen the collective voice of national organisations representing those experiencing poverty and inequality. With the other members of the Community Platform we developed a common strategy for the national negotiations. The range of demands put forward included rights for people with disabilities, the right to work for asylum-seekers, increased spending on childcare, benchmarking of social welfare payments, increased provision of accommodation and education for Travellers, measures to promote more women in decision-making, paid parental leave and the introduction of a mainstream training programme for women returners. The

negotiations commenced at the end of 2002 and the NWCI contributed a high level of resources to the negotiation process.

CEDAW Campaign

The National Women's Council of Ireland is a member of the management and advisory committees of the Women's Human Rights Project (WHRP). The main focus of the WHRP over 2002 has been raising awareness of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Irish Government is obliged to present its Report to the CEDAW committee in early 2003 and the WHRP at that time will produce a Shadow Report. Regional workshops have disseminated information about CEDAW and also helped groups make the links between their own work and international human rights. CEDAW articulates the inadequacy of the international human rights system to protect women's human rights and combat discrimination. It addresses discrimination in a systemic fashion, looking at the interrelated discriminations (direct and indirect) against women that are pervasive in society.

*Further information from Nóirín Clancy
(womenshumanrights@eircom.net)*

International Work

European's Women's Lobby

Observatory on violence against women

In April, the NWCI launched the first of an EU-wide network of national observatories on violence against women at the European Parliament offices in Dublin. The first ever Irish Observatory on violence against women will feed information on violence against women to the EWL expert group, so that the EWL can continue to lobby the European institutions on the actions needed to stop violence against women.

The EWL EU level Observatory on violence against women has been in existence since 1996. The development of National level observatories, funded by the EU Daphne initiative is being supported at member state level in Ireland with matching funding from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, through the National Steering Committee on Violence against Women. The current President of the EWL EU level Observatory is NWCI Chairwoman and Vice President of EWL, Gráinne Healy, while the Irish expert heading up the National Observatory is former Women's Aid Policy Manager, Monica O'Connor.

National Forum on Europe and Convention on Europe

NWCI made another intervention to the National Forum on Europe in Dublin Castle on the occasion of the visit of Commissioner David Byrne. Mr. Byrne came under heavy fire from those from the 'Vote No to Nice' groups. He failed to answer NWCI Chairwoman Gráinne Healy's question about the low turnout of women at the Nice treaty referendum being linked to the fact that women have not been engaged and are seen to be excluded from the key decision making fora at European level.

Ms Healy made her comments in the light of the EWL campaign *Where are the Women?*. This campaign included dissemination of the post card put your weight behind equality in Europe. The EWL, supported by the NWCI, deplored the imbalance in the representation of women in the Presidium of the Convention on Europe (2 women out of 12 representatives). Indeed, the Irish delegation contains not one woman!

General Secretary of EWL, Ms. Mary McPhail, said 'the Convention on the Future of Europe has the very important task of preparing the ground for the European of tomorrow. It does seem to us to be unthinkable, that the Presidium and the Convention will begin their work without addressing this fundamental deficit in the representation of women's rights and interests'.

New Gender Directive

The EWL continues its work to influence the contents of the forthcoming Directive on Gender Discrimination, arising from Article 13 of the Treaty of Amsterdam. Gráinne Healy has been part of a Working Group of the EU Equal Opportunities Committee (including CEO of Equality Authority, Niall Crowley), to provide the Commission with a draft text, which will inform their work in drafting the new Directive by June 2002.

Review of EWL statutes by its Board for the EWL General Assembly in September 2002

Within the EWL itself, the long process of reviewing the EWL statutes came to a close at the GA in Brussels in September. Attended by Director Joanna Mc Minn and Board members Chairwoman, Grainne Healy (who finished her 6 year term on the Board of the EWL and a term as Vice President) and Board members Tess Murphy and Mary Kelly (who was elected to the Board of EWL replacing Grainne).

The GA was lively and included strong motions strengthening the feminist position of the EWL on issues such as prostitution, while the EWL got a new set of Statutes and a new Board. The New President is Dutch woman, Lydia Zydell from the European Disability Forum and she is supported in the new executive by Denise Fuchs (France) and Ana Coucello (Portugal), while the new Treasurer is Kirsti Koltoff (Sweden).

