

**A Response to: Sharing Parental Rights,  
Extending Flexibility at Work - Public  
Consultation**

**Issued by: Department for Employment and  
Learning**

**August 2013**

## **1. Introduction**

**1.1** The Women's Support Network (hereafter, WSN) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Department for Employment and Learning's *Sharing Parental Rights, Extending Flexibility at Work - Public Consultation*.

**1.2** Established in 1989, WSN is a regional organisation that works across all areas of Northern Ireland. It includes in its membership community-based women's centres, groups and organisations, with a concentration in disadvantaged areas. WSN is a charitable and feminist organisation, which adopts a community development approach. We provide a range of support services to 63 community-based women's centres, projects and infrastructure groups and 26 associate members drawn from across the community and voluntary sector, who support women, families and communities (see Appendix 1).

**1.3** Our members provide a wide range of women-centred frontline services across Northern Ireland, including:

- Specialist Advice
- Childcare & Family Support
- Counselling, Support and Advocacy
- Complementary Therapies
- Training & Education
- Health & Wellbeing Programmes
- Personal Development & Employment Support
- Volunteering, Leadership & Empowerment

**1.4** WSN aims to achieve social, political and economic justice through the promotion of the autonomous organisation of women. The Network aims to strengthen the collective voice of women's groups and to promote and develop networking opportunities, to enable collective action and to impact upon policy and decision-making processes. WSN

provides an accessible, feminist, relevant and high quality support service and resource for its member groups. The Network is also an important information resource on issues relevant to community-based women's organisations and for other infrastructure groups, nationally and internationally.

**1.5** Over the past 30+ years, the community-based women's sector has developed a range of frontline services, such as childcare, support, advice and education/training services, in response to the needs they identified at a grassroots level. Women's groups continue to meet the particular needs of women and their children living in areas considered to be among the most affected by the conflict, and recognised as among the most disadvantaged across Northern Ireland.

**1.6** Network members are actively engaged with their local communities, cross-community initiatives and regional structures throughout Northern Ireland.

## **2. General Comments**

**2.1** WSN welcomes the proposals on statutory leave and pay entitlements for working parents, as affirmation of the Executive's commitment to promoting shared parenting and work-life balance for women.

We note with particular interest the consultation document's acknowledgement of the relationship between (a) gender inequalities in the childcare dimension of unpaid domestic labour; and, (b) gender inequalities in the workplace related to 'women being away from work for long periods due to parental commitments' (3.3).

However, we are disappointed that there is no additional acknowledgment of the relationship between both of these factors and gender imbalance in the other main dimension of unpaid domestic labour, i.e. housework. For the reasons that follow, if government is

serious about promoting work-life balance for women through policy measures, then it needs to design policy that addresses the relationship between *all three* of these gender inequality categories in meaningful ways.

Research shows that fathers' involvement in housework within working families 'remains low'.<sup>1</sup> This additional burden of unpaid domestic labour on women as primary carers further constrains their work-life balance choices. However, research also affirms that, where fathers engage more in parenting, they are also more likely to engage in other household duties.<sup>2</sup> In other words, there is a positive correlation between a rise in shared parenting and a rebalancing of the division of labour within the home, in respect *not only of care, but also of housework*, which can *doubly* improve work-life balance choices for women.

On this view, in order for policy to effectively address how gender imbalance in the workplace relates to gender inequalities in parenting, it must also address how both factors can in turn relate to the gender gap in housework.<sup>3</sup> Taking account of this tripartite relationship means taking seriously working women's *multiple* labour roles and aggregate labour (both paid *and* unpaid): as participants in the labour market; as the primary carers in families; *and*, as the primary participants in housework.

The Section 75 screening template accompanying the consultation document states that 'the cultural change that these proposals are designed to promote is likely to benefit women, in particular by addressing the stereotypical view of the woman as primary carer'.<sup>4</sup> But clearly, for the reasons just outlined, if government wants to maximise the potential impact on gender equality of policy in this area, then it

---

<sup>1</sup> M. O'Brien, *Shared caring: bringing fathers into the frame*. EOC: Manchester, 2005, p.iii.

<sup>2</sup> M. O'Brien and I. Shemilt. *Working fathers: earning and caring*. EOC: Manchester, 2003, pp.vii-viii.

