

YW4WORK

Gender Based Analysis

INTRODUCTION

In response to an opportunity from the Status of Women Canada, YWCA Muskoka received grant money to develop a community economic development project for women in Muskoka. The vision of the YW4Work project is to assist women in the community make decisions and take action by creating a community plan designed to outline possible economic opportunities. Research has shown that community economic development projects based upon the concept of “social economy” - an economy that enhances social relationships as well as generate revenue- can actually generate more jobs than projects based upon the traditional idea of a purely financial economy. (*The Social Economy Bristol Development Project*)

Gender analysis is an essential element of socio-economic analysis that provides information on the different conditions that women and men face. According to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), an understanding of socio-economic relations, and with it gender relations, is an integral part of policy analysis, and is essential in creating and implementing effective development co-operation initiatives. Gender analysis can provide information to address disparities, challenge systemic inequalities (most often faced by women), and build efficient and equitable solutions.”¹ This document will explore the context that makes women vulnerable to poverty in the Gravenhurst area.

Gravenhurst is located in the District of Muskoka, which is known as a prime tourist destination. An article in the New York Times quotes Noah Cowan, co-director of the Toronto International Film Festival: “Muskoka is beautiful and secluded, with palatial homes for the Canadian superwealthy that fit the Hollywood model elegantly.”² In fact, Gravenhurst is home to 11,000 or more permanent year round residents and welcomes a seasonal population of equal size³ unlike the neighbouring towns, Huntsville and Bracebridge, which have a much higher percentage of permanent residents. In stark contrast to the wealth of the seasonal visitors, Gravenhurst is the lowest income community in Muskoka,⁴ with a lower than average income for both Ontario and Canada.⁵

¹ www.acdi-cida.gc.ca

² Denny Lee. “ Muskoka: The Malibu of the North.” New York Times, September 16, 2005

³ <http://www.gravenhurst.ca/>

⁴ <http://www.ggra.ca/page3.htm>

⁵ Demographic Profile, The District Municipality of Muskoka, September, 2011.

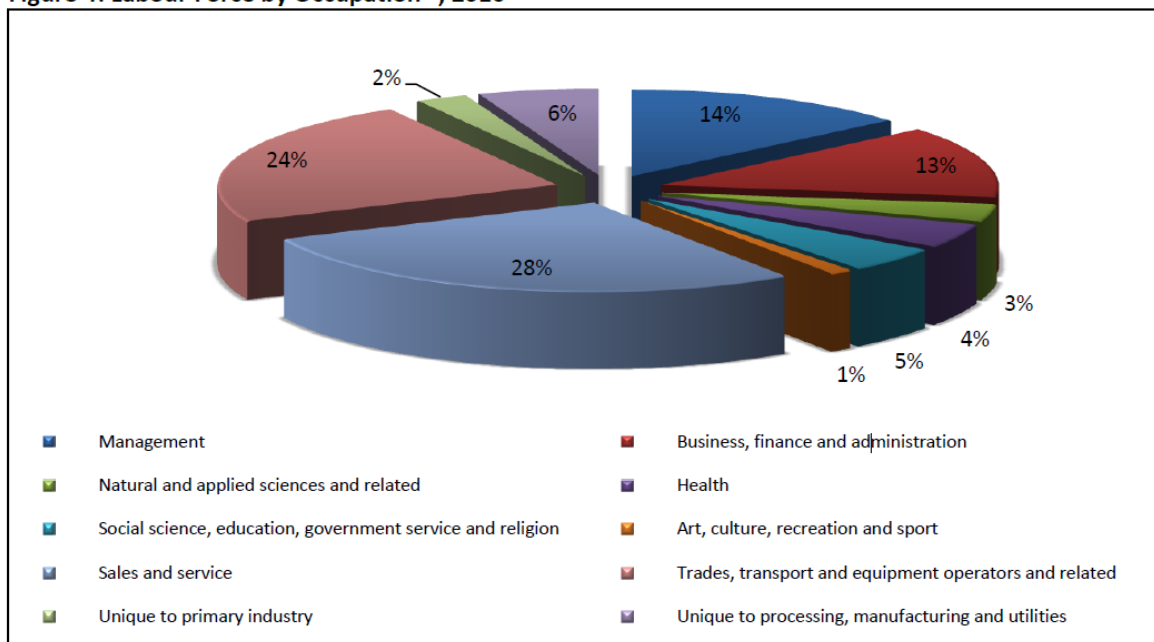
This Gender Based Analysis has been conducted as part of the YW4Work project to inform a community economic development project for women in Muskoka, initially in the Gravenhurst area.