Financial Report

Financial Review of the Year

2002 was a challenging year for the finances of the NWCI, due to a number of factors, the main ones being:

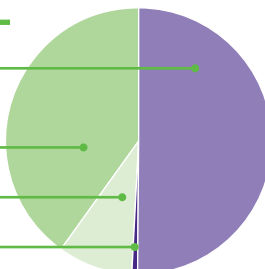
- An increase of 121% in our office rent due to the 5 yearly rent review, as per the terms of our lease.
- The 3-year core funding grant from our Private Donor coming to an end.
- A general increase in prices due to an inflation rise in the economy.

Despite financial pressures, the NWCI continued to maintain a high level of support and service to its affiliates, deliver on its planned projects and activities and respond to external events.

In line with its commitment to developing effective internal Organisational Systems to support a long-term funding strategy, a cost centre budgeting system was introduced towards the end of 2002 and will be implemented in the 2003 budget. This new system will ensure improved budgetary control and accountability across the organisation.

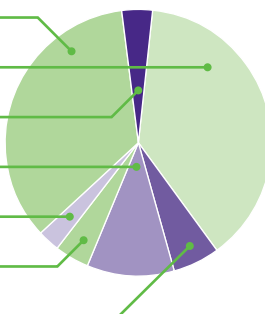
Income Analysis 2002

Core grant (Government Funding)	579,000
Income for projects and activities (Govt. funding 56%, other 34%)	463,704
Private Donations	105,000
Affiliated Member's fees	8,804



Expenditure Analysis 2002

Staff Costs	484,685
Programme and Project Mgt	441,279
Administration Expenses	47,425
Office Building Costs	134,190
Consultancy and professional fees	34,460
Organisation Expenses	53,184
Publication and Activities	72,735



End of Year Position

At the end of the year, the accounts show a net deficit position of €50,191 due almost entirely in the main to the more than doubling of the office rent as a result of the rent review.

Financial Outlook for 2003

The financial outlook for the NWCI is challenging, given the substantial increase in our office rent, coupled with a 5% decrease in our Government core grant for 2003. However, the situation is being managed closely and a number of cost cutting measures have been put in place as well as the establishment of a clear set of fundraising targets. The Council will continue to deliver on its funded projects and activities, but may have to limit or postpone the provision of additional or new services/activities, until further funding is forthcoming.

Financial Priorities for 2003 are as follows:

- Establishment of a longer-term fundraising strategy to ensure that the objectives of the Strategic Plan can be met.
- Achieving the set fundraising targets for 2003.
- Elimination of the brought forward 2002 deficit.
- Relocating to affordable office space and reassigning our current lease.
- Commencing the process of looking to purchase premises for the NWCI to ensure long-term stability.
- Restructuring the current membership fee system by introducing sliding scales.
- Set up and registration of an Individual Membership category.
- Commitment to developing the internal financial management systems and procedures.

Financial Accounts

For The National Women's Council Of Ireland

Amalgamated Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st December 2002

Income	2002	2001
Income for projects and activities	463,704	430,615
Government Funding - core grant	579,000	511,704
Private Donations and other voluntary income	105,000	154,300
Membership Fees	8,804	9,787
Total Income	<u>1,156,508</u>	<u>1,106,406</u>
Expenditure		
Staff Costs	484,685	446,804
Programme and Project Activities	441,279	424,540
Administration Expenses	47,425	66,842
Office Building Costs	134,190	76,678
Consultancy and professional fees	34,460	28,678
Organisation Expenses	53,184	60,372
Publications and Events	72,735	29,609
Total Expenditure	<u>1,267,958</u>	<u>1,133,523</u>
(Deficit)/Surplus of Income over expenditure	(111,450)	(27,117)
Income and Expenditure account balance brought forward	61,258	88,375
Income and Expenditure account balance carried forward	<u>(50,192)</u>	<u>61,258</u>

Amalgamated Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2002

	2002	2001
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	34,392	16,825
Current Assets		
Debtors	26,894	3,082
Cash at bank and in hand	165,922	172,018
Total Current Assets	<u>192,816</u>	<u>175,100</u>
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	277,399	130,667
Net Current (Liabilities)/Assets	<u>(84,583)</u>	<u>44,433</u>
Total Assets Less Current Liabilities	<u>(50,191)</u>	<u>61,258</u>
Reserves		
Income and Expenditure Account	(50,191)	61,258
(Deficiency)/Members' Funds	<u>(50,191)</u>	<u>61,258</u>

The financial statements were approved by the directors on the 30th of April 2003 and signed on its behalf by:
Grainne Healy - Chairwoman & Director Mary Kelly - Deputy Chairwoman & Director

These summary accounts have been extracted from the statutory financial statements of the National Women's Council of Ireland Limited and the National Women's Council of Ireland Education & Training Ltd. Those statutory financial statements, on which the Auditors (Grant Thornton) expressed an unqualified audit opinion will be filed with the Registrar of Companies following the Annual General Meeting. Copies of the full audited financial statements are available on request.

