



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on the Status of Women

FEWO

•

NUMBER 064

•

1st SESSION

•

41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

—

Chair

Ms. Marie-Claude Morin

Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Tuesday, March 19, 2013

• (1105)

[Translation]

The Chair (Ms. Marie-Claude Morin (Saint-Hyacinthe—Bagot, NDP)): Good morning. Welcome to the 64th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are studying expenditure plans for Status of Women Canada in 2012-2013 and the main estimates for 2013-2014.

Today, we welcome the Minister for Status of Women, the Hon. Rona Ambrose. Thank you very much for accepting the committee's invitation. We also welcome Ms. Suzanne Clément, Coordinator and Head of Agency, Status of Women Canada and Ms. Joanne Tremblay, Acting Director, Corporate Services.

Welcome to you all.

Without further delay, Ms. Ambrose, I give you the floor. You have 10 minutes. After that, we will move to questions. You may begin.

Hon. Rona Ambrose (Minister for Status of Women): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[English]

Thank you to the committee for inviting me to be here today to discuss the main estimates and supplementary estimates (C) for Status of Women. I would like to thank all of you right off the bat for the great work you do on behalf of women and on this committee.

I'm joined by Suzanne Clément, our coordinator and the head of agency at Status of Women Canada, and Johanne Tremblay, our chief financial officer.

[Translation]

Our government is committed to bettering the lives of women and girls in communities across Canada.

[English]

Since 2007, I am happy to report to the committee, our government has now funded more than 600 new projects from coast to coast that support women and girls through the women's program at Status of Women Canada. Today, I know it would be important for you to know that almost half of this funding has focused specifically on ending violence against women and girls.

We've increased funding now to the women's program to its highest level ever. As you have seen in the main estimates, we are maintaining this level of funding.

I'm also happy to inform the committee that in the next fiscal year, Status of Women Canada will continue to focus on three priority areas that I know are also important to this committee: ending violence against women and girls, increasing women's economic security and prosperity, and encouraging women's leadership and democratic participation.

We have made a serious and strong commitment to ending violence against women and girls. We're taking action to protect the most vulnerable women in Canadian society: women in immigrant communities, women who are living in poverty, and aboriginal women and girls.

Over the last year, Status of Women has issued a number of calls for proposals that address this serious issue. These targeted calls have allowed us at Status of Women to focus on emerging and urgent issues and to expand our reach across the country and build relationships with new organizations, and at times we've been able to take a national approach to some of these issues. For example, our government is currently supporting 21 projects across Canada that are working to end violence against women on university and college campuses. These projects are addressing a wide range of issues, such as sexual assault and sexual harassment, and they are innovative because they're led by students themselves.

I'd also like to inform the committee of our most recent calls. We asked communities to work together to address violence against women and girls in four key areas: preventing and reducing violence against women and girls in high-risk neighbourhoods; preventing and reducing violence against women and girls in the name of so-called "honour"; preventing and reducing the trafficking of women and girls through community-based planning, to support our national action plan to combat human trafficking—there are 16 departments involved in that plan, and Status of Women is one that's supporting it—and engaging men and boys in ending violence against women and girls.

It's no coincidence that Canada's theme this year for International Women's Week 2013 was entitled "Working Together: Engaging Men to End Violence against Women"; that reflects one of our key areas. We believe that violence against women is an issue for all Canadians to address, women and men and girls and boys alike. We must all be part of the solution.

This is an innovative approach, and it has not only led to a call for proposals, but has already led to some really exciting and interesting projects. Nationally, we have supported the work of Canada's White Ribbon Campaign, which focuses on educating men and boys and raises public awareness to end violence against women and girls. We have also partnered with the Ending Violence Association of British Columbia and their innovative "Be More than a Bystander" campaign, which involves high-profile male sports figures educating young boys that violence against women and girls is not acceptable.

In addition, our government recently launched the End Violence Against Women and Girls resource website, which has information related to this specific topic. I would urge you to take a look at it and to share the website with as many people as you can. It's at women.gc.ca/violence.

We are committed to ending violence against women, not only at home but abroad. Two weeks ago, I led the Canadian delegation to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, at which we focused our discussion on ending violence against women and girls, with many other countries. I co-hosted panels, with the United States specifically and also with Canadian non-governmental organizations, on violence committed in the name of so-called "honour", and as well on engaging men and boys in violence prevention.

I was pleased to be joined as well by Manitoba's minister responsible for the status of women, and by many other provincial ministers, at the panel on engaging men and boys in violence prevention. During the panel, we highlighted the Government of Manitoba's and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers' own "Be More than a Bystander" campaign. Using EVA BC's innovative model, which I mentioned earlier, the Government of Manitoba and the Blue Bombers are now also working together to engage men and boys to prevent violence against women and girls.

The second panel, on violence committed in the name of so-called "honour", was also very productive and well attended. It included international experts from Great Britain and the United States and Canada's own Aruna Papp, with whom many of you are familiar, who was part of our own Canadian delegation.

Of course, our government has made our position clear on the topic of violence committed in the name of so-called "honour" by clearly condemning the practice in our new citizenship guide, but also by being the first government to provide funding specifically for immigrant women's organizations across the country while they tackle this very complex issue.

• (1110)

At the UN we also endorsed the COMMIT initiative put forward by UN Women asking governments everywhere to be part of global efforts aimed at ending violence against women and girls.