<sup>3</sup> J. Lewis and M. Campbell, 'UK work/family balance policies and gender equality, 1997-2005'. *Social Politics* (2007), 14(1): 4-30, p.11.

<sup>4</sup> Department for Employment and Learning, *Section 75 equality of opportunity screening template*. DEL: Belfast, p.11.

also needs to find an effective way to promote cultural change that addresses both (a) the stereotypical view of women as the primary participants in housework; and, (b) the *reality* that ‘expanding women’s choices depends on changes in men’s behaviour in the home’.<sup>5</sup>

**WSN therefore recommends that the Executive, as it moves forward with these proposals, give due consideration to how women’s work-life balance choices are severely constrained, not only by the gender inequalities in the workplace and the gender imbalance in parenting, but also by the gender imbalance in housework.**

**A further related matter should also be considered here. Research shows that in those labour market categories where fathers’ uptake of parental leave is particularly low, for example, in manual occupations, more information and targeted awareness-raising from government is needed to stimulate greater uptake.<sup>6</sup> WSN would consequently also appreciate clarification from the Executive on whether and, if so, how, it intends addressing this issue as it develops the information and awareness-raising dimension of its proposals.**

**2.2** The impact assessment section of the consultation document cites a reduced gender gap in employment and enhanced female participation in the labour market as potential ‘unquantified benefits’ of the proposals (Table 1).

WSN is disappointed that this is the document’s only *associated* mention of the gender pay gap and the nature of participation of women in the labour market, as factors in the shared parenting debate. More precisely, we are concerned that the document makes no reference to how both factors can interact, and how this interaction can

---

<sup>5</sup> Lewis & Campbell, op. cit., p.11.

<sup>6</sup> O’Brien & Shelmit, op. cit. p.xi

adversely impact the realisation of shared parenting ambitions within working families.

The nature of the gender pay gap in Northern Ireland is such that women continue to earn less than men across a range of sectors. Latest figures, for the period 2011-2012, indicate a widening of the gender pay gap for all employees in Northern Ireland.<sup>7</sup> The nature of participation of women in the labour market in Northern Ireland, in no small measure due to their constrained work choices as primary carers in families, is such that women, compared to men, continue to disproportionately participate in part-time, low paid and sporadic work. For example, 2012 labour market figures for Northern Ireland indicated that 92% of female employees worked in the traditionally low paid service sector; that 80% of part-time employees were female; and, that median female hourly earnings of part-time workers, excluding overtime, were 69.9% of full-time workers.<sup>8</sup> The interaction between the gender pay gap and the nature of participation of women in the labour market is affirmed by research from the Government Equalities Office, which shows that 16% of the gender pay gap is attributable to 'the negative effect on wages of having previously worked part-time or of having taken time out of the labour market to look after family'.<sup>9</sup>

Clearly, in so far as it keeps women's earnings low, this interaction between the gender pay gap and the suppressed nature of women's participation in the labour market, can have the effect of reinforcing gender pay differentials within the home. And, studies show that gender pay differentials within the home represent a significant factor in men's disinclination toward parental leave since 'high maternal income is a stronger predictor of father involvement' in families.<sup>10</sup> Looked at differently, research affirms that men are more reluctant to take up

---

<sup>7</sup> NISRA, *Northern Ireland statistics & research agency results from the Northern Ireland annual survey of hours and earnings 2012*. NISRA: Belfast.

<sup>8</sup> NISRA/DFP, *Labour market statistics bulletin: women in Northern Ireland, September 2012*. NISRA/DFP: Belfast, 2012.

<sup>9</sup> Government Equalities Office, *The gender pay gap in the UK: 1995 to 2007, Research Findings No. 2010/2*, GEO: London, 2010.

<sup>10</sup> O'Brien & Shemilt, *op. cit.*, p.vii.

parental leave where salary compensation rates for this leave are low, as is the case with the proposed shared parental leave flat rate statutory pay provision.<sup>11</sup> Unsurprisingly, against this background, low-paid parental leave is 'usually taken by women'.<sup>12</sup> Research has captured this work-life balance dilemma for women thus: 'the cash vs care negotiation in contemporary households [around shared parenting] cannot be separated from the current ... gender differentials in income'.<sup>13</sup>

The substantive point here is this: working families may be financially disincentivised from availing of the proposed shared parenting statutory provision since men, as compared to women, tend to earn more and participate more in full time work. Low earning families may be disproportionately financially disincentivised in this respect. The situation for low income households is, of course, compounded by other financial constraints, such as recent freezes to the basic element of the working tax credit and the family element of the child tax credit.