Publications, Submissions and Representation

Publications

- Womenzone – Issues 9, 10 and 11
- *In From the Margin* Project Leaflet and Posters
- Referendum Leaflet – "Vote No to Referendum on Human Life in Pregnancy leaflet" (February 2002)
- Election Leaflet – "Vote to: Make a Difference for Women" (April 2002)
- NWCI Annual Report 2001 (May 2002)
- Putting more women in the picture (November 2002)
- Irish Politics – Jobs for the boys! – (November 2002)

NWCI Submissions 2002

- Submission to National Plan Against Racism
- Submission to Women's National Plan
- Pre- Budget Submission 2003 (December 2002)

Committees/working Groups On Which The Nwci Was Represented During 2002

- ADM Equality Working Group
- Aontas, Meitheal, CAN Community Development Consultancy EWM Project
- City of Dublin VEC Adult Education Committee
- Eastern Health Board
- Eastern Regional Planning Committee on Violence against Women
- EEI Working Group – Education & Science
- Equality Authority
- Equality Investigations User Group
- European Movement
- Expert Consultancy Group to National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI)
- Forum on Europe
- Gender Equality Unit, DES
- ICCL Immigration etc. Sub-Committee

- Male-Female Wage Differentials Working Group
- National Adult Learning Council (NALC)
- National Childcare Co-ordinating Committee
- National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism – Women's Sub Committee
- National Development Plan – Community Support Framework Monitoring Committee
- National Development Plan – Economic and Social Infrastructure Operational Programme Monitoring Committee
- National Development Plan – Employment and Human Resources Operational Programme Monitoring Committee
- National Development Plan – Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion Co-ordinating Committee
- National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
- National Economic and Social Forum (NESF) and NESF Management Committee
- National Rural Development Forum
- National Steering Committee on Violence against Women
- NCCRI Board
- North-South Research Collaboration Group
- POWER Partnership
- Ruhama Next Steps Advisory Group
- Task Force on Violence against Women
- University of Limerick Governing Board
- Women's Health Council
- Women's Human Rights Project
- Women Returners Fás Workgroup

European

- European Women's Lobby (EWL) Board
- EWL Observatory on Violence against Women.