[Translation]

Our government recognizes that women's safety goes hand in hand with their economic prosperity.

[English]

In fact, economic insecurity prevents women from leaving abusive relationships, unsafe neighbourhoods, and substandard housing. It

also prevents women and girls from developing their skills, furthering their education, and advancing their careers. At Status of Women Canada this means advancing women in leadership roles in all sectors of our society and increasing their economic security. Last year we issued calls for proposals across the country for projects that encourage girls' leadership and work to increase the economic prosperity of women in rural and remote communities.

In addition, through our economic action plan 2012, we are creating an advisory council of leaders from the public and private sectors to promote the participation of women on corporate boards. As McKinsey and Company, Credit Suisse, Catalyst, and others have made clear, businesses with more women on their boards are more profitable and routinely outperform those with fewer women. The council will help us increase the number of highly qualified women directors. In so doing, we will raise the profile of Canadian women's corporate excellence and leadership.

Such women leaders can also serve as role models and mentors, inspiring young women to set their sights on acquiring the education and skills they need for future success and prosperity. It's clear that increasing opportunities for women to serve on corporate boards makes good business sense for Canadian women and for Canada's economy.

So as we move forward Madam Chair, our government remains committed to ending violence against women, increasing their economic prosperity, and encouraging their leadership.

This year, as you've probably noted, \$29.6 million is being allocated to Status of Women Canada through the main estimates. The majority of this funding allocation will be for grants and contributions under the women's program. Supplementary estimates (C) reflect a transfer of \$83,333 from the Department of Justice to help fund a project by the Centre d'expertise en agression sexuelle Marie-Vincent that will serve victims of sexual abuse. This funding will enable us to add to our growing list of promising initiatives that help create positive, concrete change for women and girls in every region of our country.

[Translation]

Thank you, Madam Chair. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[English]

Thank you very much for your attention and for giving me the opportunity to share with you some of the great work that Status of Women Canada is doing.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

We now begin the first round of questions.

Ms. Truppe, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister, Suzanne and Johanne, for coming today. I know you're very busy especially with two portfolios.

Minister, you mentioned in your remarks your trip to the UN for the 57th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. I'm honoured to say that I was also in attendance, as were members from each of the three parties.

You also mentioned in your opening remarks that the theme for International Women's Week this year was violence against women. Ending all forms of violence against women is an issue that you have personally championed as the Minister for Status of Women.

Could you provide the committee with an update on efforts to combat violence against women and girls?

• (1115)

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Sure. If I could, I'll focus on the issue around engaging men and boys, because that was one of the areas we focused on when we were at the UN.

The first time we went to the UN to hold a round table on this issue, there was some interest, but to be honest, not a lot. A year later, we saw Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the UN, create a special committee of male leaders from all over the world to take a stand on ending violence against women and girls. I think engaging men and boys is not only timely, it's essential, so I was really pleased to see the work that was being done not only here in Canada but of course all over the world.

We do believe very strongly—I think all of us do on this committee, and in the House—that this is an issue for all of us. The reality is that men are the perpetrators of violence against women and girls, but the majority of them are good, and they want to help. I think the reality is that a lot of men don't quite know how to participate. Finding ways to involve them in the conversation is really important, because they are mentors, they are fathers, husbands, brothers. They have influence. They're 50% of the population. We need as many allies as we can get on this issue.

The women's movement has led this issue for decades, and that's the way it will continue to be, but we do need men to take a more active role. We need men to step up and speak out on these issues. If they see something, or if they know of something, we need it so that they aren't afraid to speak out. I think that resonated very well with the work being done at the UN, and seeing some of the projects coming forward to Status of Women are really important.

I do want to make the point also that with these kinds of projects, it's important that women's organizations remain involved. What we don't want to have happen is to lose all the great work that women's organizations have done on this issue. They're the ones who have advocated and provided great research, and are doing the front-line service provision.

So the way that we have structured the call for proposals is that men's groups, if they are men's groups, or organizations like the Y, for instance, that may want to work on projects, have to involve

women's organizations. I think that's important, because it creates that dialogue that we really need to have happen.

I would say there's a lot of work being done. I mentioned EVA in British Columbia. The flagship project that EVA BC is doing with the BC Lions is called "Be More Than a Bystander". It has iconic football role models or athletes going into schools, making hundreds of visits into schools, to talk to girls and boys, but specifically targeting the boys about ending violence against women. It's an innovative idea. These are men that the boys look up to. They listen to what they say when they come into the classroom.

That has spurred another program in Manitoba, with the Manitoba government and the Blue Bombers.

The idea is to open up the conversation and look for innovative ideas.

In Brantford, Ontario, the Nova Vita women's shelter has a male-led project to engage male and female students in at-risk schools in promoting awareness of domestic violence against women and girls.

There's also one in London, Ontario, that we're supporting, an initiative called "Changing Ways". It engages youth aged 12 to 15 and their parents to end gender-based violence and bullying.

There's also a great one in New Brunswick that the YWCA is working on with young girls and boys.

The idea is to look at this from a more holistic point of view, to ensure that boys at a young age know that they also have a responsibility and obligation, and to talk about healthy relationships. I think this is a very important aspect, and an essential aspect, of the conversation to end violence against women and girls moving forward.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Great. Thank you, Minister.