The document states that the shared parental leave proposals are 'intended to afford new choices [for working parents] rather than to take away existing options' (3.22). But in the context of such financial disincentivisation, extending shared parenting through availing of these changes may simply not be a feasible/realistic option for many working families, especially low income households. Clearly this scenario of financially-constrained choices for working families restricts the potential of the proposals to positively impact both gender parenting differentials and, by consequence, related gender inequalities in the home and the workplace. If policy does not address these financial constraints in significant ways, then affected working families will not be offered meaningful and sustainable choices in work and care.

---

<sup>11</sup> Lewis & Campbell, op. cit., p.14

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.16.

<sup>13</sup> O'Brien & Shemilt, op. cit., p.xii.

**WSN therefore recommends that the Executive give fuller consideration to how women's care and work choices are fundamentally constrained by the complex relationship between the gender pay gap and the nature of women's participation in the labour market.**

### **3. Specific Comments**

#### *Right to request flexible working*

**3.1** WSN welcomes the proposed extension of the right to request flexible working to all employees (3.75). However, we have concerns about the potential of this extension to adversely affect provision for those currently entitled to avail of flexible working, i.e. parents and carers.

The important question here is whether the extension of entitlement will increase demand for flexible working across different working cohorts to such an extent as to make it more difficult for carers and parents to seek flexible working, as they, in effect, compete for flexibility with newly entitled co-workers.

**WSN recommends that the Executive give due regard to this danger to existing entitlement for carers and parents, as it progresses these proposals.**

**3.2** We note with reservation that should the Executive opt to follow the UK government's model of parental leave, then the current statutory process for dealing with requests for flexible working will be replaced by an ACAS Code of Practice for employers, in respect of employees who are newly entitled to make requests (3.75). Under the code, employers will have a duty to consider all requests for flexible working in a 'reasonable manner', but, as is the case with current entitlement, employers will be able to refuse these requests on business grounds, such as the burden of additional costs.

WSN is concerned that a Code of Practice might be a less effective way of cautioning employers against unfairness and unreasonableness in consideration of these requests. More precisely, we have doubts about how the removal of the statutory process might be interpreted by employers, and share the TUC's misgiving that the removal of the statutory procedure 'will send the signal to employers that accommodating flexible working requests is less important'.<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, we are disappointed that the proposed right to request flexible working, like the current statutory entitlement for carers and parents, is not a 'day one' right, but rather a right that only applies after 26 weeks of employment (3.68). A day one right would better support women's access to the labour market by offering them greater choice and flexibility to effect work-life, care-work balances.

**WSN recommends that the Executive properly assess the risk to provision for flexible working associated with the removal of the statutory process for dealing with requests for flexible working, and introduce a day one right to request. Consideration should also be given to the question of support for smaller employers, such as might help them better accommodate such requests.**

#### *Shared parental leave and statutory shared parental pay*

**3.3** WSN appreciates the potentially positive impact that the shared parental leave proposals could have on children's early years' development. Research affirms this potential by indicating a causal link between increased paternal involvement in early years parenting and enhanced child development and later child outcomes.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, of course, maternal involvement in early years' development remains vital. For example, research shows significant benefits to the child's development of breastfeeding for the first six months.<sup>16</sup> Increased shared parenting options can maximise the potential of parental involvement to positively impact early years' development

---

<sup>14</sup> TUC, 'Shared parental leave plans welcome but should do more for parents'. [Online].

<sup>15</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.iii.

<sup>16</sup> Lewis & Campbell, op. cit., p.16

since, for example, high levels of paternal support for mothers can extend infant feeding options and promote breast-feeding.<sup>17</sup>

In theory therefore, the proposals represent an opportunity to boost early years' development by facilitating increased paternal involvement in parenting alongside continued maternal involvement. However, we are concerned that, in practice, this opportunity might be undermined by the proposed restriction on the employee's right to return to the same job after availing of shared parental leave.

