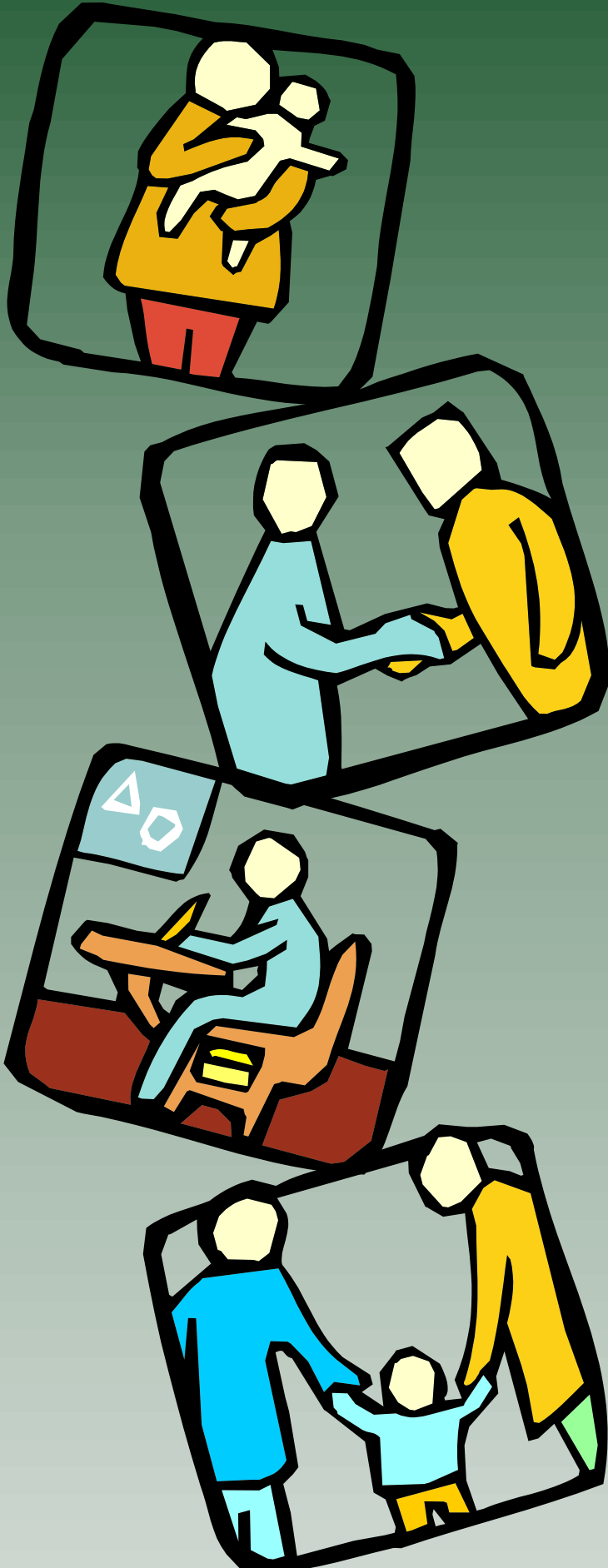


People, Partners and Prosperity

A Strategic
Social Plan for
Newfoundland
and Labrador
1998



GOVERNMENT OF
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR



Foreword



The Honourable Brian Tobin

With the release of this Strategic Social Plan, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is renewing its commitment to address our social challenges and meet the changing needs of our citizens. The Plan also begins the process of forging the essential link between social and economic development.

New ideas and innovative measures are needed to bring meaningful change. People, within their communities and regions, have a critical role in making choices about their future. Therefore, the Strategic Social Plan provides an action framework focused on an integrated, holistic approach to social policy development and the new alliances needed to incorporate community needs and priorities in social and economic programs affecting them.

Change has already started. Reform of the education system is underway. Health and Community Services Boards have been established. Income support will be redesigned to assist those most in need and to remove barriers to work. A provincial literacy plan is being developed. Young people are being assisted in finding jobs and furthering their education. And, we have started addressing child poverty through provincial support measures related to the National Child Benefit program for all low-income families with children.

Our economy is in transition, presenting us with new challenges. Yet it is also growing and presenting us with new opportunities. Managing this transition requires that we work together to balance economic and social development, to build on existing community and regional strengths, and invest in people to create the opportunities and services needed to support them in the regions where they live.

I offer my sincere thanks to the Social Policy Advisory Committee for their efforts in conducting the public consultation process and preparing the reports which provided the foundation for this Strategic Social Plan.

The Strategic Social Plan provides the framework we need for people, organizations and government to work together and create a future filled with opportunity and choice.

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Vision, Values, Goals

Our Vision

Our vision for Newfoundland and Labrador is of a healthy, educated, distinctive, self-reliant and prosperous people living in vibrant, supportive communities within sustainable regions.

Our Values

Self-reliance

Collaboration

Social Justice

Equity

Fairness

Our Goals

Vibrant communities and regions in which people actively participate in their collective well-being.

Sustainable regions based on strategic investment in individuals, families and communities.

Self-reliant, healthy, educated individuals and families living in safe, nurturing communities.

Integrated and evidence-based policy development and monitoring as the foundation for the design, delivery and evaluation of social development programs and services.

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	i
Vision, Values, Goals.....	iii
Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Purpose	3
The Need for a Strategic Social Plan	3
Development of the Plan	3
Chapter 2: Tackling The Issues.....	5
Issues and Challenges.....	7
A New Framework for Social Development	8
Strategic Directions	9
Building on Community and Regional Strengths	9
Integrating Social and Economic Development.....	10
Investing in People	11
New Ways of Working Together	12
Chapter 3: Progress Through Partnerships	13
Government Accountability	15
The Role of Government in the Strategic Social Plan	15
The Role of the Cabinet Committee.....	15
Interdepartmental Partnerships.....	16
Strategic Partnerships with the Federal Government.....	16
Strategic Partnerships with the Community	16
Premier's Council on Social Development.....	17
Building Regional Partnerships.....	17
Building Community Partnerships	18
Supporting the Partnerships	18
Chapter 4: Taking Action	21
Goals and Objectives.....	23
Vibrant Communities and Regions	24
Sustainable Regional Economies	26
Self-reliant, Healthy, Educated Individuals and Families	28
Integrated, Evidence-based Policies and Programs	30
Implementing the Framework	32
Chapter 5: Monitoring Actions, Achieving Goals.....	33
Monitoring Outcomes: A Social Audit	36
Well-Being	36
Employment and Economic Security.....	36
Community Stability	36
Chapter 6: Conclusion	37

This Page is left intentionally blank.



Chapter 1

“Social policy is about how people interact. It is about processes, transactions and institutions which promote an individual's sense of identity, participation and community. Good social policy promotes freedom of choice and social solidarity. It is the embodiment of values and relationships which enhance human well-being.”

Social policy is also about the allocation and distribution of resources for the benefit of all people. It plays a critical bridging role during times of economic and social change. It should focus on people's needs by building a strong social infrastructure.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Introduction

Purpose
The Need for a Strategic Social Plan
Development of the Plan

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Introduction

Purpose

The Strategic Social Plan is an overall framework for responding to the needs and aspirations of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians in a coherent and effective manner. It is intended to address current social development needs and to incorporate the means of anticipating and responding to new challenges as they arise.



The Plan focuses on new strategic directions, broad goals and objectives. It does not deal with specific changes to individual programs and services. Government departments will undertake their own planning initiatives, incorporating strategies which are consistent with the new directions, goals and objectives of the Strategic Social Plan.