I agree that men should be speaking up as well. As you know, I'm a good supporter of the "Be More Than a Bystander" program. I think that's a great initiative.

We know that aboriginal women and girls are the Canadians most at risk of violence, and that the Government of Canada developed a five-year national strategy aimed at enhancing the response of law enforcement and the justice system to cases of missing and murdered aboriginal women and girls, and supporting culturally appropriate victim services.

But these are not the only issues faced by aboriginal women. Access to services and leadership opportunities for women and girls living in these remote communities is limited, and programming more difficult to access.

I've heard you speak passionately about the need for an extension of matrimonial property rights for first nations women living on reserve. Could you speak to the need for programming that addresses the needs of these at-risk and rural populations, as well as the importance of addressing issues of matrimonial property rights, as part of our efforts to end violence against aboriginal women and girls?

● (1120)

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Sure. I know that this committee did—

The Chair: You have just one minute, sorry.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: The committee obviously did a great study when you did the work on ending violence against aboriginal women and girls, but we all know and recognize that aboriginal women and girls are the Canadians most at risk of violence. The statistics are very clear. So, as you said, there is a lot of work being done, whether it's through the national strategy and the RCMP missing persons unit that's been established or the over 40 projects across the country that are culturally sensitive, working with aboriginal women's groups and other groups that are working on these issues.

I think those projects in particular are really important, because they're projects that are on the ground. They address the issues of aboriginal women at risk in rural and remote communities, and they're grassroots initiatives that touch the lives of aboriginal women and girls, so they're also preventative, which I think is very important.

I'll just name one, because I'm familiar with it. It's in Edmonton. It's with the Creating Hope Society and it's working with aboriginal women and girls to provide them with the resources necessary to support victims of violence in the aboriginal community. There are a number of these being funded across the country—there are almost 40 through Justice Canada—but this in particular is funded through Status of Women, and we have a number of projects as well.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Ambrose, I am sorry, but I am going to have to interrupt you because the time allocated to Ms. Truppe is up.

The floor now goes to Ms. Day.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day (Charlesbourg—Haute-Saint-Charles, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Ambrose, welcome to this committee. We hope to see you again at our committee very soon and as often as possible.

Madam Minister, the United Nations is one thing, but last night, at a meeting of the NDP women's caucus, we had with us Michèle Audette, the President of the Native Women's Association of Canada. She did not see things as you do, in that she was saying that, before getting men and boys involved, it is necessary to provide basic, essential services, including a shortage of 10,000 homes in first nations communities.

Here are my questions for you.

The Main Estimates 2013-2014 show a transfer from Justice Canada to Status of Women Canada. It is intended to strengthen the development of knowledge for aboriginal service and resource deliverers so that they can better deal with the problems of sexual violence against women in their communities. The funding of projects designed to improve the lives of women and girls is very important.

Given the seriousness of the problem of sexual violence against first nations women, is Status of Women Canada recommending a national inquiry on missing or murdered aboriginal women?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I think there were quite a few different questions in there. Did you want me to speak about the transfer from Justice Canada in particular, or address the issue of murdered or missing aboriginal women?

[Translation]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I was talking about the transfer from the Department of Justice to Status of Women Canada.

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Sure, I'd be happy to.

We work with a number of different departments. If a project, for instance, doesn't fit within our mandate, we work with that group to try to get funding for it through another department. We work very closely in particular with Aboriginal Affairs on projects related to aboriginal women and girls, and with Justice Canada on issues related to violence against women and girls through their Victims Fund.

So, for instance, in this project they transferred money to us. They thought it made more sense for us to manage this project, so they transferred some funds to us. This is consistent with the Government of Canada's objective through our blue ribbon panel to streamline the way that we effectively manage our programming. It made more sense for Status of Women to deliver this project. This project is... you're probably familiar with it, the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent. It was approved in March of last year as a 36-month project that is basically around the development of knowledge for aboriginal service deliverers on the issue of sexually assaulted girls. The project is going to develop expertise of service delivery professionals in aboriginal communities in Quebec to better serve aboriginal girls who have been victims of sexual abuse.

Status of Women's contribution itself for the project is \$380,000, but Justice's contribution is \$250,000, so that means \$83,333 per year. That's where the transfer comes in. The total combined amount for the project itself over the three years is just a little over \$630,000, but we know this is an excellent organization and an excellent project, so we're very happy to fund it, and very happy that Justice Canada is also contributing to the project.

● (1125)

[Translation]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Currently, the committee is working on a study on sexual harassment in the federal workplace. Do you believe that Status of Women Canada should play a frontline role in helping departments to prevent sexual harassment?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Absolutely. I speak out on it. Our department supports other departments when it comes to gender-based analysis, and that's part of dealing with these kinds of issues. When the issue arose about sexual harassment in the RCMP, one of the first calls we made—Suzanne Clément can speak more to that—was to the commissioner of the RCMP to offer our services and our expertise on doing a gender audit.

I applaud the committee for doing the work you are doing because this isn't just an issue that affects one organization or agency within the federal government. It's an issue that affects women all across the country, whether that is public or private sector.

But we are there with our expertise and we are more than happy to offer it. We did do that with the RCMP in particular, and we will do that with any department that asks for it.

I don't know if Suzanne wants to make any further comment about that.