The document outlines two possible options covering the employee's return to work after shared parental leave, one of which covers leave taken in a continuous block, while the other covers aggregated leave. In both scenarios, the right to return to the same job only applies for the first 26 weeks of leave, after which the right to return to *the same or a similar job will apply*, if it 'is not reasonably practical' to return to the original job (3.36). This condition mirrors the situation with the current right to return to work after maternity leave.

The inherent danger of this restriction on the right to return to the same job is that employees could be dissuaded from shared parental leave, fearing negative changes to their roles and status on return to a 'similar job'. Were such dissuasion to arise, the potential of shared parenting to benefit early years' development would clearly be jeopardised.

Part of the stated rationale for the proposals is that they will help address the relationship between gender inequality in childcare provision in the home and gender inequalities in the workplace (3.3). To the extent that it threatens the take-up of shared parenting, the restriction on the right to return to the same job contradicts this rationale. Moreover, WSN is further concerned that a weaker right to return to a job might stimulate further pregnancy discrimination in

---

<sup>17</sup> O'Brien, op. cit., p.iv.

Northern Ireland around unreasonable and unfair definitions from employers of what constitutes a 'similar job'.

Pregnancy discrimination remains an everyday issue for many working women in Northern Ireland.<sup>18</sup> For example, research carried out by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland in 2007 showed that gender related matters constituted the highest proportion of queries to its legal helpline and, of these, pregnancy and maternity constituted the largest single category.<sup>19</sup>

Anxiety around return to work issues can increase stress levels for pregnant women and working mothers. Some categories of workers are more at risk of pregnancy discrimination than others. Research shows that the more vulnerable workers (i.e. those with the least job security) are at greatest risk.<sup>20</sup> For example, an Equal Opportunities Commission statutory investigation into pregnancy discrimination in Britain found that 54% of cases involved women with less than one year's service, compared to 39% of those with five or more years of service.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, those on low incomes, such as women in sales and customer services jobs, were more at risk of pregnancy discrimination than skilled or senior workers.<sup>22</sup>

Studies show a causal association between pregnancy discrimination and a lack of knowledge and understanding among employers regarding their statutory obligations to pregnant women.<sup>23</sup> Significantly, research also shows a causal link between pregnancy discrimination and employer confusion over what job a woman can be given following a re-structuring during maternity leave.<sup>24</sup> The complexity of the new

---

<sup>18</sup> S. Harding, 'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination at work', *Belfast Telegraph*, 27 January 2010. See also, BBC News, 'Woman wins sex discrimination case after miscarriages', 27 June 2013. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-22805132>

<sup>19</sup> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, *Equality Commission for Northern Ireland statement on key inequalities in Northern Ireland*, 2007. ECNI: Belfast.

<sup>20</sup> Equal Opportunities Commission, *Final report of the EOC's investigation into discrimination against new and expectant mothers in the workplace*. EOC: Manchester, 2005.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

proposals around eligibility criteria for leave and the right to return to work could potentially add to employers' confusion, thus increasing the risk of pregnancy discrimination for vulnerable women in Northern Ireland on return to work.

WSN believes that statutory entitlement around the right to return to the *same* job should apply to those returning from shared leave and maternity leave, irrespective of whether that leave is more or less than the proposed 26 weeks cut-off level. This streamlining should help address employer confusion as a cause of pregnancy discrimination. And, this change could also therefore help alleviate associated stress for pregnant women and working mothers. Of course, there are no guarantees.

**WSN recommends that the government should extend the right to return to the same job for those availing of shared parental leave and maternity leave, regardless of the length of that leave.**

**3.4** As noted, research affirms that men are more reluctant to avail of parental leave where salary compensation rates for doing so are low. It is therefore troubling that the proposed statutory shared parental leave rate is itself low: it is proposed that parents on shared parental leave should receive any balance of the mother's statutory maternity pay or adoption pay (currently just £136.78 per week). The crucial point here is that this amount is lower than the national minimum wage and, if government is seriously committed to expanding shared parenting options for working families in Northern Ireland then, at the very least, this figure should instead reflect a living wage.<sup>25</sup>

By adequately adjusting this amount upwardly, the Executive could potentially remove a significant source of financial disincentivisation to shared parenting, thereby enhancing both the take-up rate of shared parental leave and, in consequence, the potential of the proposals to

---

<sup>25</sup> See Methodist Church in Britain, 'Enhancing maternity and paternity pay to the living wage', MCB: London, 2013. [Online].

positively impact gender inequalities in the home and the labour market.