Like all good plans, the Strategic Social Plan must evolve in response to changing circumstances. This will require monitoring, re-assessment and adjustment over time. All partners involved in social development will need to participate in this process.

The Need for a Strategic Social Plan

Everyone in Newfoundland and Labrador benefits from the province's social programs. People rely on health care and educational services. They gain from good environmental policies and programs. Jobs and a safe workplace are important to families and to the

economy. The justice system protects citizens and helps to rehabilitate those who have committed offenses. Cultural and recreational programs enrich people's lives. Housing and income support programs enhance the well-being of a wide range of people. Other social programs assist people who are vulnerable and help them to gain or regain their independence.

Together, these programs and services make society function better, equip people to face challenges and enhance their quality of life. They also make Newfoundland and Labrador a better place to live and a more competitive place to do business.

As taxpayers, everyone has a strong interest in how social programs work and how they are managed. Well-run, effective programs cost less money and improve the province's chances for economic prosperity. Conversely, economic prosperity allows more to be invested in areas such as health care and social services.

Development of the Plan

In June 1996, the Premier, the Honourable Brian Tobin, released the *Strategic Social Plan Consultation Paper*. In July, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador appointed a Social Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) to conduct public consultations throughout the province. The Committee was made up of fourteen independent volunteers from various regions, backgrounds and interests.

After extensive consultations and dialogue with people representing the general public, special interest groups, organizations, service providers and government employees, SPAC prepared two reports.

The first, *Volume I: What the People Said* was released in March 1997 and reported on the consultation process and public comments and ideas. It forcefully confirmed the need for a strategic plan to meet the challenges being faced today, to address the issues that the future may bring, and to create an environment for the continued development of Newfoundland and Labrador as a caring society and a self-reliant people.

Volume II: Investing in People and Communities, A Framework for Social Development was released in April 1997. This report proposed new strategic directions and initiatives based on the consultations and SPAC's assessment of Newfoundland and Labrador's requirements in the coming years.¹

Government endorsed the Social Policy Advisory Committee's recommendations in principle, and formed special ministerial and interdepartmental committees to develop the Strategic Social Plan.

Since the release of the SPAC reports, these committees have reviewed additional documents, as well as other relevant provincial, national and international studies.

Collectively, the consultations, research and analyses have led to the conclusion that Government and its partners in the community need to think differently about the outcomes that have to be achieved and about how to achieve them.

¹ Copies of these reports are available from the Queen's Printer.



Chapter 2

“Just as the causes of social problems are complex and interlinked so, too, are the solutions. There is no single strategy to respond to the high levels of unemployment, reduce the causes of stress and family violence, improve health, eradicate the effects of poverty, and ensure sound early childhood development. Nor is there an easy solution to raising the revenues necessary to maintain social programs.

We have two choices to confront these problems: adjusting and adapting existing programs within the current social policy framework, or formulating significant new approaches within a new framework.

... New approaches to social policy require more coherent planning and decision-making. Policy coherence among financial, economic, environmental and social policy directions must be directed at the highest level.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Tackling the Issues

Issues and Challenges

A New Framework for Social Development

Strategic Directions

New Ways of Working Together

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Tackling the Issues

Issues and Challenges

Both the *Strategic Social Plan Consultation Paper*, released by Government before the public consultation process, and many of the submissions received by SPAC documented the concerns, hopes and priorities of people throughout the province.



Employment is the chief concern of many people. People want to work, to be self-reliant, to regain their dignity, and to stop worrying about their financial security. The lack of adequately paid work is also the main cause of poverty, which engenders an array of social problems and exacts a high personal, social and financial cost. Without sufficient income, some families are unable to feed or care for their children adequately. This often leads to hunger, illness, exclusion and social isolation, which may in turn result in failure in school, delinquency and other problems for the individual and for society. Poverty is also more common among women and children, and in particular among teenage mothers and elderly women.

These conditions, combined with an aging population, have increased demands on most social programs. The population is getting older not only because people are living longer, but because the province's young people are migrating to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere. Many of those leaving are well-educated and highly-skilled individuals who are needed to help diversify and strengthen the provincial economy and its social institutions.

If these trends continue, they will significantly affect the kind and extent of the social programs needed in the future. The school system will face continuing challenges and increasing costs because of lower enrolments. The health care sector will have to respond to the needs of more elderly people. Fewer people and an aging population also mean that all Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will have to bear a greater burden for providing public services and infrastructure.

Newfoundland and Labrador has a small population living in more than 700 communities scattered over a large land mass. Consequently, providing health care, municipal services, highways and roads, good schools and other essential services has always been very costly. Changing demographics will make it even more costly to provide such services in the future.

All these issues have resulted in concerns about the viability of some rural communities. Residents are worried that new services will not come their way, that there will be reductions in the services they currently have as the population declines.

Government recognizes that work and economic security are key to ensuring the long-term well-being of people, communities and the province. Government is therefore committed, through this Strategic Social Plan, to ensuring that social and economic policy development, planning and investments go hand-in-hand. As a consequence, the Plan is designed to address the key challenges of:

- ▶ supporting people to achieve their potential,
- ▶ supporting employment and economic security,
- ▶ achieving community stability.

A New Framework for Social Development

Government recognizes that these challenges cannot be addressed simply by adjusting existing policies and programs. New approaches to social policy development are required. People need new and more effective ways of working together to develop and deliver programs and services to achieve effective outcomes.

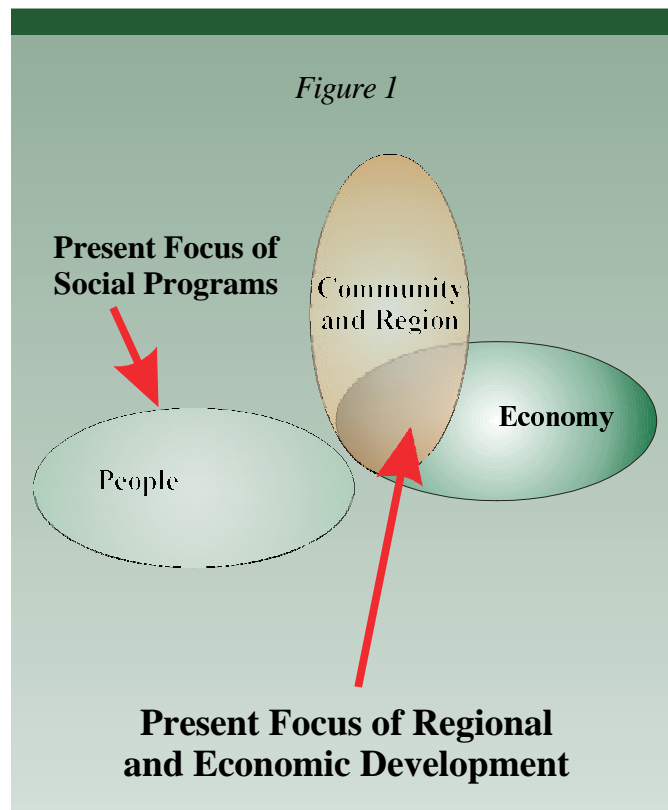
In its report *Investing in People and Communities, A Framework for Social Development*, the Social Policy Advisory Committee stated that the province must develop a new social policy framework to meet these challenges, a framework “founded on the concept of social development and which acknowledges the essential roles of individuals and communities in fostering social and economic well-being”. Based on its consultations with the public, SPAC proposed major shifts in Government’s approach to policy and practice in order to establish that framework.