[Translation]

Ms. Suzanne Clément (Coordinator and Head of Agency, Office of the Coordinator, Status of Women Canada): As the minister mentioned, we have worked with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We pointed out to their representatives the tools available to conduct a comparative analysis within their organization for various processes, including the recruitment and promotion of women.

In terms of the public service as a whole, we are working closely with the Treasury Board Secretariat, which is responsible for harassment policies in the public service. So we are able to provide them with advice and assistance.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: The budget will be tabled soon. Can we expect it to include gender analysis?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: In terms of the way gender analysis is done, of course we provide expertise, but it is, as you know, the responsibility of each department to do gender analysis. From what I see, that is being done. I see in cabinet documents that gender analysis is done. The analysis is provided to ministers when programs do come through. And we encourage and work with all the departments to ensure they are doing it in a rigorous way. We also help with training those within each department who are responsible for fulfilling that obligation.

[Translation]

The Chair: You have one minute left, Ms. Day.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Thank you.

Can we expect to see you again soon, after the budget has been tabled, so that we can look at what is available in the 2013-2014 budget for Status of Women Canada?

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I look forward to an invitation. I thank you for that.

[Translation]

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Recently, the Government of Canada approved a UN Women's initiative asking governments around the world to be part of the global efforts to end violence against women and girls. This is a noble endeavour, if we are ready to play a real role.

The UN is asking all countries to put in place an action plan to fight violence against women by 2015.

Is Canada committed to having such an action plan in place?

[English]

The Chair: Very quickly....

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I'm sorry, do I have time to answer?

• (1130)

The Chair: Yes, just.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: We did commit—the title of the initiative is COMMIT, from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. We were one of the first countries to commit, and we highlighted a number of initiatives, some national, some local, some regional, that Status of Women Canada is working on. As I said, the opportunity for us, through the way that we're managing the department and our funds, is to target our call for proposals in a way that sometimes is able to result in a national approach and sometimes, depending upon where the needs are, to be more local, more targeted—for instance, rural and remote communities. We took a national approach to sexual assault on university campuses and colleges and CEGEPs, so we do have that flexibility, and I think that's important.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we move to the Conservative Party.

Ms. O'Neill Gordon, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I thank all of you for taking the time to be with us today. We realize you have a busy schedule, so it is much appreciated.

I understand that there has been an effort to increase the ability for volunteer organizations to participate in these calls by expanding the terms and conditions to allow groups that were before not formally eligible for funding. They are now able to apply for funding through Status of Women Canada's calls for proposals.

I'm wondering if Suzanne Clément could perhaps describe some of the changes that were made to make this available, and perhaps give us an example of a type of group that can now apply that before was not able to, and the new terms and conditions making what had been previously ineligible for funding now eligible.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Thank you.

The women's program is a grants and contributions funding program. It is governed by the Treasury Board policy on transfer payments, which requires an evaluation of terms and conditions of programs be undertaken on a cyclical basis. In 2011-12 Status of Women Canada undertook an evaluation of our program, reviewing the Ts and Cs to see if any areas needed to be addressed to change the Ts and Cs.

The overall evaluation was very positive. It looked at five years of program activities and in particular the last two years. It found the focus of the program was still very relevant, a focus on gender equality. It found the design and the delivery mechanisms were appropriate to reach the population and the objectives we wanted to reach. It found we were stimulating the right partners, and in particular it highlighted the blueprint approach as very innovative and positive. It also found it was efficient in its operations.

It also indicated we needed to focus our projects more on widening their potential reach as well as the sustainable impact to have impact over a longer term.

With this in mind, the revised terms and conditions did increase the potential reach by adding new applicants and categories of applicants. One of those is cooperatives. In the past the cooperatives were not an eligible applicant, and we found a lot of the work they do at the community level made them very effective project deliverers.

We also looked at expanding the reach to aboriginal organizations. Most terms and conditions do not allow government organizations to apply for government funding, but we found in certain areas and in particular on reserve it was difficult to find organizations, NGOs, that could undertake projects. Where NGOs are lacking, we are able to have agreements with government organizations.

We can also have agreements with provincial and territorial governments, again where the NGO population or presence is insufficient to have projects.

We also increased flexibility in the types of activities we are able to fund. For example and in particular on engaging men and boys on violence, the previous Ts and Cs had a requirement that stated women had to be involved in all aspects of the project, which meant we couldn't work with a group of men, for example, that wanted to work with women. We modified that to say women are involved in many of the aspects of the project. I think that has gone a long way in allowing us to create those partnerships that are important to open the dialogue between men's and women's groups in communities.

• (1135)

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Thank you.

All these changes were certainly worthwhile.

One of the calls for proposals mentioned issues that were addressed earlier, affecting women living in rural and remote communities and small urban centres. We know women living in rural and remote areas have different levels of access to programs and services from women living in urban centres, and we are so pleased to hear you've included a separate call for proposals for these women. Sometimes rural women need to travel to the next town to obtain help, find a shelter, or gain access to training to help improve their economic prospects.

Could you provide some additional detail on the call for proposals for women living in rural and remote communities?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I'd be happy to do that.

We felt we didn't have the kinds of relationships with rural organizations that we should, so we put out the specific call. The response that came back was overwhelming. Clearly there is a need in the rural and remote areas.