EMPLOYMENT

According to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, employment provides the major source of stability and financial well-being for Canadians. Work also enhances other aspects of individual satisfaction by contributing to meaningful occupation, ensuring social interaction, and providing a sense of purpose and accomplishment.⁶ However, statistics indicate that 42.5% (3,340 individuals) of the adult population of Gravenhurst are not in the labour force, and almost 60% of those are female. Conversely, 53 % of females are employed, as opposed to 63.3% of the adult male population.

The District of Muskoka's Economic Profile⁷, states that major employers are in the Services (31%) and Retail trade (18%) sectors, closely followed by Construction (15%) and Business Services (14%). Manufacturing accounts for 10% of the labour force, Health Care and Social Service 8%, Educational and Finance (including Real Estate) both account for 4%, and Wholesale trade and Agriculture at 2% each.

Figure 4: Labour Force by Occupation¹⁰, 2010



Source: McSweeney & Associates from Manifold Data Mining Inc. Superdemographics 2010.

⁶ www.hrsdc.gc.ca

⁷ The District of Muskoka Economic Profile (Source: Statistics Canada)

There are significant differences in the labour performed by males and by females in the Gravenhurst area. According to Women in Canada, 67% of all employed Canadian women were working in teaching, nursing and related health fields, clerical or other administrative positions, and sales and service occupations in 2005.⁸ Statistics for Gravenhurst are consistent with the national picture: 90% of people working in the Health field in Gravenhurst, and 74% of those in the Social Science, Education, Government service and Religion sectors are female. However, there are many fewer opportunities for employment in these sectors. Many more females than males are working in the Business, Finance, and Administration sector (545 females; 175 males) in positions as clerks and secretaries. Of those working in Management, the majority (63%) are males. In Gravenhurst, the majority of people employed in the Sales/Service sector, an area with the lowest wages, are females (950) as opposed to males (530). By far, many more males (1125) than females (95) are employed in the Trades, Transportation and Equipment Operator sector, where wages are considerably higher.⁹

Labour Force

Wage Ranges by National Occupation Classification (2006)

Occupation	Wage Rates (\$)		
	Low	High	Average
Managers in Social, Community and Correctional Services	12.00	33.23	21.77
Retail Trade Managers	10.45	22.77	14.79
Restaurant and Food Service Managers	10.00	19.25	13.50
Manufacturing Managers	15.00	39.85	23.93
Supervisors, Finance and Insurance Clerks	13.00	26.37	17.95
Bookkeepers	10.50	21.80	15.86
Secretaries (except Legal and Medical)	11.00	22.87	18.08
Legal Secretaries	12.00	26.10	17.82
General Office Clerks	10.38	22.55	15.63
Customer Service Representative -Financial Services	10.14	19.75	14.47
Information Systems Analysts and Consultants	17.48	41.93	27.01
Computer Programmers and Interactive Media Developers	17.51	41.00	29.17
Industrial Engineering and Manufacturing Technologists and Technicians	14.39	27.00	19.27
Pharmacists	42.52	47.00	45.85
Registered Nurses	19.43	38.33	30.09
Social Workers	15.60	34.98	26.59
Employment Counsellors	15.71	25.00	20.60
Janitors, Caretakers and Building Superintendents	9.00	21.50	14.59
Electricians (except Industrial and Power System)	12.85	36.96	24.49
Plumbers	13.10	32.87	21.45
Carpenters	13.00	30.31	19.82
Brick Layers	15.00	32.65	22.90

Note: Study area includes Bruce, Grey, Simcoe and Muskoka Districts
Source: Service Canada

⁸ Women in Canada, 5th edition. Statistics Canada 2005

⁹ <http://www.city-data.com/canada/Gravenhurst-Town-work.html>

There are more higher-paying, low skilled jobs in the Gravenhurst area, because the building trade is a major employer. Men traditionally fill these positions as labourers, and make a good wage. The low skilled jobs more readily filled by women include retail and service industry positions, which pay minimum wage.¹⁰

Part-time work can limit opportunities for promotion, salary increases, training opportunities, and networking.