In particular, SPAC stressed the importance of recognizing and acting on the close relationship between people’s social and economic well-being. It recommended tackling the root causes of social problems within the context of the communities and the broader socio-economic setting in which people live.

Government’s approach to economic development, its *Growth Agenda*, is rooted firmly in regions and communities through the Economic Zones. In the social sector, however, Government and other service providers have tended to focus programs on delivering services to individuals, often in isolation from the larger context in which they live. This approach does not consider the many factors which may be contributing to these problems, nor does it consider opportunities which may exist within particular regions and communities for solving them (**Figure 1**). Examining issues from the broader community context in which people live, work and interact is referred to as “place-based” in this Plan.

Shifting social development to a place-based approach will help to integrate social and economic development by matching social investment with current

community and region-based development approaches. This will shift the focus from treating individual problems to addressing the underlying causes of those problems by considering people’s needs in the context of their communities and their socio-economic environment. Reorienting social programs and services from remedial approaches to strategies which address the root causes of problems will also result in programming that is more efficient and more cost effective.



This shift (**Figure 2**) simultaneously supports people, strengthens communities and regions, and enhances opportunities for economic development throughout the province. These changes can make people and society stronger, healthier, more prosperous and better prepared to meet the challenges ahead.

Strategic Directions

To establish the new framework for social development, the Strategic Social Plan employs three inter-related strategies:

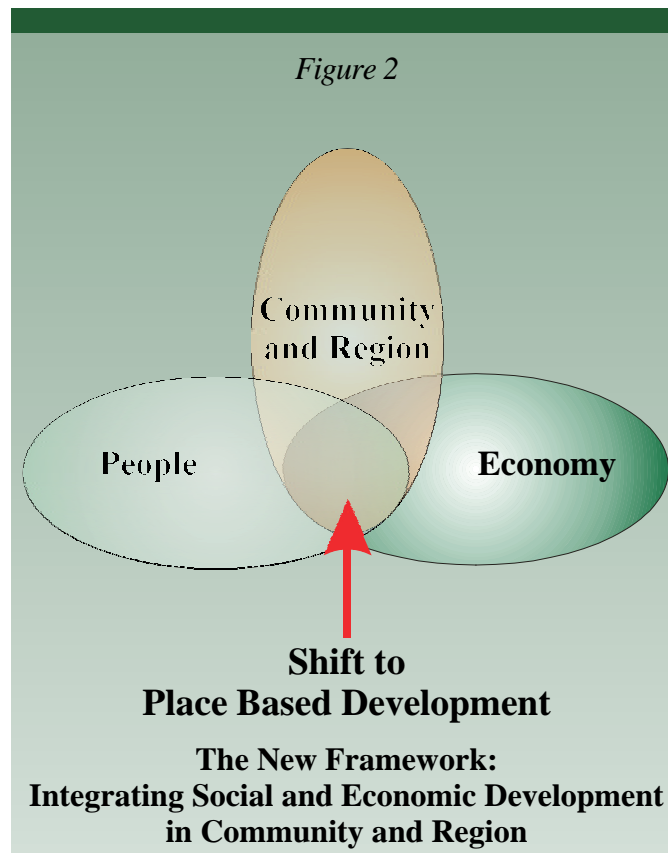
- ▶ building on community and regional strengths,
- ▶ integrating social and economic development,
- ▶ investing in people.

Building on Community and Regional Strengths

The Strategic Social Plan's shift to place-based development approaches will require strengthening existing regional and community capacity and resources. Government recognizes the challenges associated with helping rural communities build on their strengths and find long-term solutions for the difficult circumstances resulting from the crisis in the fishery and out-migration. It will support economic development initiatives wherever they can be established and can flourish. It will ensure that human resources and support services are available to cultivate industry and support its labour force requirements.

The Strategic Social Plan focuses on strengthening communities and regions:

- ▶ to become more self-sustaining,
- ▶ to support individual and community well-being,
- ▶ to provide people with opportunities for choice.



Strengthening communities and regions happens best when people have access to employment, basic services, and infrastructure within the general locality. Within many localities, certain communities have emerged as service and employment centres. These centres have developed because economic opportunities have changed, service provision has evolved and transportation systems have improved. An important challenge in implementing this Plan will be focusing social investments within lo-

calities in a manner that ensures key services are available, accessible and linked with economic development.

For some communities, particularly in remote areas, the challenge will involve finding new ways to ensure that individuals have access to the support services they require. Government must work with individuals and communities in such areas to ensure that their basic needs are met with the resources that are available. This may mean finding new ways to meet service needs and new approaches for addressing accessibility such as the “clustering” of services. It

may also mean identifying cost effective methods to facilitate servicing in smaller, more remote communities.

The main challenge is to provide access to essential services while maximizing social and economic investments where they can be most effective. Involving the community-based sector (sometimes referred to as the *third sector*² or *voluntary sector*) will help to ensure that initiatives better respond to local and regional needs. Community involvement through the community-based sector will also help ensure that proposed solutions are workable and feasible.

Community-based organizations play a vital role in both personal and community development, and contribute substantially to the cultural, social and economic life of the province. People come together to respond to community needs through the community-based sector. Participation in voluntary organizations is a basic building block of community leadership, which is essential to capacity building. People in this sector are active in program and service delivery, employment creation and business development, human resource development and education.

A community's capacity to work together effectively in collective action depends on leadership, experience, knowledge and preparedness. This capacity often called "social capital," improves quality of life, increases business competitiveness, supports and sustains individuals, increases cultural opportunities and focuses the resources and talents within communities toward achieving common objectives.

Government recognizes that when people work together in community-based groups and

organizations, they create an effective vehicle for identifying and responding to local needs and priorities, and for developing effective strategies to deal with them. Community participation in decision-making with respect to the delivery of services and programs that affect the community increases the level of satisfaction with those decisions. A regular process of public participation can promote inclusiveness and thus a sense of social cohesion and civic responsibility.

Changing demographics and increasing expectations are multiplying the demand on the community-based sector. Consequently, many volunteers and voluntary agency employees now feel overburdened and under-supported – "burnt out" by rising demands and diminishing resources. Volunteerism is an essential component of a healthy community. Government recognizes this and will work with the community-based sector to support its social development role.

While the community-based sector requires support from Government, it must also retain its roots in the community in order to provide services and support in ways that satisfy the people it serves and the volunteers themselves. To ensure the strengthening of local leadership, Government will place greater emphasis on partnering with this sector to achieve its social development goals.

Integrating Social and Economic Development

Linking the social and economic sectors will help coordinate investments in order to achieve common objectives.

Many studies have shown that economic well-being is strongly associated with physical well-being, emotional health and educational attainment. For

²It is called the "third sector" because it is neither government (the public sector) nor business (the private sector). It is made up of a variety of groups, ranging from informal associations to registered charities which have volunteer governance and do work that benefits society, the community or a group within the community.

example, people who are unemployed or living in poverty are more likely to be under stress, which in turn, can lead to health problems. In addition, not being able to afford nutritious food can affect the health of whole families. Such problems place more demand on our social support systems.

On the other hand, people who are healthy, educated and confident are better prepared to find employment, initiate new business opportunities and contribute to economic development.

Employment is the most basic link between social and economic development. The development of business and industrial opportunities not only creates employment but also tackles the root causes of many social problems. Similarly, investing in education and training, supporting cultural development, ensuring that people are healthy and well-nourished, and providing adequate child care, strengthens people's ability to take part in economic development opportunities.