For instance there aren't a lot of NGOs in Nunavut. It then made us think we should change our terms and conditions so we can partner with a government like Nunavut's so we can help deliver important projects in rural and remote areas like that.

But it's true—whether it's through community planning initiatives we're working on for safety within small rural communities or partnerships to identify and respond to specific needs like isolation, economic security, or insecurity in rural and remote areas—women living in small towns and small cities are facing very specific issues and challenges.

These really are excellent projects. We were thrilled because we were able to make connections and build relationships with these organizations that we didn't have in the past through Status of Women, and so we'll continue to work with them.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

We now move to Ms. Sgro, for seven minutes.

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro (York West, Lib.): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Madam Minister, it's great to have you here with us. I very sincerely thank you for the good work you are doing. I may want you to do more, and I may want you to do many different things, but I thank you for what you are doing.

I have a couple of questions. I'll try to be quick because we only get one time slot here. I'd like to get short answers, but I'm probably going to ask you a complicated question and ask for a short answer that you probably won't be able to give me.

In a recent answer to an order paper question I had about the amount of money the government is spending on media monitoring, it came back that the government as a whole is spending over \$30 million on monitoring responses to the government. You know what I'm talking about when I say "monitoring the media". It's something we all do, as we want to know what people are saying and what the media is saying about what the government of the day is doing.

Frankly, that \$30 million is a huge amount of money to spend on just media monitoring. Of that \$30 million, you signed off on over \$10.6 million, not only as the Status of Women minister but in your role as the minister of two portfolios. Can you tell me how much of that was related to Status of Women in particular? Can you also tell me what you felt you got out of the monitoring that told you about a different direction you might want to go in, whether that's from a polling perspective or about a different avenue that you might want to direct some of the funds to?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Sure. From a Public Works point of view, we're the contracting authority. We manage the licences and contracting with the media and the news agencies and outlets. Through the centralization of those contracts and the consolidation of the contracting, I think we're saving the government \$18 million a year now or something. I could get the specific figures for you.

But beyond that, each department makes the determination of what they need for their specific areas of information. That happens at an official level. Of course, then it's also determined what the needs are within the department, or the ministry, or the minister's office, so I can't really speak to that.

On Status of Women Canada, I can tell you that we have no expenditures because we are an agency through HRSDC. I don't know the exact amount.

Suzanne, do you know?

• (1140)

Hon. Judy Sgro: At a time when we are running up deficits and making all kinds of other cuts that have to be done to a variety of other organizations, spending \$30 million on monitoring what the media is saying about the government I think is very much in excess of what should be spent. I can think of all kinds of programs that you could use that money for rather than spending \$30 million as a whole. That's part of the issue.

So none of that \$30 million would have been spent to monitor anything to do with Status of Women?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I'm going to ask Suzanne to answer, because I'm not sure about that.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: We're very innovative at saving money at Status of Women.

Voices: Oh, oh!

A voice: Because you're a women's organization.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: We are part of the portfolio for HRSDC, so one of the things we did is that we were able to arrive at an arrangement with them such that they've added a few search words in their ongoing media monitoring and they're able to pull out the information that we would be interested in seeing. There is no cost to Status of Women Canada, and we're able to spend all of our money on our programs.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Not directly, but is the information you're getting from monitoring the media dictating your mandate and the direction you're taking?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: No. I don't get daily clippings. I get the communications department....

Ms. Suzanne Clément: It's a function of every department.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Yes. It's a huge amount of money. That's the point. In a time of austerity when we're cutting everywhere you can look at, when Service Canada offices, immigration department offices, and so on are being cut, we have \$30 million to monitor what the media is saying about the government.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: What I will say to that, though, is that as the contracting authority, as the Ministry of Public Works, we have worked to consolidate contracting, so that we are saving the government millions of dollars. In terms of how the departments are using this, I think we can find more savings, and we should find a way to ensure that it is being used effectively, efficiently, and if it's necessary. If it's not, then we should look to cut those costs.

Hon. Judy Sgro: I think you could cut at least half of it and use it for helping seniors and a few others.

I appreciate your promotion of our country, of Canada and what it's doing when it comes to women, but in the latest reports that have come out, even as recently as last week from the United Nations, Canada is way down. In one of them, it was number 17, one ahead of the United States, as far as advancing women's issues goes. As much as we want to talk about how wonderful we are as a country—and we all do it—the reality, when it comes to the real numbers that come out of the United Nations, doesn't show Canada in the lead.

At one point, we were third or fourth on those many lists that the United Nations puts out. On one of them last week, we were at 17. We're falling tremendously in regard to some of these larger issues when it comes to the people who do those analyses.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I appreciate that. I think there's always more work that can be done. I would also say that there are other reports.

For instance, in 2012, just last year, there was a global poll of experts—and I say that because it was a global survey, but the experts were actually gender experts—specifically looking at the wide range of services offered to women, at resources, at research capacity. They found that within the G-20, Canada was the best place in the world to be a woman. You saw, of course, that *Newsweek* rated Canada the third-best place in the world to be a woman. The World Economic Forum, since 2008—and that's the gender forum in particular—has placed Canada ahead of the U.S. and Australia.

I know that there's always more work to be done, but we're doing well internationally in a lot of the surveys related specifically to gender.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Many of the organizations that have been advocates on behalf of women and so on throughout Canada over the last five or six years have lost their funding and have closed the doors of their organizations. Based on even these kinds of changes that you alluded to earlier—to the cooperatives, and to areas in which there are not organizations—are you planning any further changes that might allow other organizations to help advance the initiatives you've been talking about?