Women in Canada, 5th Edition, p.109

Women in Canada are far more likely than men to work part-time because of child care or other personal or family responsibilities.¹¹ This is compounded in the Gravenhurst area by the impact of tourism and cottagers on the local economy of Muskoka. The Tourism industry generated over \$472,000,000 in annual visitor expenditures in Muskoka in 2008.¹² However, tourism in this region is largely seasonal; associated employment fluctuates throughout the year, with the majority of tourism business occurring from July to September.¹³ The seasonal work that pays minimum wage accounts for 50% of Muskoka's workforce employed across trades, sales and service sectors.¹⁴ The population of Gravenhurst doubles annually with the influx of cottagers and seasonal residents,¹⁵ who require goods and services. In Gravenhurst, 41% of the labour force works in the tourism and services sector, in services such as accommodation, and food and beverage enterprises, which generate low wages¹⁶ and seasonal employment.

Statistics for Gravenhurst reveal that more than half of all people who reported earnings in 2005 did not have full time employment: 47% of males and 55% of females were not employed full year, full time.¹⁷ This

has negative implications for all workers, including a reduced income, insecurity of employment, lack of employee benefits such as maternity leave, and reduced or unavailable pension plans. Part-time work can limit opportunities for promotion, salary increases, training opportunities, and networking.¹⁸

Far more women than men are engaged in unpaid work including housework, child care and care for seniors in the Gravenhurst area. The unpaid work women do, particularly caring for children or older and dependent family members, may limit the kinds paid jobs they can undertake as well as the hours

¹⁰ Janet Hainsworth, Manager, Employment North, Gravenhurst Office. Feb. 5, 2013

¹¹ Women in Canada, 5th Edition, Statistics Canada, 2005(p.109)

¹² The District of Muskoka Economic Profile (Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2008)

¹³ <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/research/rtp/rtp.shtml>

¹⁴ <http://www.muskoka.on.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=563>

¹⁵ District of Muskoka Demographic Profile

¹⁶ <http://www.ggra.ca/page3.htm>

¹⁷ Statistics Canada Community Profile <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/>

¹⁸ Business Victoria (2006) Causes of Gender Pay Gap. Government of Victoria. Available at:

http://www.business.vic.gov.au/BUSVIC/STANDARD//pc=PC_61632.html quoted in Women and Financial Security, (Gender Impact Assessment No.5)

they can work for pay. Even women in full-time paid employment average fewer hours a week than men working full-time.¹⁹

Ontario has two social assistance programs to help eligible residents of Ontario who are in financial need: Ontario Disability Support Program helps people with disabilities and Ontario Works helps people who are in temporary financial need. These programs have two parts: Income Support and Employment Supports.²⁰ Ontario Works' caseload in 2011 by area municipality lists Gravenhurst at 31%, second highest in Muskoka, despite the fact that Gravenhurst has 20% of the population. Of these cases, there were 74 single females (7.3%); 90 mother-led families (8.8%); 27 couples with children, and 13 couples without children.²¹ Over 50% of the Ontario Works (OW) households are headed by a person in the 16-25 year age group. This includes single youth, as well as parents --typically sole support parents-- of whom women are the majority in Gravenhurst.²² Caseloads for Ontario Works continue to climb in Muskoka largely because of the type of work available. The seasonal work that pays minimum wage, accounts for 50% of Muskoka's workforce employed across trades, sales and service sectors.²³

Restricted access to the EI program may limit women's access to training which may be provided to recipients of EI benefits and which could help women improve their earning power. In addition, EI has a program to encourage people to "create their own jobs" by becoming self-employed. Ironically, once they do this, they may no longer be eligible for EI benefits if they are out of work.²⁴

INCOME

Earnings and income statistics reveal that Gravenhurst is not a wealthy community. 35% of income in the town is not employment related, but comes from Government support payments.²⁵ The median income for persons living in Gravenhurst in 2005 was \$23,500 as compared to the Ontario average income of \$27,000 for the year 2005.²⁶ Although incomes have risen since 2005, income for individuals in Gravenhurst still falls behind the median for Ontario by \$3,500 with a median income reported to be \$26,025 in 2011, as opposed to the Ontario median of \$29,520.²⁷ According to recent statistics, 5,412