Government recognizes that investing in employment opportunities in the community-based sector has great value. Not only does this sector benefit from the dedicated commitment of countless volunteers, it employs a significant number of people in a wide range of paid jobs. The combined effort of these people contributes enormously to individual and community well-being. This ensures that local needs can be addressed close to home, by people who understand these needs.

Employment in the community-based sector includes work in:

- ▶ community businesses, such as cooperatives and community development projects, which can lead to long-term employment,
- ▶ volunteer and not for profit organizations which can sponsor services such as early childhood programs, community kitchens and services for persons with disabilities,

- ▶ community projects which maintain or enhance community infrastructure such as environmental protection and municipal maintenance.

Paid work in this sector distributes employment opportunities more widely across the province since it is less subject to purely economic considerations. Voluntary organizations also provide good work experience and skills development for volunteers in regions where private-sector employment is scarce.

Strong participation in the community-based sector is an extremely effective means of creating the foundation, confidence and climate needed for the development of new economic opportunities and the growth of entrepreneurship.

Investing in People

While it is important and acceptable to invest in the province's physical infrastructure, it is equally important to invest in its social infrastructure. This may require a significant shift in thinking for some. Social programs must be viewed not as a drain on financial resources but as a critical investment in the people of our province.

The concept of *investing in people* implies a shift from the traditional remedial model of crisis intervention to approaches which emphasize prevention and early intervention. For instance, strengthening programs aimed at supporting children and their families can head off a host of problems before they occur, and before they become very difficult, painful and expensive to solve.

While an investment in prevention requires more up-front spending, the return on investment is substantial in the longer term. This approach is more cost-effective than continuing to spend limited resources on services that never remove the cause.

To be effective, services must be designed around people's needs. Current programs often have difficulty accommodating the needs of people who do not fit rigid program criteria. Other people find that their issues are caught between departmental jurisdictions. Coordination of services and resources across departments and agencies is essential if the needs of individuals are to be met comprehensively and efficiently.

Government departments need to cooperate not only with one another but also with community groups in the design and delivery of services which are appropriate and effective for each client group. This will ensure a seamless and accessible continuum of services in which needs are identified at the earliest stage and met in a timely, efficient and flexible manner.

A holistic, integrated, client-centred approach involves the client and, where appropriate, family members. In addition to ensuring that services are appropriate and effective, direct participation will enhance personal dignity and assist in developing self-reliance.

Providing services within the general locality of the person's home community will increase the opportunities for community participation in service delivery and enhance self-reliance. It will maintain familiar links with education, work and community resources, which should, in turn, increase stability and reduce the need for crisis interventions.

New Ways of Working Together

Government alone cannot implement the Strategic Social Plan. If effective solutions are to be achieved, all stakeholders must have a chance to participate. This will require new partnerships and alliances among government, the community and individuals.

Implementing the Strategic Social Plan requires better coordination within Government and increased cooperation with community groups. This means more integrated planning within government departments and agencies, and stronger alliances with communities and regional boards.

Government will shift its approach from crisis-driven responses to a planned investment model. It will move away from remedial programs toward proactive approaches that effect long-term solutions. Wherever possible, policy development will stress the well-being of the whole population.

Working together can bring valuable benefits to all those involved. A partnership approach to policy development and service delivery will help ensure that social programs are more responsive to local and regional needs.



Chapter 3

“The Social Policy Advisory Committee has proposed that the Provincial Government adopt a new framework for social development which is based on investing in people by integrating economic and social initiatives and by strengthening individual, family and community resources. Establishing this framework and advancing its objectives demand a significant shift in policy-making, a reorientation to horizontal policy and program design, and reorganized service-delivery systems.

The new model focuses on prevention and early intervention: client-centred, integrated service provision; improved research capacity and knowledge-based policy-making and program design; improved data collection, accountability, and evaluation methods; ongoing collaboration with the public; and building strong partnerships with community groups. ...

If Government accepts the recommendation of the Social Policy Advisory Committee to adopt a whole new approach to social policy, then it should signal its commitment through tangible action. Immediate and concerted efforts will be needed to review and act upon the multitude of changes required. Catalysts must be established at the highest level within Government and through a broad-based community alliance.

Catalysts for change must exist both within Government and at the community level.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Progress Through Partnerships

Government Accountability

The Role of Government in the Strategic Social Plan

Strategic Partnerships with the Community

Supporting the Partnerships

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Progress Through Partnerships

Social progress is only possible through efforts that draw together the various sectors in society. Government is committed to implementing the Strategic Social Plan through a partnership approach.



Community groups, regional boards, individuals and governments working together toward common goals and objectives can draw on their different backgrounds, expertise and strengths to achieve the broad solutions that this Plan seeks. Government cannot do it alone.

Government Accountability

While partnerships are central to successful implementation of the Strategic Social Plan, final responsibility for the Plan, however rests with Government. This is based on its elected mandate. In general, Government has a responsibility to:

- ▶ establish broad provincial public-policy directions and ensure accountability for achieving those directions,
- ▶ allocate public resources in keeping with policy directions and ensure accountability for expenditure of public funds,
- ▶ establish provincial standards for the delivery of public services and ensure compliance with these standards.

In order to accomplish its policy objectives, Government will delegate certain authorities but it will continue to retain the means for ensuring that its responsibilities are fulfilled and accountability is maintained.

The Role of Government in the Strategic Social Plan

The Strategic Social Plan requires a strong policy base within Government and equally strong management support to move forward. Departments will be guided by the strategic directions contained in the Plan in preparing their annual plans and budgets. A Cabinet Committee will provide the strategic direction necessary to ensure the intent of the Strategic Social Plan is carried forward into action.

The Role of the Cabinet Committee

The Cabinet Committee vested with responsibility for the Plan will be the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet consisting of the Ministers of Education, Health and Community Services, Human Resources and Employment, Justice, Municipal and Provincial Affairs, Environment and Labour, Government Services and Lands and Tourism, Culture and Recreation. As well, the Chair of the Economic Policy Committee of Cabinet, the Minister of Finance and the President of Treasury Board, and the Chair of the Cabinet Committee on Rural Revitalization will participate. The Premier will designate a lead Minister for the Plan. These Ministers will ensure that the directions of Government are carried out and that Cabinet is kept fully apprised of all developments related to the Plan. Specifically, the Cabinet Committee will work toward:

- ▶ integrating social and economic policy and planning,
- ▶ conducting the business of Government in a way that supports coordination and integration and emphasizes accountability for results,
- ▶ providing for meaningful public input in the design and delivery of public services through

regionalized/decentralized structures,

- ▶ strengthening capacity within regions to support community action around social development goals and ensuring coordination of effort to achieve the Plan's outcomes,
- ▶ accomplishing the policy and program shift from crisis and reactive approaches to prevention and early intervention.

The Cabinet Committee will be assisted in this role by Deputy Ministers who will have administrative responsibility for the Plan's implementation under the direction of Ministers. As well, the Assistant Secretary to Cabinet for Social Policy will provide support services to Ministers and Deputy Ministers in carrying out these functions and will serve as a central contact point for the Plan.

Interdepartmental Partnerships

Within Government, action will need to focus on developing links among the many departments and agencies involved in both the social and economic sectors. These links are essential to:

- ▶ integrating social and economic policy and planning,
- ▶ harmonizing programs and services,
- ▶ making any financial adjustments.

The development of these interdepartmental links will build on the efforts of front-line, public sector professionals who have promoted the importance of holistic and multi disciplinary approaches. The Strategic Social Plan formalizes Government's commitment to this new way of working. Government has also taken steps within Public Service Reform to introduce and support progressive management and human resource development practices that complement the Plan's directions.