• (1145)

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Right off the bat I would say that we're always open to changes in our terms and conditions so that we can better serve women's organizations across the country; we're very responsive. We have also implemented a number of flexibilities in the ways that women's organizations can apply for funding. If it's online, we've made the application process much simpler. As you're probably aware, we're also very flexible: we'll work with an organization on refining their application, because often women's organizations don't have money to hire a consultant to write a long proposal.

So there's that. But we're also working very closely with a number of other departments on a committee that—

[Translation]

The Chair: I am going to have to interrupt you—

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: —is focused on violence against women and on family violence, too. If we can't help them, perhaps another department can help them. So we're doing our best to facilitate support for organizations.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Ambrose, I am going to have to interrupt you. Thank you for your answers.

We now move to Ms. James, for five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Roxanne James (Scarborough Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Minister and officials, for being here.

I know that in the first round of questioning, Minister Ambrose, you spoke extensively about the commitment to engage men and boys in the fight to end violence against women. While you were saying that, I was thinking about a member's statement that was read

into the Alberta legislature on March 14 of this year by Donna Kennedy-Glans, MLA for Calgary-Varsity. She was a member of Canada's United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and she was speaking about the importance of engaging men and boys in leadership, a position that you have taken, Minister, in this particular area.

I brought it with me, and I'd like to read it in, because a lot of what she says, I think, is really important. I'm just going to read it. Again this is not my personal statement. I'm reading another statement:

Last week I attended the 57th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women with my colleague from Barrhead—Morinville—Westlock. Our Canadian delegation was very capably led by federal Minister Rona Ambrose. The goal of this session was to identify ways to eliminate and prevent violence against women and girls.

As a mother of three sons it was particularly reassuring to me that the vast majority of the participants at this UN session recognized the need to engage men and boys in preventing violence against women and girls. In fact, this strategic imperative was concretely advanced by the Canadian delegation.

It's heartening...to know that this approach is already being applied here in Alberta. [Here are just few examples.]

The Calgary YWCA hosts the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes campaign, inviting men to walk in high heels to raise awareness of men's roles in combating violence against women. The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters hosts Breakfast with the [Boys] events to bring male leaders together to inform and inspire action to help end domestic violence.

I'm [very] excited about an initiative launched by the B.C. Lions football team, [which] I'm hoping...will be adopted by the Calgary Stampeders and the Edmonton Eskimos. Football meets feminism when high-profile athletes

—I heard a giggle—

stand alongside women as allies.

I think that's really true, though.

Wally Buono, former coach of the Calgary Stampeders and [new] coach of the B.C. Lions, even steps up to share his own story of growing up in a home with domestic violence.

This is not part of the statement, but the next two points I really want to stress because they really drive home the need to engage men and boys.

These initiatives have the potential to be gamechangers. Too often we see gender equality as a women's movement, dependent on male support and encouragement, yet it isn't enough for my father, my husband, and now my sons to stand along the sidelines and root for me. They need to get in this game and participate.

I thought that was fitting, and I wanted to read it into the record today. I think the last two points this person made were very fitting as to why we need to bring men and boys into the equation now. So thank you for the good work we're doing in that area.

I wanted to touch very briefly on another point. You mentioned Bill S-2 in one of the first questions. You didn't refer to the bill by name, but you were talking about matrimonial property rights on reserves. I'm just wondering whether you could speak a moment on how important this bill is, how we currently have a legislative gap here in Canada that does not protect women on reserves, and how, in terms of marital breakdown, the fact that there is such inequality right now plays a large part in domestic violence in those particular areas. I'm wondering if you could touch a little bit more on that particular issue.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Bill S-2 is our latest attempt in the House of Commons to close the gap that exists, which the Supreme Court identified over 25 years ago. It's a rights gap in that aboriginal women living on reserve do not have the same rights to matrimonial property that women in the rest of Canada have. I think this is the fourth legislative attempt to pass this bill, so I do urge all of the members from all parties on the committee to think about that. It's been over a quarter of a century since the Supreme Court ruled that women living on reserve are without access to the legal rights they deserve.

This particular bill, Bill S-2, which you're familiar with, will give women those rights to matrimonial property, and—I think most importantly—it will allow a judge to enforce emergency protection orders and remove a violent partner from the home. At this point, we don't have that protection for aboriginal women on reserve. I think that's a really important part of this, because it addresses the issue of violence against aboriginal women and girls living on reserve. So I do urge all members of the House to support this. Of course, the consultations on this have been very thorough and lengthy. They've taken place over 25 years. This is the fourth legislative attempt. If there are discussions to be had among parties, let's have them, but by all means let's expedite this bill through the House.

• (1150)

Ms. Roxanne James: Thank you very much for your comments.

Do I have any time left?

[Translation]

The Chair: I am sorry, but your time is up.

We now move to Isabelle Morin, for five minutes.

Ms. Isabelle Morin (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine, NDP): Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you very much for joining us, Madam Minister.

I am going to continue with the same subject, because violence against indigenous women is a concern of mine.