List of Affiliates – 2002

Access 2000	DES Action Ireland	Irish Dental Nurses Association	Network Kildare	Tipperary Women's Networking Group
AIM Family Services	Disabled Women's Working Group	Irish Family Planning Association	North Dublin Women in Networking	Tír Boghaine Women's Network
AKIDWA	Dóchas for Women	Irish Farmers Association	North Leitrim Women's Centre	Tralee Women's Resource Centre
Alexandra College Guild	Donegal Traveller Women's Project	Irish Federation of University Teachers	North West Inner City Women's Network	Triskele Community Training & Development
Alliance Centre for Sexual Health	Donegal Women's Network	Irish Federation of University Women	Older Women's Network	Tuam Women's Group
An Cosán	Doras Buí	Irish Girl Guides	One Parent Exchange & Network	
Aoibhneas Women's Refuge	Drogheda Area Women's Centre	Irish National Eating Disorders Association	Parlaimint na mBan	UCD Women Graduates Association
Aontas	Dublin Adult Learning Centre	Irish National Teachers Organisation	Pavee Point	UNIFEM Women's Committee
Association of Baha'I Women	Dublin Rape Crisis Centre	Irish Nurses Organisation	Positive Action	Union of Students in Ireland
Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland	Dublin University Women Graduates Association	Irish Stillbirth & Neo Natal Deaths Society	Presbyterian Women's Association	
Association of Teachers of Home Economics	Dublin Wellwoman Centre	Irish Women's Environmental Network	Public Service Executive Union	Waterford Rape & Sexual Abuse Service
Attic Press	Duhallow Women's forum			Waterford Student Mothers Group
				Waterford Women's Centre
Ballymun Women's Resource Centre	Electricity Supply Board Officers Association	Kerry Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre	Rathcoole Women's Development Group	Western Women's Link
Baltinglass Women's Group	Europa Donna Ireland	Kerry Women Together	Rape Crisis Network Ireland	Women Educating for Transformation
Banúlacht	European Institute of Women's Health	Kilkenny Rape Crisis Centre	Reach to Recovery	Women in Learning
Basic Income Guaranteed		Kilkenny Women's Group	Rehab Women's Group	Women in Technology & Science
Bodywhys	Fianna Fáil Women's Equality Forum		Rowlagh Women's Group Ltd	Women in Media & Entertainment
Business & Professional Women's Club	Fine Gael Women's Group	Labour Women	Ruhama Women's Project	Women Managers Network for the Civil Service
	Fingal Centre for the Unemployed	Leitrim Women's Network	Rural Community Care Network	Women of the North East Galway
Cáirde	Forum Women's Working Group	Letterkenny Women's Centre Ltd		Women of the North West
Catherine McAuley Centre		Limerick Family Planning Clinic	Second Chance Education Project for Women	Women Together Tallaght Network
Cavan/Monaghan Rural Development Women's Group	Girls Friendly Society	Limerick Federation of Women's Organisations	Sinn Féin National Women's Forum	Women's Aid
Centre for Women's Studies Trinity College	Graphical, Paper & Media Union	Longford Women's Centre	SIPTU National Women's Committee	Women's Community Projects (Mullingar) Association
Cherish	Green Party Women's Group	Lourdes Youth & Community Services Ltd	Sláinte Pobal	Women's Education Research & Resource Centre
Childminding Ireland		Macra na Feirme	Sonass Housing Association	Women's Health Project for Prostitutes
Civil & Public Service Union	Home Birth Association of Ireland	Mandate	Soroptomists International	Women's International League for Peace & Freedom
Clare Women's Network	Impact	Manufacturing Science & Finance Union	Southill Integrated Development Programme	Women's Studies Centre
Clondalkin Women's Network	Inishowen Women's Network	Methodist Women's Association	Southside Women's Action Group	Women's Support Project
Community Women's Education Initiatives	IPPA, The Early Childhood Organisation	Mothers' Union	Southwest Kerry Women's Association	Young Women's Christian Association of Ireland
Connaught Rural Women's Group Ltd	Irish Agricultural Advisers Association	Mountwood Fitzgerald Community Development Centre	Summerhill Active Retirement Group	
Cork Rape Crisis Centre	Irish Association of Social Workers		Teachers Union of Ireland	
Cork Women's Action Group	Irish Childbirth Trust	NASC Ban	Teach Tearmainn Women's Refuge	
Cork Women's Poetry Circle	Irish Countrywomen's Association	National Association of Widows in Ireland	Tearmann Domestic Violence Service	
Cork Women's Political Association	Irish Deaf Women's Group	National Children's Nurseries Association		
County Carlow Women's Network		National Network of Women's Refuges		

Organisation Information

Executive Board

Directors

Gráinne Healy (Chairwoman)

Mary Kelly (Deputy Chairwoman)

Mary Allen

Frances Byrne

Philomena Harrington

Deirdre Healy

Mary Leahy

Rhona McSweeney

Tess Murphy

Secretary

Bridget O' Sullivan (appointed December 13th, 2002)

Business Address

16-20 Cumberland Street South, Dublin 2

Auditors

Grant Thornton
Chartered Accountants
Ashford House
Tara Street
Dublin 2.

Bankers

Bank of Ireland
P.O. Box 3131
Baggot Street, Dublin 2
Staff

Solicitors

O' Donnell Sweeney
The Earlsfort Centre
Earlsfort Terrace
Dublin 2

Staff

Director

Dr. Joanna McMinn

Finance Officer

Bridget O' Sullivan

Communications Manager

Anne O' Donnell

Projects Manager

Margaret Martin

EEI Project Coordinator

Annie Dillon

Policy Manager

Orla O' Connor

IFTM Project Coordinator

Anne Brennan

Administration Officer

Elaine Mullen

Information Officer

Helen Farrell

Finance and Projects Assistant

Ann Kinsella

Membership Assistant

Imelda Brown

Administration Assistant

April Keogh

Receptionist

Gertrude Hoey



National Women's
Council of Ireland

Comhairle Náisiúnta
na mBan in Éirinn

“making a real
difference”



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