The Cabinet Committee will ensure that appropriate

mechanisms are put in place to support cross-departmental decision making. Government has introduced a formal departmental planning process which will be used to support these directions.

Strategic Partnerships with the Federal Government

The federal government is a significant partner in social development. Its role extends from delivering national initiatives such as employment insurance to providing financial support for provincial programs. Federal participation ensures social programs are of comparable quality from one province to another and enables provinces with limited resources to deliver these programs. A strong social union is a crucial aspect of Canadian unity.

Both orders of government can improve efforts to coordinate, deliver and support social programs. Clarification of roles and responsibilities will improve services by limiting the confusion people sometimes face when dealing with two orders of government. Regular dialogue and more collaboration will improve efficiencies, reduce duplication, strengthen accountabilities and ensure good program ideas are not lost. Continuous and meaningful dialogue with the federal government will demonstrate a shared sense of responsibility and strengthen the commitment to strong social programs. These new and stronger alliances will assist communities and individuals to achieve the social development objectives they seek.

Strategic Partnerships with the Community

The Strategic Social Plan is based on Government and the community finding more effective ways to work together to address social and economic development issues. Together, they can look at problems from a holistic and more general perspective rather than

adopting a more confined and specialized approach. They can attack problems at the source rather than always treating the symptoms. Lastly and most importantly, the Plan reinforces that effective solutions arise from a *shared* sense of responsibility and a capacity to act which only comes from involving people. An important challenge for Government is to find appropriate ways to foster the broad participatory processes that support implementation of the Plan.

Premier's Council on Social Development

The Premier will establish a Council on Social Development to provide advice on provincial directions for social development. Specific emphasis will be placed on the links between social and economic development, on population health and well-being and on economic security. The Council will play a significant role in advising Government with respect to achieving the goals and objectives of the Strategic Social Plan. The Premier will appoint members to the Council who will provide expertise in matters relating to social development and reflect the diverse views and regions of the province.

The Council will provide advice through round table discussions and through research and assessment activities on questions referred to it by the Premier or Ministers. It will be involved in the process leading up to the development of the social audit. Opportunities also will be provided for the Council to exchange views on social development issues with the Cabinet Committee and with the Premier's Advisory Council on Economy and Technology.

The Minister designated as lead Minister for the Plan as well as the Chair of the Social Policy Committee of Cabinet will sit as *ex-officio* members. The Assistant Secretary to Cabinet for Social Policy shall be the Executive Secretary of the Council.

Building Regional Partnerships

During the public consultation process, community groups and agencies throughout the province told SPAC that they wanted to be part of the solution. They wanted an active role in implementing the Strategic Social Plan and in assessing its effectiveness. Government accepts this position and furthermore recognizes that progress will depend on such involvement. The issues confronting the province are not ones that Government action alone can resolve.

Government has already demonstrated its commitment to approaches that involve people directly in the development and implementation of public policy. Regional boards have been established to deliver key public services and to coordinate local economic and community development. These regional boards carry out their respective mandates in partnership with Government and in keeping with an accountability framework. The boards include:

- ▶ Health Institutions Boards,
- ▶ Health and Community Services Boards,
- ▶ School Boards,
- ▶ Economic Development Boards.

Government views these regional bodies as key partners in the Plan's implementation by virtue of their delegated roles and mandates. These regional boards form a strategic link between Government and the community. They have been established to ensure that public policies, programs and services are responsive to local conditions while remaining consistent with overall provincial policy directions. Individually, the roles performed by these boards are onerous and complex. Collectively, these regional boards are already confronting many of the challenges that are central to the Strategic Social Plan.

If the Strategic Social Plan is to have meaning for communities, regional boards provide a logical base

from which to support local efforts and recognize local leadership. The Cabinet Committee, assisted by Deputy Ministers, will actively work with and support these regional partners to develop processes that will:

- ▶ achieve coordinated and integrated approaches to meeting their mandates and responding to the social development needs of their region,
- ▶ achieve effective stakeholder and community involvement in regional social development, as well as strengthen the volunteer and leadership capacity of communities at a local level,
- ▶ strengthen the channels for regional input into Government's social policy development and decisionmaking.

These are important objectives that will result in additional shared responsibilities for the regional boards. Government will consult further with boards, to identify approaches that could be used to achieve these objectives and the supports necessary to make this happen. The needs of each area may also require that approaches be unique to a region or adapted to meet regional experience.

The approaches chosen by the regional partners will also need to accommodate the involvement of other community partners such as municipalities, the community-based sector and provincial and federal government direct service providers.

Building Community Partnerships

In addition to strong partnerships at the regional level, the Strategic Social Plan will require broad participation at the community level. It will need to develop the capacity of communities to *act* in ways that support the overall objectives of the Plan and respond to unique regional circumstances. The development of community capacity means *supporting* active involvement of community groups,

volunteers and all citizens who ultimately build healthy, supportive communities.

One of the primary goals of building strong partnerships at the regional level is to develop the capacity for *building and supporting* local community involvement and action. Each region may have different needs in this regard and the regional partners, in cooperation with the stakeholders groups, may devise a variety of ways to achieve the outcome.

The community-based sector can perform a number of essential roles in implementing the Strategic Social Plan. These include:

- ▶ partnering with regional boards to plan for integrated social and economic development,
- ▶ implementing regional prevention strategies on a local basis,
- ▶ providing voluntary services on a coordinated, client-centred basis,
- ▶ contracting with Government to provide client services on behalf of Government, where appropriate,
- ▶ providing employment opportunities in the sector to deliver services, implementing programs and carrying out social and economic development work.

Leadership skills must be strengthened in localities where the community-based sector is under-developed. This will enable the sector to effectively participate in the Strategic Social Plan.

Supporting the Partnerships

Government is committed to ensuring the effectiveness of these partnerships and achieving the strategic directions outlined in the Plan. The appointment of the Premier's Council on Social Development serves to reinforce that commitment.

Government also recognizes that resources will be required to:

- ▶ assist groups to work together in regional and community partnerships,
- ▶ support strategic directions, particularly the shift to prevention and early intervention,
- ▶ undertake flexible initiatives that support the Plan's objectives,
- ▶ build community capacity.

Government has committed financial resources to begin to implement this Plan. During the regular budgetary process it will consider further social investment within the context of available resources.

This Page is left intentionally blank.



Chapter 4

“If we wish to protect our Province, if we want to develop its potential, if we want to build on what is good about Newfoundland and Labrador, and if we want to foster social and economic change and development, then we must quickly regroup to find new ways of doing things.

This is not a job for Government alone. It is not a job for the private sector, the public sector or the community in isolation. We face a task which demands that we each put aside our conflicts and forget our individual self-interests. We will have to stop depending on others and take on the task of turning our beloved Province around, not only to ensure that this is a place where people can stay, but to make it a place where people want to come.

The Social Policy Advisory Committee recognizes that there are no quick fixes. We do believe, however, that there are ways to improve the manner in which Government does business and to help the public confront the future. The full participation of every single Newfoundlander and Labradorian in a most concerted effort is critical to deal with the mammoth problems this Province faces.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Taking Action

Goals and Objectives

Implementing the Framework

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Taking Action

Goals and Objectives

Implementing the Social Plan's new framework and its strategic directions requires setting specific goals and objectives to build on community and regional strengths, to integrate social and economic development and to secure effective investment in people. It also requires identifying specific actions that will work towards these goals and objectives.



The Plan's strategic actions are intended to be broad initiatives aimed at achieving strategic goals and objectives. Government and its partners will need to work together to carry out these actions through specific planned initiatives at the departmental, regional and community levels.