¹⁹ <http://www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca/sites/default/files/imce/Poverty%20Issues%20for%20Canadian%20Women%20-%20Background%20Paper.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/social/>

²¹ Sandra Beausoleil, Program Information Manager, Muskoka Community Services, The District Municipality of Muskoka, e.mail, Feb. 6, 2013

²² <https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

²³ <http://www.muskoka.on.ca/siteengine/activepage.asp?PageID=563>

²⁴ <http://www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca/sites/default/files/imce/Poverty%20Issues%20for%20Canadian>

²⁵ <http://www.ggra.ca/page3.htm>

²⁶ Statistics Canada, Census 2006

²⁷ <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/famil105g-eng.htm>

persons ages 15 and over who reside in Gravenhurst report earnings of less than \$25,000, which represents a third of the population who reported earnings.²⁸

Women in Gravenhurst earn considerably less than men: average incomes are reported as \$19,000 for females and \$28,000 for males in the Statistics Canada 2006 report.²⁹ Although incomes for both males and females have increased since 2006, the gap between females and males has actually widened from \$9,000 to over \$12,000.³⁰ The incidence of low income is 8.9% for males and 9.3% for females.³¹ The fastest growing economic sector in Muskoka is the low paying retail wage sector, which employs a higher percentage of women, creating more \$10 an hour jobs and fewer dignity wage incomes for families.³²

Women are much more likely to be poor if they are on their own without a spouse or partner. Average household income in Gravenhurst is \$69,320³³. Single parent families are at higher risk of poverty because the costs of living are not appreciably reduced even though the family is largely dependent on one income. The most recent census information available indicates that 15.2% of families in Gravenhurst are lone-parent families, and 76% of lone-parent families in Gravenhurst are female led.³⁴ Single parent families have considerably lower incomes on average than two-parent households and female-led lone parent families have lower incomes than those single parent families led by males: average after-tax income for female-led lone parent households is reported as \$28,988 which is 69% of income reported by male lone-parents.³⁵ 22% of female-led lone parent families in Canada are considered low-income. The depth of poverty of lone-parent mothers is a serious concern.³⁶

In addition, figures reveal a dire situation for the senior demographic of women, of whom 1455 live in Gravenhurst. According to an article in What's Up Magazine, the estimate is there are about 1,200 women over 65 living in poverty in Muskoka. Breaking it down stepwise:

- 22 per cent of Muskoka's population is seniors
- 26 per cent of those seniors live alone
- three quarters of those single seniors are women

²⁸ www.Gravenhurst.ca Gravenhurst for Business

²⁹ Statistics Canada, Census 2006

³⁰ www.Gravenhurst.ca Gravenhurst for Business

³¹ Statistics Canada, Census 2006

³² communityinformationmuskoka.ca

³³ www.Gravenhurst.ca Gravenhurst for Business

³⁴ Statistics Canada. 2012. Gravenhurst, Ontario (Code 3544002) and Ontario (Code 35) (table). Census Profile. 2011 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-XWE. Ottawa. Released October 24, 2012. <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed February 19, 2013).

³⁵ <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed February 19, 2013).

³⁶ <http://www.rapereliefshelter.bc.ca/sites/default/files/imce/Poverty%20Issues%20for%20Canadian%20Women%20-%20Background%20Paper.pdf>

- Of them, 49% – almost half – live in poverty, as defined by Statistics Canada, meaning an income less than \$16,273.³⁷

Gravenhurst has a much higher percentage of seniors than the average for Ontario and the majority of this age group are females. Nearly 33% of these seniors rely on pensions and are on fixed incomes.³⁸ It is projected that this demographic will nearly double (94% increase) from 12,685 in 2011 to 25,122 in 2036 in Muskoka.³⁹

“With over 600 people and families on The District's wait list for social housing, we know there is a shortage of suitable housing in Muskoka. Due to the high cost of living in Muskoka and the lack of suitable housing available, coupled with the low average annual income per household and seasonal employment, there is a growing population of homeless Muskokans.”

(<http://www.communityinformationmuskoka.ca/content.php?ID=95>)

HOUSING

Housing is one of several social indicators used to measure financial security. By definition, those with housing affordability problems include families and unattached individuals who spend 30% or more of their total household income on shelter costs.⁴⁰ 25% of households in Gravenhurst report spending more than 30% of their income on housing, the highest rate of all regions within Muskoka.