We are soon going to begin work the work of our special committee on missing and murdered indigenous women. Unfortunately, I am not sure of the extent to which the special committee will be able to find justice for those missing women and bring peace of mind back to their families. The work we on the committee will be doing is very important.

Status of Women Canada really has the ability to conduct gender analysis. How will the department use its skill and expertise to advise the special committee on missing and murdered indigenous

women? Are you going to participate in it, how will you do that, and what will your contribution to the committee be?

Thank you.

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Well, I've already made my views known to the whips of each party who are dealing with this special committee. My view is that this is a good opportunity for all of the parties and for women's organizations that are working on this issue to put forward a substantive exercise and a substantive process, and I support that wholeheartedly.

I look forward to the special committee. I will work with my colleagues as much as I can. I know this is led by Justice Canada. This is about the investigation in particular, the investigative techniques or allegations about challenges in the judicial system that aboriginal women and girls have faced and that communities have faced. But we will be there to support the committee in any way that we can.

I don't know who is going to be sitting on the committee, but I hope all of you from the different parties make a point that it is especially important to have the expertise from this committee. You already did a study on this issue not that long ago, on the issue of violence against aboriginal women and girls. I hope that all that information is available to the special parliamentary committee and that some of the members of this committee are asked to sit on that committee or participate in whatever the undertakings are of that committee. It's very important.

There has been a lot of work done. There's been \$25 million allocated to the missing and murdered aboriginal women strategy. There's been a new centre created by the RCMP for missing persons, and a new national database that's accessible for all levels of police, whether municipal, provincial or federal police organizations. There's even a public tips website. If you know of someone who's missing, you can put a piece of jewellery on it so that people could maybe identify it.

There are so many things happening across the country to deal with this issue. There's the inquiry in British Columbia led by Mr. Oppal. We have forwarded that information on to the United Nations that's looking at this issue. There's a lot of collaboration between the provinces and the federal government. There's so much work that has gone on and a lot of goodwill, but there's still an opportunity—

• (1155)

[Translation]

Ms. Isabelle Morin: I am going to interrupt you here because I do not have a lot of time.

I wanted to know how you are going to participate in it, but my colleague Ms. Hughes will continue. She has other questions for you.

[English]

Mrs. Carol Hughes (Algoma—Manitoulin—Kapusking, NDP): Thank you very much.

I'm going to ask you a variety of questions, and what you don't have a chance to answer, could you please forward your responses in writing?

In 2008, Status of Women Canada was working on a gender equality indicator project and I'm wondering if you can update the committee on the progress of this report.

The other question I have is with respect to some of the comments you made with respect to MRP about thorough consultations. Could you table the report of all the thorough consultations? I can tell you that I have first nations that have said they have not been consulted at all, and their concern is with respect to the fact that you are impeding...in their jurisdiction to decide what they're going to do with their own land.

The other thing is with respect to—

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Hughes, you have 30 seconds left.

[English]

Mrs. Carol Hughes: —the transfer for Justice. I'm wondering where that funding envelope was, what that money was actually allocated for, and whether it's going to affect a program that was set for something else. What was cut in the Justice file, if anything?

The other one is that you made a comment with respect to proposals for projects that encourage girls. I'm wondering if you can tell me how many came in, how many were approved, how much is being invested in these programs, and where these projects are actually taking place.

Thank you.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Well—

[Translation]

The Chair: Excuse me, Ms. Ambrose, but Ms. Hughes' time is up.

However, you can answer questions in writing. The clerk will be in touch with you about that.

[English]

Hon. Rona Ambrose: Absolutely, we can answer all of those.

[Translation]

The Chair: It is also possible that the officials may be able to reply during our second hour.

We have three minutes left.

So you have three minutes, Ms. Ambler.

[English]

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Minister, for being here today.

I'd like to talk to you as the mother of a daughter who just turned 18 last week. I want to thank you for championing the issue of violence prevention on university and college campuses. My daughter will be going to university this fall and I've read all the horror stories about what can happen to young girls on university and college campuses.

Mainly in these stories we hear that women between the ages of 15 and 34 are at the most risk of experiencing violence. In particular, university and college women are more likely to have the other risk factors of violence, such as being out of their house in the evenings most nights, or being exposed to alcohol.

That's why I agree it's very important to address the risk factors where they occur and to partner with universities and colleges to prevent violence against women on campus.

I was wondering if you could speak to the calls for proposals for women engaging young people to prevent violence against women on post-secondary campuses and provide some examples of the types of projects that are being funded in this area.

Hon. Rona Ambrose: We are seeing the incidence of sexual assault rise on university and college campuses and CEGEPs across the country. There are a lot of women's organizations that are active on campuses, but for some reason it's not enough. It doesn't seem to be working, so we thought we'd target student-led organizations, ask the young people what they think would work, so that's what's different about this call for proposals. We wanted student-led organizations to be a part of it.

Of course they don't have the capacity, so they partnered with.... For instance, in Edmonton, they partnered with the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton or they may have partnered with the Y in certain places, but the whole point is they may not have the capacity to deliver the service, but they had some really good ideas. There were some really interesting things that came out of that.

In total we funded 21 different organizations. It was a national approach to carry out these projects. They tackle a wide range of issues. There are harassment issues, but more often than not it's about sexual assault and things like safety plans on campus. There are still places where there aren't safe walk programs, where young women are walking back from their classrooms late at night, or there's no transportation on campus, so they have to walk quite far to get to a bus and they're alone. So even community safety plans on campus to create a safe walk program are needed. Other universities and campuses seem to be more advanced, so they were looking at more sophisticated approaches to getting the message out regarding the resources they have available.