Government has already begun to take action consistent with the Plan's strategic directions. Recent initiatives have been undertaken in partnership with the community and are aimed at strengthening the underlying system of social supports. These include:

- ▶ reforming the denominational educational system as a prerequisite for broad-based educational improvements,
- ▶ redesigning the income support program to remove disincentives to employment and provide improved access to career development and employment support programs,
- ▶ placing social services relating to child welfare, community youth corrections, people with

disabilities, family services and child care under the management of Regional Health and Community Services Boards to improve accessibility and opportunities for consumer and public input,

- ▶ allocating additional resources to family resource programs, child care services (including infant care) and services for youth which will improve the range of available early stage intervention programs,
- ▶ implementing the Provincial Strategy Against Violence,
- ▶ developing a provincial literacy strategic plan.

The results of these initiatives and a number of others introduced through the Strategic Social Plan may take several years to achieve. During this time the Plan will continue to provide a road map that guides Government and community action for the future.

GOALS

- I. Vibrant communities where people are actively involved
- II. Sustainable regions based on strategic investment in people
- III. Self-reliant, healthy, educated citizens living in safe communities
- IV. Integrated and evidence-based policies and programs

GOAL I**Vibrant communities and regions in which people actively participate in their collective well-being.**

Responsibility rests with all members of society and not solely with Government for protecting, nurturing and supporting families and individuals in sustainable communities and regions. People must be able to participate actively in the social development of their community and region. Optimal use of resources will assist in building community and regional capacity and providing coordinated and integrated services.

1.1 Objective: Effective Government and community partnerships which provide support to individuals, families and communities.**Actions**

- a) Government will pursue a partnership approach to implementing the Strategic Social Plan involving partners at the federal, provincial, regional and community levels.
- b) Regional and community partners, with support from Government, will use team-based approaches to achieve solutions for local issues through coordinated, client-centred delivery of services.
- c) Government will build flexibility into programs and services so that community partnerships can be responsive on a client and/or community basis.

1.2 Objective: Communities prepared to partner with Government to identify problems and improve delivery of social programs at the regional level.**Actions**

- a) The Regional Boards, including the Health Institutions Boards, the Health and Community Services Boards, School Boards and the Economic Development Boards, acting in the role of regional partners with Government will:
 - ▶ identify and assess the available resources for social development in each region,
 - ▶ assess the nature and extent of voluntary agencies and volunteer activity in each region,
 - ▶ identify gaps in community capacity to plan and deliver services to match Strategic Social Plan objectives,
 - ▶ develop and implement mechanisms to ensure community participation in problem identification and decisionmaking,
 - ▶ develop community leadership capacity,
 - ▶ work to eliminate gender specific barriers that confront women and ensure full and equal participation of all disenfranchised persons in society.

1.3 Objective: Coordinated, efficient and effective service delivery which makes the best use of regional and community resources.**Actions**

- a) Regional Boards acting as regional partners with Government, and in cooperation with community-based groups, will:
 - ▶ facilitate involvement of voluntary agencies,
 - ▶ coordinate integrated responses to local needs through community services, voluntary resources, and federal and provincial programs,
 - ▶ coordinate the multi-purpose use of government and community-owned infrastructure to support community action.

- b) To the extent possible, Government will direct its funding of the community-based sector towards strengthening implementation of the Strategic Social Plan and community-based service delivery.
- c) Government will seek to coordinate its expenditures and the deployment of community resources with the federal government to achieve the outcomes identified in the Strategic Social Plan.

will monitor progress in regional economic development, build upon the work of the Economic Development Boards and plan new regional service and infrastructure investments consistent with identified long-term development strategies for each region.

- b) Government will consolidate and coordinate delivery of services to maximize effectiveness and efficiency, consistent with social development objectives.
- c) Government will develop strategies to improve access to services at the regional level and develop access standards for key services.

1.4 Objective: Regional service investments which are consistent with long-term development opportunities.

Actions

- a) Government, in cooperation with Regional Boards,



Taking Action

GOAL I: *Vibrant communities where people are actively involved.*

Objective

Action

Effective partnerships	Government/community partnerships, client- centred delivery and flexible programs and services
Communities involved in planning and delivery	Joint regional planning and development process
Coordinated service delivery	Coordinated local action, expenditures and funding of community-based sector
Regional investments linked to development opportunities	Coordinated regional infrastructure investment, consolidation of services and access standards for key services

GOAL II**Sustainable regions based on strategic investment in individuals, families and communities.**

Social investments can stimulate economic development and create the labour force required to participate in new opportunities. Investment needs to be directed to the development of the community-based sector as well as that of the private sector. To ensure choices for youth and to support the development of opportunities for a highly skilled and well educated labour force, people must be able to participate in the development of their regions through paid work and volunteer participation.

2.1 Objective: A labour market which supports economic development in the private and community-based sectors.**Actions**

- a) Government will develop a labour-market strategy for the province to address regional labour-market development issues. This strategy will:
 - ▶ identify emerging private-sector employment opportunities considering the long-term development strategies advanced in the zonal strategic economic plans,
 - ▶ identify the range and extent of employment creation opportunities within the community-based sector and determine how long-term employment in that sector could be created,
 - ▶ develop a human resource strategy focused on preparing people to participate in long-term development strategies for each region as entrepreneurs and employees.

2.2 Objective: Employment generation strategies in the private and community-based sectors

through coordinated federal-provincial partnerships and investments.

Actions

- a) Government will seek to coordinate and integrate provincial and federal investments to achieve social and economic integration. These strategies will take into consideration long term regional and provincial economic plans. In particular it will:
 - ▶ seek to secure federal participation, together with the province, in an employment program in the community-based sector. The purpose will be to invest in community-based approaches matched to social development goals, while providing new employment opportunities,
 - ▶ seek to match federal/provincial economic development agreements and programs to employment generation objectives, taking into consideration zonal strategic economic plans,
 - ▶ establish coordinated social and economic development objectives in any new federal/provincial labour-market development and social development agreements and programs,
 - ▶ continue to focus the existing federal/provincial Labour Market Development Agreement on local labour-market and business development needs.
- b) Government, in partnership with the federal government, will address youth unemployment using integrated initiatives, such as:
 - ▶ increasing support to community-based organizations and businesses to cultivate youth entrepreneurship,
 - ▶ instituting school-to-work and work-to-school transition programs which emphasize employment opportunities in new sectors of the economy.

2.3 Objective: A qualified labour force participating in a range of employment opportunities.

Actions

- a) Government will invest in and adapt social programs to enhance economic development and reduce barriers to education, job training and work by:
 - ▶ making strategic investments in education and employment programs,
 - ▶ taking into consideration zonal strategic economic plans,
 - ▶ redesigning income support programs to promote

and to provide incentives for active participation in the labour force, including support for training and education,

- ▶ assisting individuals to participate in post-secondary education by improving availability and affordability,
- ▶ providing employment generation opportunities which target such groups as youth, women, persons with disabilities, seasonal workers and long-term unemployed people,
- ▶ providing supportive policies and programs to assist people to meet their family responsibilities so that they can become and remain employed.