On this view, the practice of financially incentivising working families to avail of shared parental leave holds wider implications across a range of policy areas, *and could potentially positively impact these areas*. For example, given the positive impact that shared parental leave can have on children's development, such financial incentivisation could assist the Executive in achieving enhanced outcomes in its early years and childcare strategies.

**WSN therefore recommends that the Executive reconsiders the proposed flat rate for statutory shared parental pay, with a view to adjusting it upwardly, thereby taking due account of its potential to adversely impact the take-up of shared parental leave.**

**3.5** Obviously, by its very design and underlying rationale, the proposed shared parental leave scheme excludes consideration of the work-life balance needs and interests of lone parent households in Northern Ireland. Of the 63,900 lone parent households with dependent children recorded in the 2011 Census, 91 per cent were female-headed.<sup>26</sup> This means that the majority of parents excluded by the intrinsic nature of the scheme are women. Clearly, to take account of this exclusion and promote equality of opportunity between different kinds of households in Northern Ireland, the government would need to consider an alternative shared care leave scheme specifically geared to take account of lone parent work-life balance issues. For example, such a scheme might involve allowing lone parents to share care leave entitlement with other adult family members such as grandparents and siblings.

---

<sup>26</sup> R. Russell, *Northern Ireland Assembly, Research and Information Service Research Paper - Census 2011: Key Statistics at Northern Ireland and LGD level*, NIA: Belfast, 2013.

**From this perspective, WSN recommends that the Executive gives further consideration to the particular work-life balance needs of lone parent households in Northern Ireland.**

#### **4. Conclusion**

As noted, WSN acknowledges and appreciates the consultation exercise's intent to address constrained work-life balance choices for women. But we would reiterate the important point that if government wants to give working women in Northern Ireland 'real' and 'genuine' choices in work and care,<sup>27</sup> by addressing the root causes of the gender inequalities that constrain these choices, then it must commit to an integrated, holistic and properly coordinated cross-departmental policy approach to this issue, which seeks to accurately identify and remedy these causes in impactful and sustainable ways.

The gender inequalities that constrain women's work-life balance choices are deeply entrenched in both public sphere *and* private sphere behaviour, and the causal factors underlying these constrained choices are consequently complex, overlapping and mutually affecting. So, although WSN does welcome the government's proposals on shared parental leave, we have serious concerns about the limited capacity of these proposals to achieve their aim of addressing constrained work-life balance choices for women.

---

<sup>27</sup> Lewis & Campbell, *op. cit.*, p.11.

## **Bibliography**

Department for Employment and Learning. (2013). *Section 75 Equality of opportunity screening template*. DEL: Belfast.

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. (2007). *Equality Commission for Northern Ireland statement on key inequalities in Northern Ireland*. ECNI: Belfast.

Equal Opportunities Commission. (2005). *Final report of the EOC's investigation into discrimination against new and expectant mothers in the workplace*. EOC: Manchester.

Government Equalities Office. (2010). *The gender pay gap in the UK: 1995 to 2007, research findings No. 2010/2*. [Online]. Available at: [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100505211508/http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/GPAYGAP\\_gpg\\_summary\\_FINAL.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20100505211508/http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/GPAYGAP_gpg_summary_FINAL.pdf)

Harding, S. (2010). 'Pregnancy and maternity discrimination at work', *Belfast Telegraph*, 27 January. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/business/help-advice/employment-issues/pregnancy-and-maternity-discrimination-at-work-28514114.html>

Lewis, J. and Campbell, M. (2007) 'UK work/family balance policies and gender equality, 1997-2005'. *Social Politics*, 14(1): 4-30.

