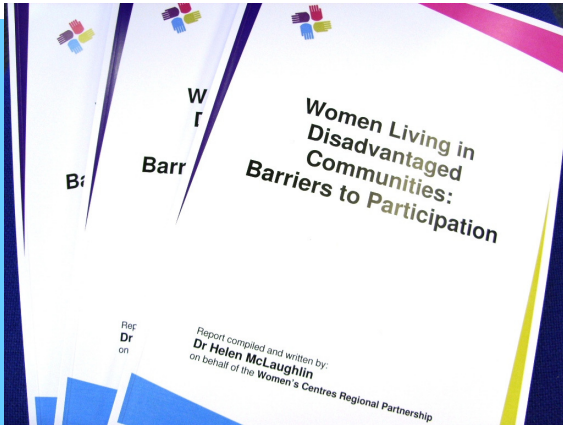


**END YEARS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN**



**Re-Launch of the Barriers Report**

In August the WCRP will be re-launching the report, “Women Living in Disadvantaged Communities – Barriers to Participation” and we’ll be asking the new Assembly to act now to end years of discrimination against women from disadvantaged areas. The WCRP would like to invite our partner organisations to be involved in the re-launch at a photo shoot which will take place on 9th August as part of the WCRP Network Meeting. Your involvement will help us make a bigger impact.

Dr Helen McLaughlin, author of the report comments, “When writing this report I was amazed at the amount of data that existed, drawn from academics, from the community and voluntary sector, over the past ten years that gave the same message over and over again. Women do not have equal access to services – and women living in disadvantaged communities have a much larger barrier in front of them when they try to engage in training, education, employment and civic life.”

Dr. Margaret Ward, WCRP Chair calls on the new Assembly to introduce a range of policies that will bring these barriers down. “Not surprisingly, childcare is the primary barrier women face. We welcome the fact that all the political parties made pledges in their manifestoes to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive childcare strategy. The WCRP would like to see this co-ordinated by one lead Government Department, with all Departments working closely together to ensure adequate planning and resourcing. In the coming months we will be meeting with the parties to see how their commitments to women can be realised in the new Assembly.”

Siobhan Doherty, NIRWN, urges the Assembly to address the difficulties faced by women in isolated rural communities. “Barriers are barriers, but as the report clearly outlines, living in a rural community can often exacerbate these barriers.” Patricia Haren, WSN comments, “Women living in disadvantaged communities have many barriers to overcome to escape poverty. The work of the women’s centres is vital in helping women in a number of ways by providing opportunities to gain education and skills, developing confidence and self esteem.”

Margaret Logue, The Women’s Centre, Derry says, “Women are a key constituency when the Assembly is drafting plans for the future social and economic development of our region. Through the women’s regional partnership we have structures in place to make women’s voices heard and to enable us to contribute to improved wellbeing and prosperity, particularly for families from disadvantaged communities.”

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## WCRP SOCIAL ECONOMY EVENTS

The WCRP held two social economy events for the wider women's sector during March in Derry/Londonderry and Belfast. Both events were well attended and emphasised the entrepreneurial role of local women. Speakers gave their views and experience of setting up and running a social economy business and described some of the benefits to local communities.

In Northern Ireland social enterprises account for between 5-8% of economic activity, comparable to the tourism industry (5.6%) and construction industry (5.1%). Women are running organisations providing childcare, catering, community facilitation, plumbing and carpentry services. These examples show that women can be innovative and it's notable that 26% of social enterprises are described as 'women-led' – almost twice as many compared to small businesses.

The NW event speakers included Cresco Trust, Avert Foyle Women's Aid, NOW and WOMEN'S TEC. Helen Crickard from WOMEN'S TEC, highlighted the value of non-traditional skills training for women, the importance of being multi-skilled and being able to seize opportunities in order to compete.



l-r Helen Sayers (Cresco Trust), Eleanor McGuckin, (Avert Foyle Women's Aid), Brian O'Neill (NW Marketing), Maeve Monaghan (NOW), Margaret Logue (Derry Women's Centre), Helen Crickard (Women's TEC).



l-r Stephen McGarry (Work West), Elizabeth Livingstone (Footprints Trading Ltd), Helen Crickard (WOMEN'S TEC), Anne Graham (Social Economy Network), Margaret Ward (Chair, WCRP), Liz Curran (Community Direct), Betty Carlisle (Shankill Women's Centre), Roy McGivern (DSD)

The Belfast event venue showcased Shankill Women's Centre's new social economy 'Small Wonders II'. Betty Carlisle, MBE, spoke at the event and a video was shown of the journey Shankill has taken to turn a derelict building into a community business. The video is available to watch from their website <http://www.shankillwomenscentre.org.uk/content/video-making-small-wonders>. Liz Curran described how Community Direct gives employment opportunities to women trained as facilitators by the WRDA.

Footprints Women's Centre spoke about their catering business set up in 1997 and their daycare business established in 2003. The profit made from its businesses are put back into the women's centre and used to ensure that crucial services, often difficult to finance, can still be provided. Footprints Catering Ltd provided lunch at the Belfast event.