According to PROMPT (Poverty Reduction of Muskoka Planning Team),

“Individuals and families living on low incomes in Muskoka (Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement), would have to spend from 69% to 127 % of their income for food and housing costs alone. Having a job does not necessarily mean that income earned will cover the cost of basic needs. When full-time minimum wage employment (\$8.75 per hour) is a Muskoka family's income source, 67 per cent of this income would be needed just to pay for food and rent.”⁴¹

Rental rates in Gravenhurst are only slightly lower than in other Muskoka towns, and there are fewer units available. Average rental rates for a 1 bedroom accommodation is \$710/month and a 2

³⁷<http://www.whatsupmuskoka.com/sitepages/?aid=5757&cn=ARCHIVED%20NEWS%20%20PHOTOS&an=Muskoka%27s%20other%20side>

³⁸ <http://www.ggra.ca/page3.htm>

³⁹ www.ywcamuskoka.com/sites/.../Stats%20%20Programs.pdf

⁴⁰ *Women in Canada*, 5th edition, Statistics Canada, 2005. p.147

⁴¹ Poverty Reduction of Muskoka Planning Team Facts Sheet. www.omssa.com/lib/db2file.asp?fileid=35924

bedroom unit is \$903/month. The average value of owned dwellings in the Gravenhurst area was \$421,078 in 2011.⁴²

Females in Gravenhurst are disproportionately impacted by insecure housing. Of the 212 available “Rent Geared to Income” units, 62% are rented by females: 51 are occupied by single women, 52 by mother-led families, 28 units are occupied by couples with children and 1 unit is occupied by a couple without children. Of the 234 people on the wait list for housing, 73% are females: 99 are single women, and 44 are mother-led families, 17 couples with children and 11 couples without children.⁴³ Gravenhurst has no affordable housing program.⁴⁴ Muskoka Community Services reports that the total number of approved applications for Emergency shelter has increased by 35.7% since 2008. The percentage of “sole supports” (of whom 75% are females in Gravenhurst), has increased by 9.2% over the same period, with the most dramatic growth from 2010 to 2011 at almost 20%.⁴⁵

CHILD CARE

Access to child care is a critical factor affecting the ability of parents to gain and maintain employment, start or operate their own business, and access education and training opportunities. However, there is only one licensed daycare program in Gravenhurst providing daycare for 64 children. This program is currently at capacity, and has a waitlist of approximately 100 children, 44 of whom are infants.⁴⁶ There are no provisions for “before school” care and 60 spaces provided for children for “after school” care.⁴⁷ A recent survey conducted by the YW4Work project indicates that child care continues to be an obstacle to employment, education and training for a significant number of women in Gravenhurst.⁴⁸

According to The District Municipality of Muskoka, the child care fee subsidy program has grown by 208% from 2006 to 2011 (from 288 to 887 children). The total number of families served per year by the Child Care Fee Subsidy Program has grown by 192% from 2006 to 2011 (228 to 666 families) in Muskoka.⁴⁹ Of the 64 children in daycare in Gravenhurst, 22 receive the subsidy. Of the approximately 50 children in after school care, 8 are currently subsidized.⁵⁰

⁴² Gravenhurst for Business. www.Gravenhurst.ca

⁴³ Sandra Beausoleil, Program Information Manager, Muskoka Community Services, The District Municipality of Muskoka, email Feb. 1, 2013

⁴⁴ <https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

⁴⁵ The District Municipality of Muskoka, Muskoka Community Services, A presentation to the Township of Lake of Bays, October 9, 2012

⁴⁶ Janice Ireland, Program Director, Gravenhurst Children’s Place. Interview, March 11, 2012.