NISRA/DFPNI. (2012). *Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency: results from the Northern Ireland annual survey of hours and earnings, 2012*. NISRA: Belfast, 2012. [Online]. Available at: [http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern\\_ireland\\_ashe\\_2012\\_bulletin-revised\\_22-11-12.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/northern_ireland_ashe_2012_bulletin-revised_22-11-12.pdf)

Methodist Church in Britain. (2013). *Enhancing maternity and paternity pay to the living wage*. MCB: London. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.methodist.org.uk/downloads/coun-MC1346-enhancing-MP&PP-april-2013.doc>

NISRA/DFPNI. (2012). *Labour market statistics bulletin: women in Northern Ireland, September 2012*. NISRA/DFP: Belfast, 2012. [Online]. Available at: [http://www.detini.gov.uk/women\\_in\\_northern\\_ireland\\_september\\_2012\\_final\\_version.pdf](http://www.detini.gov.uk/women_in_northern_ireland_september_2012_final_version.pdf)

O'Brien, M. (2005). *Working paper series No. 18 shared caring: bringing fathers into the frame*. Equal Opportunities Commission. EOC: Manchester.

O'Brien, M. and Shemilt, I. (2003). *Research discussion series: working fathers: earning and caring*. Equal Opportunities Commission. EOC: Manchester.

TUC (2013). 'Shared parental leave plans welcome but should do more for parents'. [Online]. Available at: <http://www.tuc.org.uk/equality/tuc-22081-f0.cfm>

**For further information, contact:**

Dr Caroline Walsh - Policy and Research Coordinator

Tel: 028 90236923

Email: [policy@wsn.org.uk](mailto:policy@wsn.org.uk)

## MEMBERSHIP 2012

	<u>Member Group</u>
1	All Ireland Mother's Union
2	An Munia Tober (Travellers)
3	Antrim & Ballymena Women's Aid
4	Ardmonagh Women's Group
5	Ardoyne Women's Group
6	ATLAS Women's Centre
7	Al Nisa Women's Group
8	Ballybeen Women's Centre
9	Ballymurphy Women's Group
10	Belfast & Lisburn Women's Aid
11	Belvoir Women's Improvement Group
12	Carrickfergus Women's Forum
13	Carew II
14	Causeway Women's Aid
15	Chrysalis Women's Centre
16	Clan Mor Women's Group (Sure Start)
17	Derry Well Woman
18	Derry Women's Centre
19	Falls Women's Centre
20	First Steps Women's Group
21	Footprints Women's Centre
22	Foyle Women's Aid
23	Foyle Women's Information Network
24	Granaghant District Women's Group
25	Greenway Women's Centre
26	Kilcooley Women's Centre
27	Lesbian Advocacy Services Initiative
28	Lesbian Line
29	Lenadoon Women's Group
30	Ligoneil Family Centre

31	Link Women's Group
32	Manor Women's Group
33	Markets Women's Group
34	NI Women's Aid Federation
35	NI Women's European Platform
36	Fermanagh Women's Network
37	Newry & Mourne Women
38	Newtownabbey Women's Group
39	Older Women's Network NI
40	Omagh Women's Aid
41	Rape Crisis Centre
42	Rasharkin Women's Group
43	Shankill Women's Centre
44	Strabane & Lifford Women's Centre
45	Strathfoyle Women's Centre
46	The Learning Lodge
47	Voices Women's Group
48	Waterside Women's Centre
49	Windsor Women's Centre
50	Women Connect Project
51	Women into Politics
52	Women's Information Group
53	Women's News
54	Women's TEC
55	Women 2 Gather
56	Women's Resource & Development Agency
57	WISPA (Women in Sport & Physical Activity)
58	Ardcarn Women's Group
59	OIYIN Women's Group
60	Mossley Women's Institute
61	Mount Vernon Women's Group
62	Coole New Opportunities
63	North Belfast Womens Initiative & Support

	Project
	<b><u>Associate Members</u></b>
1.	Ballymena Community Forum
2.	CiNI
3.	Community Relations Forum
4.	East Belfast Community Partnership
5.	Employers for Childcare
6.	HIV Centre (Women's Support Group)
7.	Mencap
8.	National Women's Council of Ireland
9.	Playboard
10.	RNIB (Women's Group)
11.	Good Morning Newtownabbey
12.	Monkstown Community Association
13.	WAVE Trauma Centre
14.	WEA
15.	Parents Advice Centre
16.	Templemore Community Action Group
17.	Gingerbread
18.	Larne Community Development Project
19.	Community First Coaching
20.	Changing Faces
21.	Sands NI
22.	Women's Project Ashton Centre
23.	Women on Track
24.	Matt Talbot Women's Group
25.	Ulster People's College
26.	Council for the Homeless NI