**Already there are positive outcomes following the events. Avert Women's Aid, who spoke at the NW event, has received a social entrepreneurial grant from UnLtd. Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group has received funding to carry out a feasibility study of potential social economy options from North West Marketing. Greenway Women's Centre and Derry Women's Centre are currently considering social economy options for their centres.**

WCRP would like to thank all the women's centres who attended and took part in the events. Speaker presentations can be downloaded from the WCRP website at [www.wcrp.org.uk](http://www.wcrp.org.uk)

## POLICY SUBGROUP

The Policy Subgroup had a very busy start to the year, with the Child Poverty Strategy, the Play and Leisure Strategy, Guidance of Local Generalist Advice Strategy, Budgets, and the Community Safety Strategy all receiving responses. Members of the subgroup were also involved in disseminating the Women's Election Manifesto and speaking at its launch events.

The subgroup will be issuing a press article to re-launch the WCRP Barriers Report. We are concerned to ensure that the Programme for Government is responsive to the needs of women and we will, along with other members of the Women's Ad Hoc Policy Group, be meeting with the new MLAs to ensure that they are fully briefed across the range of issues important to women, particularly those in disadvantaged and rurally isolated areas.

Our 'Women Living in Disadvantaged Areas: Barriers to Participation' report has proven to be so useful that we had it reprinted and will be ensuring that politicians and policy makers receive copies. **Next meeting: 24 Aug 2011, WRDA.**

## ALL WELCOME TO ATTEND SUBGROUPS' MEETINGS.

## COMMUNICATION SUBGROUP

The WCRP Communication Subgroup meets quarterly; all WCRP partner organisations are very welcome to attend. The purpose of the subgroup is to implement the Communications Action Plan. The action plan was recently reviewed at the WCRP Network Meeting in May. Key activities this year include monitoring communications within the Partnership; looking at ways to improve and engage with members; promoting events/activities through press articles; developing the WCRP website and producing the WCRP newsletter.

If you have any suggestions for the subgroup, please forward to Kelli, WCRP Co-ordinator or Siobhan Doherty, Chair, WCRP Communications Subgroup. **Next meeting: 24 Aug 2011, WRDA.**

## EDUCATION SUBGROUP

The Education Subgroup is currently working on the Learner Access and Engagement project report for the North West Women's Centres. The subgroup has also been working closely with an IT consultant to develop the Education Prospectus into an online version. This work is in its final stages of development and will soon be piloted with Centres. We will be asking Centres to enter their course information for the year during June. The online Education Prospectus will be launched this summer. **Next meeting: 31st Aug 2011 in L'Derry.**

## CHILDCARE SUBGROUP

The Childcare Subgroup meets quarterly. The subgroup continues to work closely with DSD regarding the scope of childcare funding as current provision under the WCCF is due to end March 2012. The Childcare Subgroup Action Plan was agreed at the recent WCRP Network Meeting in May, which includes work focused on quality standards, regulation and professional development within centres. We welcome Centres to attend subgroup meetings. **Next meeting: 31st Aug 2011 in L'Derry.**

## WCRP Talk

### Centre Managers!

*Are you using WCRP Talk to its full advantage?*

WCRP Talk's contact list goes to Partnership Centre Managers. Why not use WCRP Talk to promote key events or to share information with other Centre Managers.



**WCRP policy responses, publications & press articles are available to download from the 'publications' page of the website at [www.wcrp.org.uk](http://www.wcrp.org.uk)**

## WOMEN'S CENTRES

## WCRP Partnership Organisations throughout Northern Ireland

Gay Sherry-Bingham  
**Atlas Women's Centre**  
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[www.footprintswomenscentre.org](http://www.footprintswomenscentre.org)

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Hazel Gamble/ Eleanor Jordan  
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### NEW STAFF



WCRP would like to welcome Isobel Loughran who is interim Centre Manager at Greenway Women's Centre.

Isobel has over 18 years experience within the women's sector and is currently Chair of Footprints Women's Centre Board of Directors.

Isobel looks forward to building links within the WCRP partnership and will be hosting the next WCRP Network Meeting on 9 August 2011.

### Dates for Your Diary

- 9 Aug 2011 (11am) – WCRP Network Meeting, Greenway Women's Centre.
- 17 Aug 2011 (11am) – NW Live & Learn Meeting, Derry Women's Centre.
- 24 Aug 2011 (10.30am) – WCRP Policy Subgroup Meeting, WRDA.
- 24 Aug 2011 (11.30am) – WCRP Communication Subgroup Meeting, WRDA.
- 31 Aug 2011 (11am) - WCRP Education Subgroup Meeting, Derry Women's Centre.
- 31 Aug 2011 (12noon) - WCRP Childcare Subgroup Meeting, Derry Women's Centre.
- 8 Nov 2011 - WCRP Network Meeting, venue to be agreed.
- 7 Feb 2012 - WCRP Network Meeting, venue to be agreed.

### WCRP Contact: Kelli Boyles

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