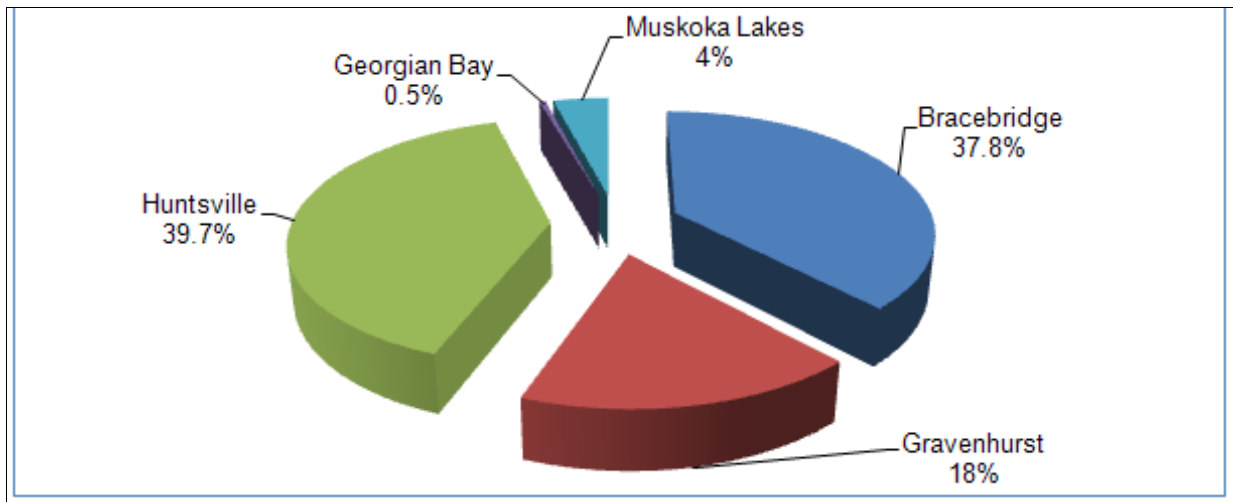
⁴⁷ <https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

⁴⁸ YW4Work Needs Assessment survey, 2012

⁴⁹ <https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

⁵⁰ Janice Ireland, Program Director, Gravenhurst Children’s Place. Interview, March 11, 2012.

Number of Children in Child Care Fee Subsidy⁵¹ -By Municipality-



EDUCATION

Level of education is one of the social indicators used to measure financial security.⁵² According to Statistics Canada, average annual earnings for both women and men (in Canada) rose with their level of education in 2008. In 2008, women with less than a Grade 9 education earned \$20,800 on average, compared with earnings of \$62,800 for women with a university degree. In contrast, men who had less than Grade 9 education earned \$40,400, compared with \$91,800 for those with a university degree.⁵³

Although the education premium was greater among women, the discrepancy between earnings for women and men at all levels of education is inequitable.

In Gravenhurst, the Educational Attainment level of both males and females falls below the provincial average in most categories, with the percentage of persons with university education reported to be less than half of the provincial average. Roughly 76% of Gravenhurst residents have a certificate, diploma, or degree. Although the percentage for persons with a college or trades and technical certifications is slightly higher than the provincial average, only 7% of females between the ages of 25 to 64 years have a certificate as opposed to 24% of males. This places women at a significant disadvantage to gain adequate employment in the Gravenhurst labour market, where 24% of jobs are in the Trades, Transportation and Equipment Operator sector, where wages are considerably higher. Although more

⁵¹<https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

⁵² <http://whv.org.au/what-we-do/workshops/applied-gender-analysis>

⁵³ Women in Canada. 5th Edition. Statistics Canada, 2005

females (12%) than males (9.7%) have a University certificate, diploma or degree, these figures fall far below the provincial average for both groups,⁵⁴ and there are many fewer positions available in the Gravenhurst area.

Characteristics ⁷	Gravenhurst	Gravenhurst (%)	Ontario (%)
Total population 25 to 64 years	6,301		7,436,263
No certificate, diploma or degree	1,521	24.1	13.3
Certificate, diploma or degree	4,780	75.9	86.7
High school certificate or equivalent	1,589	25.2	24.9
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	914	14.5	8.6
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	1,434	22.8	22.1
University certificate, diploma or degree	842	13.4	31.0
University certificate or diploma below bachelor level	92	1.5	4.6
University certificate or degree	750	11.9	26.4
Bachelor's degree	556	8.8	16.4
University certificate or diploma above bachelor level	107	1.7	3.1
Degree in medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry	26	0.4	0.7
Master's degree	38	0.6	5.3
Earned doctorate	23	0.4	0.9

Source: McSweeney & Associates from Manifold Data Mining Inc. Superdemographics 2010.

