

Crisis centres and women's resource centres across Canada, particularly those in remote and rural areas, do extremely important work. And, while the Women's Program does not fund social services, it provides a means for women with a wide range of needs to help themselves and each other.

In Summary

Repeatedly, witnesses from isolated, rural and urban areas spoke positively of their experience with the Women's Program and commended its achievements. Staff - both in the field and in the national office - were described as being very helpful and supportive.

The Women's Program works for improvement in the status of women in major areas of concern to women. More generally, it involves a wide range of issues reflecting the needs and aspirations of women including health issues, education and training, child care, pornography, pension reform and pay equity.

By supporting research and publications on women's issues, the Women's Program has increased public awareness of women's issues and, on the part of women themselves, of ways advancement can be achieved.

Program funding assists women's organizations in carrying out specialized research and educational projects in the broad field of women's issues. These organizations include, for example, the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, Canadian Women Studies/Les Cahiers de la femme, the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association and the Women's Skill Development Society. The Program has also helped groups such as Le Réseau national d'Action éducation des femmes to document and promote French-language educational opportunities for women in Canada.

Not all of the research-oriented groups presenting briefs to the Committee were successful in applying for funding through the Women's Program. The Human Rights Institute of Canada, for example, although a voluntary organization with a record of achievement in the field of women's issues, was refused funding presumably on the basis that it did not work exclusively for the advancement of women.

Together, however, these and other organizations active in research and education have taken great strides forward in extending knowledge and improving public awareness of the status of women in Canada. Research, education, advocacy, publications, networking and training in organizational skills have all been avenues through which the Women's Program has promoted the advancement of women in Canadian society.