Taking Action

GOAL II: *Sustainable regions based on strategic investment in people.*

Objective

Labour market which supports economic and social development

Employment generation in the private and the community-based sectors

A qualified labour force

Action

Develop a labour market strategy which promotes opportunities in the private and community-based sector

Integrate provincial and federal investments and agreements and address youth unemployment

Invest in and adapt social programs to enhance economic development and reduce barriers to employability

GOAL III**Self-reliant, healthy, educated individuals and families living in safe, nurturing communities.**

It is important to continue to emphasize measures which overcome discrimination and eliminate barriers to full participation in the life of the community. Individuals and families need access to health, education, personal social services and cultural and recreation pursuits which provide a sufficient range of supports to meet their needs. They must be able to achieve an adequate standard of living which helps individuals and families become self-reliant. They need to live in communities and regions that have safe, nurturing and healthy environments, where people come together to prevent problems, take care of one another and improve the social, economic and cultural life of the community.

3.1 Objective: Improved access to, and the quality of, essential services in the areas of health, justice, social services, housing, education and employment supports.**Actions**

- a) Each department on an on-going basis will:
 - ▶ define standards for service accessibility in terms of eligibility, distance, time and affordability,
 - ▶ identify existing barriers to access, including historical discrimination and vulnerability to abuse and violence, which have placed women and other vulnerable populations at a social and economic disadvantage,
 - ▶ develop specific strategies to eliminate barriers and to improve access and service quality.
- b) Government will ensure that standards of equitable

access and quality service are addressed in an integrated manner.

- c) Wherever practical Government will move from institutional and direct delivery approaches to a community-based delivery model. The development of community capacity will be supported to ensure that effective, quality services can be delivered through community-based approaches.
- d) Government will build on current initiatives that use a multisectoral approach, such as the Model for Coordination of Services to Children and Youth and the Provincial Strategy Against Violence.

3.2 Objective: Individuals and families who are able to address basic needs and achieve self-reliance.**Actions**

- a) Government will redesign the income support program to focus on more active support for people moving to employment. The redesign will also improve the efficiency of the program's delivery, as well as ensure that the basic needs of people who need to rely on income support are met.
- b) Government will continue to establish supports to alleviate the effects of poverty, especially on children and families.
- c) Government will support the provision of literacy and basic life-skills education to assist people in need to make informed choices and to become self-reliant.

3.3 Objective: Reduced social and health problems through community prevention and early intervention initiatives in all regions.

Actions

- a) Regional Boards, acting as regional partners with Government, will develop regional prevention and early intervention strategies which will guide government and community decision making.
- b) Government, in co-operation with its regional partners, will continue to implement programs and services aimed at prevention and early intervention, including:
 - ▶ child welfare reform, such as supports for families and regional/community-based service delivery,
 - ▶ early childhood enrichment, such as parent development programs, resource centres and links to the school system,
 - ▶ coordinated youth services, such as community service participation for tuition vouchers and a youth employment strategy
- c) Government will seek to coordinate its investments with its federal and municipal counterparts and with regional and community-based organizations to implement these regional prevention and early intervention plans.



Taking Action

GOAL III: *Self-reliant, healthy, educated citizens living in safe communities*

Objective

Action

Improved access and quality of services

Develop and ensure standards of access to community-based and multisectoral delivery approaches

Citizens able to meet basic needs and achieve self-reliance

Redesign of income support programs, alleviate poverty and provide basic education and literacy

Reduced social and health problems

Develop regional prevention strategies, continue new program options and coordinate investments

GOAL IV**Integrated and evidence-based policy development and monitoring as the foundation for the design, delivery and evaluation of social development programs and services.**

To meet individual, community and regional needs more effectively, new processes will be established to ensure coordinated policy development within/across government departments and between the social and economic sectors. Policy development in Government will integrate current research, public input, analysis of issues, identification of gaps in services, assessment of impacts and outcomes, and social auditing approaches to evaluation. This approach will more closely integrate program design and delivery with broad-based policy objectives and will ensure greater consistency between policy and delivery.

4.1 Objective: Integrated, evidence-based policy development in Government.**Actions**

- a) Government will pursue coordinated policy impact analysis across departments at the policy development stage.
- b) Government, in consultation with its regional and community partners, will enhance its capacity to make evidence-based decisions by:
 - ▶ compiling the baseline and benchmark data required to assess Strategic Social Plan outcomes and determine the degree to which those outcomes are being achieved,
 - ▶ ensuring that such data is available to inform decision making and assess the impacts of proposed policy changes,
 - ▶ ensuring policy input from its partners.
- c) Government will formulate a gender inclusive

analytical framework which will facilitate the assessment of legislation, policies and programs from this perspective.

4.2 Objective: Consistency between policy and the delivery of programs and services.**Actions**

- a) Through the departmental planning process, programs and services will be refocused over time to meet the goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Social Plan. Programs and services will:
 - ▶ be integrated and coordinated across departments,
 - ▶ be effective, efficient and accountable,
 - ▶ meet provincial standards,
 - ▶ optimize resources and eliminate waste and duplication,
 - ▶ have sufficient flexibility to respond to changing needs and circumstances in regions,
 - ▶ promote inclusiveness while remaining sensitive to diversity,
 - ▶ address desired outcomes.

4.3 Objective: Effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the Strategic Social Plan.**Actions**

- a) The Cabinet Committee will establish a Strategic Social Plan monitoring and evaluation process within Government.
- b) Government, in consultation with its regional partners, will:
 - ▶ develop a provincial performance measurement framework which includes a comprehensive set of provincial indicators,
 - ▶ assess and evaluate Strategic Social Plan outcomes.
- c) Government will conduct a social audit.



Taking Action

GOAL IV: *Integrated and evidence-based policies and programs*

Objective

Action

Integrated, evidence-based policy development

Coordinated policy impact analysis across departments, enhanced evidence-based decisions and gender-based analysis

Consistency between policy and delivery

Departmental planning to design programs and services to meet the Strategic Social Plan goals and objectives

Effective monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of outcomes using a performance measurement framework and indicators

Implementing the Framework

The Strategic Social Plan is a long-term strategy which will take many years to fully implement. Work will begin immediately to establish the coordinated partnerships necessary to get started. This work will focus on three fronts:

Interdepartmental Partnerships:

This will involve working to achieve greater coordination and integration in the activities of government departments at the policy and program level. In 1997-98, Government introduced a departmental planning process which will serve as a useful tool for pursuing the Plan's directions. Further work is necessary to strengthen cross-departmental and cross-sectoral approaches to the planning process. Departmental planning, however, is only one aspect of the internal effort that must occur. Departments will need to work together to determine how best to relate to their regional partners and provide the direction and support required.

Partnership with the Regional Boards:

Government recognizes that regional boards are dealing with major issues within their mandates. At the same time, Government knows that the boards are

strongly committed to moving in these strategic social directions. To that end, Government will support an implementation process to work with regional boards on a phased-in basis over the next 12-18 months. A phased-in approach will enable regions to identify an appropriate start date timed to their circumstances. Each region will develop a coordinating mechanism among boards and an implementation strategy which reflects regional priorities. Government will consider these regional strategies as part of the regular departmental planning and budgetary processes.

Flexible Funding for Community-Based Initiatives:

Government has allocated dedicated startup funding for the Strategic Social Plan. These funds will support the regional partnership process and provide some flexible funding to seed initiatives consistent with the Plan. These funds will help to initiate early action to start building community capacity and piloting early intervention and prevention programs.

During the Fall of 1998, Government will meet with regional boards and other stakeholders in the community to communicate the Plan and discuss the implementation strategy. Intensive work with the first region on their regional implementation plan will begin in January 1999.



Chapter 5

“An important component of the new framework is the concept of social auditing. In essence, social auditing is about “what’s working, why and for whom”. Social objectives should be the base for policy formulation and should be the primary criteria for policy evaluation. Social auditing is based on the assumption that meeting social needs is what public policy is all about.