Financial strain deters women living in poverty from seeking education and skill training opportunities.⁵⁵ Although both Georgian College and Nipissing University have Muskoka Campuses, they are located in the town of Bracebridge, which requires transportation from the town of Gravenhurst and often from rural locations in the Gravenhurst area. Additional challenges, such as the availability and affordability of child care and the necessity to maintain part-time employment restrict women's access. The Adult Education and Training Centre in Gravenhurst reports that, of the 26 students ages 18 and older currently enrolled, 10 are females (37%) and 16 are males (62%).

According to a recent article published in The Toronto Star, almost half of Employment Ontario's \$1.2 billion worth of training programs are available only to people receiving employment insurance (EI) benefits. And yet, barely half of the province's jobless are eligible for EI.⁵⁶ The 2011 Ontario Works caseload breakdown for Muskoka reveals that among all the municipalities the OW density ratio is highest for Gravenhurst at 1.6, representing 31% of the total caseload. Over 50% of the Ontario Works households are headed by a person in the 16-25 year age group which includes single youth as well as

⁵⁴ <http://www.city-data.com/canada/Gravenhurst-Town-education.html>

⁵⁵ <http://www.canadianwomen.org/economic-development-resources> (Feb 27, 2012)

⁵⁶ http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2012/04/08/ontarios_job_training_shuts_out_half_of_unemployed.html

parents (typically sole support parents).⁵⁷ In Gravenhurst, there were 74 single females and 90 mother-led sole-parent households on OW in 2012.⁵⁸

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation presents a significant barrier to employment, education and training in the Gravenhurst area, and females are disproportionately disadvantaged. Of the total resident labour force, 44.6% of males and 38.0% of females have a usual place of work that is outside of Gravenhurst.⁵⁹ Although 13% of Ontarians list public transit as their mode of accessing their place of employment, this is not an option for Gravenhurst residents where there is no public transit available. The car is reported as the main mode of transportation, as driver or as passenger. 83% of males and 72% of females report the car, as driver their method of transportation. Many more women rely on others for transportation as a passenger: 16% females as opposed to 9% males report the car, as passenger as their mode of transportation to work. Only 7% of males and 10% of females access work by walking or riding a bicycle. This may reflect the fact that many places of employment, such as resorts and major building sites are located beyond the town core. Only 52% of males and 60% of females report working in the same census subdivision as their residence in Gravenhurst, making transportation an essential element in accessing employment.⁶⁰ Of the 49 female respondents in the recent YW4Work survey, 13 report that they do not have adequate access to transportation, and 2 report that they sometimes have adequate access to transportation.⁶¹

MINORITY AND MARGINALIZED POPULATIONS

In 2006, Gravenhurst's population was 95.6% white, 2.0% Aboriginal and 2.4% visible minorities. Current demographic information indicates that Gravenhurst remains a largely white, English speaking community. There are 205 Aboriginal people living in the community, of whom 95 are male and 110 are female. Of the total population of 245 of visible minorities, the majority are females: 10 Chinese, 115 Black, 10 Southeast Asian, and 10 Korean, representing 59% of the total.

⁵⁴<https://lakeofbays.civicweb.net/FileStorage/082C7ACF24064E8A90FDAF737DC8B152-12%2010%2009%20District%20Community%20Services.pdf>

⁵⁸Sandra Beausoleil, Program Information Manager, Muskoka Community Services, The District Municipality of Muskoka, email Feb. 1, 2013

⁵⁹ Gravenhurst Market Sector Analysis, McSweeney & Associates. December 31, 2010

⁶⁰ <http://www.city-data.com/canada/Gravenhurst-Town-education.html>

⁶¹ YW4Work Needs Assessment survey, 2012

Women with disabilities tend to have fewer employment opportunities, low incomes, and additional expenses due to the disability.⁶² Statistics as of December 31, 2012 show that there were 1466 Ontario Disability Support Program cases in the District of Muskoka. In addition to 1466 cases, there were 265 children under the age of 18, 26 dependent adults - adults over the age of 18 living with parent(s) on ODSP and 245 spouses. In total, there were 2002 people receiving benefits from the Ontario Disability Support Program in the District of Muskoka as of December 31st, 2012.⁶³ Disaggregated statistics were not available.