Social auditing is a process through which the effects of policy and other social conditions on people are analyzed. It goes beyond traditional accounting methods which focus on financial costs and benefits, and makes Government accountable for instituting policy that meets the needs of the public, and for doing it effectively.

Social auditing incorporates methods to review both financial and public accountability. It does not provide a formula for making hard decisions – choices will still have to be made. However, it could be the basis for making choices based on more complete information. The same information would provide the benchmarks against which citizens can assess policy achievements and failures.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Monitoring Actions, Achieving Goals
Monitoring Outcomes: A Social Audit

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Monitoring Actions, Achieving Goals

The Strategic Social Plan focuses on social development within an integrated and developmental framework that is significantly different from the traditional focus of social programs. It is therefore critical that a process be established to ensure the accountability of all the partners. There is a need to document and measure progress toward attainment of the Plan's goals and objectives through the actions specified. This will require appropriate evidence to determine whether actions are being implemented effectively and whether goals are being achieved. In other words, information needs to be identified and collected related to two types of indicators: process indicators (measuring *outputs*) and impact indicators (measuring *outcomes*).



In the past, measuring has usually focused on outputs, such as determining whether programs and services are being implemented, how many people are being served, and so on. To ensure that the Plan is achieving its goals, *much greater emphasis will have to be placed on measuring outcomes*, such as whether or not people are becoming healthier, more prosperous and better prepared for the labour market.

Output indicators will be used to show the actions identified in the Strategic Social Plan are being carried out, and to determine how well they are being implemented. It will be necessary to measure outputs such as:

- ▶ the level of people's involvement in the development of their communities and regions,

- ▶ whether policy development has been modified to meet the goals of the new framework for social development,
- ▶ whether the design and delivery of programs is being coordinated across departments.

Outcome indicators will measure progress toward reaching our goals. They will help us assess the effects of our strategies and actions. These indicators measure long-term outcomes and will answer such questions as:

- ▶ has there been a reduction in social problems?
- ▶ are communities becoming more stable and self-reliant?
- ▶ has the level of people's health, education and employment income improved?

While finding evidence of **outputs** is relatively straight forward, **measuring outcomes** will require more complex analyses since both social and economic development are influenced by many factors. This makes it very difficult to attribute changes in overall development to specific plan initiatives. However, by monitoring a wide variety of social and economic well-being indicators a better understanding of progress toward the goals of a healthy, productive society can be achieved.

A provincial measurement framework will be developed by Government in cooperation with regional partners and the Newfoundland Statistics Agency. Within Government, this framework will form an important part of the internal departmental planning process which is already under way. Government departments and regional partners will need to define indicators and identify specific outputs and outcomes related to the Strategic Social Plan goals.

Monitoring Outcomes: A Social Audit

The Strategic Social Plan is founded on Government's commitment to effect overall improvement in the well-being of our residents in three key outcome areas: general well-being, employment and economic security, and community stability. Improvement in these areas will be assessed by tracking the following socio-economic indicators over time:

Well-Being

Health, social and educational status are measures of a society's general well-being and its ability to improve social and economic circumstances. Indicators could include:

- ▶ health status,
- ▶ family status (adequate nutrition, economic security, safety),
- ▶ access to early childhood programs and services and school and post-secondary education,
- ▶ human resource development,
- ▶ education status (literacy, attainment and achievement levels).

Employment and Economic Security

The Strategic Social Plan and other initiatives seek to improve people's economic security and employment opportunities. Indicators could include:

- ▶ employment rates,
- ▶ labour force participation rates,
- ▶ labour force profile
- ▶ the duration of employment,
- ▶ sectoral and geographic distribution of employment,
- ▶ employment in the community-based sector,
- ▶ economic status (income levels, poverty rates, reliance on transfer payments),
- ▶ social assistance caseloads.

Community Stability

The Strategic Social Plan seeks to improve the well-being of people by ensuring that regions become stronger and more viable. Indicators could include:

- ▶ population dynamics,
- ▶ community safety,
- ▶ regional and community distribution of resources,
- ▶ capacity of community and voluntary agencies,
- ▶ civic participation and involvement,
- ▶ access to recreation and cultural pursuits,
- ▶ access to other essential services.

During the period leading up to the social audit, it will be necessary to establish an analytical capacity and build a baseline profile of the province's population against which to measure change and progress.

Five years following implementation of the Strategic Social Plan, Government will conduct a social audit which will indicate *what is working, why, how and for whom*. It will include the following:

1. an assessment of the status of the population for each of the key outcome areas identified above and the extent of progress achieved,
2. an analysis of the status of particular client groups (e.g. children, youth, women, people with disabilities, unemployed persons, seniors).
3. an assessment of the impact of major social programs and services on various of the social indicators.

Reflecting the spirit of the Strategic Social Plan, Government will share the results of the social audit with the citizens of the province.



Chapter 6

“The Social Policy Advisory Committee acknowledges the Provincial Government's difficult challenge in trying to maintain a full array of public services. Certainly, there are no quick fixes. We believe, however, that steps can be taken immediately to develop a new and comprehensive approach to formulating social policy. Making the shift to these new approaches will require strong, committed leadership. This will help to establish a new sense of stability and optimism, and trust between Government and the public.”

The Social Policy Advisory Committee believes, without equivocation, that the success or failure of this Province, of this planning process and of individual lives rests with the kinds of choices the Provincial Government makes to invest in the people of the Province.”

Social Policy Advisory Committee, 1997

Conclusion

This Page is left intentionally blank.

Conclusion

This Strategic Social Plan represents a fundamental change in the way social and economic programs and services are planned, designed and delivered. Adopting this new approach will pose challenges. Traditional government programming is designed around the resolution of specific issues and along departmental lines.



Shifting to holistic policy development and multisectoral approaches to delivery will require a change in the culture of Government.

Greater cooperation and stronger partnerships between Government and its regional and community partners will help ensure that this Plan succeeds. This will further Government's ability to effectively deliver public services. It is a recognition that the challenges confronting this province and the search for solutions requires ongoing cooperative effort.

The challenging nature of the issues facing this province demands an approach which can achieve an integration of social and economic objectives, focus attention on prevention and early intervention, and promote coordination in the delivery of client-centred services. Without such an approach, government initiatives run the risk of being less effective and more costly, as well as being unable to respond to the root causes of social problems.

The prudent use of public funds requires the adoption of a model of planned investment. It must ensure that spending generates real and measurable benefits for people, their communities and the province. Decisions about priorities, about the design and delivery of programs and services must therefore be based upon reliable and relevant information and an understanding of local needs.

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to the processes and actions described in this Plan. It is committed to changing the way Government works, to a united effort across government departments and strong partnerships with the people of this province to achieve the vision of a self-reliant and caring society. It is committed to individual, regional and social development in partnership with the people of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Strategic Social Plan will provide an opportunity to position Newfoundland and Labrador as a leader in social policy development. Working in partnership with communities and regions will require openness, mutual trust, and a renewed sharing of responsibility. This is what the Social Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) said was needed to achieve the goals and realize the vision for Newfoundland and Labrador contained in this Strategic Social Plan. The Strategic Social Plan marks a major milestone in the social development history of Newfoundland and Labrador.

For additional copies of this document contact:

Office of the Queen's Printer
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NF
A1B 4J6
(709) 729-3649

or

<http://www.gov.nf.ca>

For additional information contact:

Assistant Secretary to Cabinet (Social Policy)
Executive Council
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's, NF
A1B 4J6
Tel: (709) 729-5387
Fax: (709) 729-5218