HEALTH AND SECURITY

International research shows that long term exposure to financial hardship has a negative impact on health, and that women are more affected by this.⁶⁴ In Simcoe/South Muskoka, which includes Gravenhurst, 63.4% of females and 61.5% of males report their perceived overall health as very good or excellent, and females report a slightly higher rate of perceived life stress than the Ontario average.⁶⁵ However, statistics for self-injury hospitalizations per 100,000 for the same period and region are startling:

Simcoe/Muskoka		Ontario	
Male	Female	Male	Female
98	154	51	76

⁶² Women and Financial Security. Gender Impact Assessment No. 5, August 2008. Women's Health Victoria

⁶³ Margaret Buddo, Local Office Manager, Ministry of Community and Social Services, North East Region. email March 4, 2012

⁶⁴ Women and Financial Security. Gender impact Assessment No. 5 August 2008. Women's Health Victoria

⁶⁵ <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/health-sante/82-228/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=HR&Code1=3560&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Rate&SearchText=Simcoe%20Muskoka%20District%20Health%20Unit&SearchType=Contains&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

Likewise, mental illness hospitalization rates for the region are higher than the provincial average⁶⁶:

Simcoe/Muskoka		Ontario	
Male	Female	Male	Female
532	539	414	403

Although these statistics are not specific to Gravenhurst, they are considered to be representative of the Gravenhurst area.⁶⁷ There is no hospital or “Walk-In” clinic in Gravenhurst.

In the past fiscal year, a total of 208 different women and their children escaping abusive relationships

Women from Gravenhurst have to leave their town, their employment and child care, and relocate their children to new schools in order to access shelter from an abusive situation.

resided in shelters in Muskoka: the Muskoka Interval House in Bracebridge and Chrysalis in Huntsville. The majority of these women are between the ages of 19 and 45. Children who stay in the shelters are most frequently 6-12 years of age or younger.⁶⁸ Some of these women are from the Gravenhurst area. There is no shelter located in the town of Gravenhurst.

Statistics supplied by the Muskoka/Parry Sound Sexual Assault Services for 2011/2012 indicate that they responded to 1009 calls, 83 of which came from the Gravenhurst area. Women in Gravenhurst face additional challenges in accessing support as the only office is located in Bracebridge. Barriers include transportation, which is no longer funded without the written support of a Psychologist or Psychiatrist. In addition, women from Gravenhurst have to leave their town, their employment and child care, and relocate their children to new schools in order to access shelter. As a result, many women do not receive the assistance that they require either to report assault or to escape from abuse.⁶⁹

⁶⁶<http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/health-sante/82-228/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Tab=1&Geo1=HR&Code1=3560&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Rate&SearchText=Simcoe%20Muskoka%20District%20Health%20Unit&SearchType=Contains&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

⁶⁷ Mary Ellen Deane, Public Health Dietician, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Feb. 27, 2013

⁶⁸<http://www.mwag.ca/>

⁶⁹ Lauren Power, Therapist, Muskoka/Parry Sound Sexual Assault Services. Interview, Feb. 27, 2013.

CONCLUSION

This gender based analysis is intended to inform the YW4Work project in developing a community-based economic development plan, by outlining the major issues facing the Gravenhurst area, particularly as they impact women.

Females in the Gravenhurst area face significant challenges. Unemployment and under-employment expose women to financial risk. Women have less security due to reduced work force participation, the gender pay gap, lack of accessible education and training, and interruption to paid work due to pregnancy, childbirth, childcare, and the care of seniors. The seasonal nature of the tourism industry contributes to the lack of full- time, year- round and economically sustaining employment. There are more female- led lone parent families with low incomes and more women over 65, many of whom are living without partners, on pensions and fixed incomes.

Lack of transportation limits women's access to work, health, and education facilities. It tends to isolate women from social participation, from accessing support and from escaping abusive situations. Insecure housing further contributes to women's lack of security and financial independence.

There are fewer supports and services available to women in Gravenhurst than in the other towns in Muskoka. There are no women's shelters, sexual assault services or "Walk-In" medical clinics in the town. There is no hospital. Licensed child care is limited and there are currently no spaces available. There are no college or university satellites in Gravenhurst. There is a wait-list for social housing.

Issues identified by this analysis will provide background for initiatives intended to improve the social and economic well-being of the community, and particularly the women of Gravenhurst.

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