In Port Alberni, British Columbia, the Alberni Community and Women's Services Society is working with the North Island College on a really great project that affects women in that area. As I mentioned before, in Edmonton, the sexual assault centre is engaging male students in a couple of the campuses to work on anti-violence against women on the university campuses.

Here in Ottawa, were working with the Ottawa Coalition to End Violence Against Women to engage students at the University of Ottawa, Carleton, La Cité collégiale, and Algonquin College to end violence against women.

In Montreal, Quebec we're funding a YWCA project that engages francophone students from three different CEGEPs in ending violence against women on their campuses.

• (1200)

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Do any of these have a date rape prevention component?

Hon. Rona Ambrose: I would imagine so. Obviously, there are a number of different approaches at different universities, but I'm sure that's a huge issue on campuses. They're looking at a broad range of issues.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

That ends our one-hour meeting with the minister.

Thank you once again for coming to meet the members of our committee.

I am now going to suspend the meeting for a few minutes to allow our next guests take their places.

• (1200)

(Pause)

• (1205)

The Chair: We now continue our meeting.

We welcome Linda Savoie, Director General, Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate and Sébastien Goupil, Director General, Policy and External Relations.

We will just continue the round we started earlier with Ms. Tremblay and Ms. Clément.

Ms. Young, you have seven minutes.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young (Vancouver South, CPC): Hello, and thank you so much for coming today. It was very interesting to hear from the minister today, not just on the breadth and scope of the programming that's happening in Canada but also on the initiatives and the leadership that we've undertaken in the United Nations as well, to have an impact globally and internationally with other countries. I know that, for example, it was Canada and the minister and yourselves, of course, working very hard to launch the International Day of the Girl. I want to commend you on that great work and the fact that it was obviously a huge success.

Now turning more to the department, because of your role here, I wanted to ask about this new website that was alluded to this morning, because some of us have not had a chance to look at this website. Can you tell us about the reason behind it, what happened, and what you think the reach is going to be for this, which is obviously not just Canada but international, and again where Canada can be a leader in this whole area?

I want to spend a couple of minutes on that, and then I want to talk about the transfer of funds in the main estimates.

• (1210)

Ms. Suzanne Clément: We're very proud of the website, and please, I encourage everybody to go and visit it. The website was developed to encourage all Canadians, women and men, girls and boys, to recognize and do something about the issue of violence against women and girls. We know that awareness is a very powerful

tool. Ensuring that there's more information available to all Canadians would certainly have the impact of increasing awareness.

The website acts as a hub of information and it includes various sections. It has forms of violence, its economic impact, and who is most at risk of abuse. It also includes information on how to respond when you're faced with a situation of violence. It has tips for parents, educators, youth, and others. It has a wealth of information on services available. When you go into the site and you want information on a specific area, as a parent, for example, you can go into your province and it will identify all of the provincial or territorial services that are available for you in that area. We feature a number of initiatives through the site, like EVA BC, the project that the minister mentioned earlier. We have information on the RespectED program, which is available in schools, on developing non-abusive relationships. There's also the Stop Sex With Kids initiative from the Government of Manitoba, for example, that is featured. There are a number of initiatives by NGOs, by governments, etc.

It also provides a cohesive picture of what initiatives the Government of Canada has undertaken to address the issue of violence from the various government departments.

In developing the website, which was completely done in-house, we worked very closely with Justice, Public Safety, INAC, and a number of other departments, and especially provincial and territorial colleagues who provided us with all of the information that the site was able to connect to. In order to attract people to this site—because we know there's an abundance of information available on the Internet—we were able to access some funding from the central advertising fund. We were provided with \$250,000 in this fiscal year, which we received through the supplementary estimates (A) in order to develop, create, and purchase web banners and Google ads that would drive traffic to the site. When you're in LinkedIn or on news sites, you'll get a banner that comes across and tells you about it. If a person is interested or affected by violence or abuse, they would be able to get to our violence website. It's been a very popular site since its launch February 23. We've had between 1,000 and 2,000 hits a day, and 83% come from the banners, people discovered it through the banners and then go into the site.

Ms. Wai Young: When you say it was launched February 23, do you mean this February? A few weeks ago?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Yes.

Ms. Wai Young: This is in fact a pretty comprehensive initiative from the department. I'm very impressed that you worked with all the different departments and that it was done in-house because we have the in-house expertise obviously. I'm also very impressed that you're doing the central advertising as well.

As we all know, Canada is a very large country with the second largest land mass in the world, but we have a very scattered population throughout and up north, and in rural communities, which we talked about earlier. This will in fact put the resources, the information, the education, and the steps that one takes right out there, so that anybody in any community in Canada can access that, whether you're a parent, a teacher, a local community group, a women's group, a men's group, etc. Given the thousands of hits that you've received today in such short time, what do you anticipate as an outcome for this website?

Very quickly, because I have other questions.

• (1215)

Ms. Suzanne Clément: As I said, information is a powerful tool. The outcome would be to have a greater awareness, a greater level of information, and a greater commitment by all Canadians that violence is something that we can end, and it requires everybody to take action.

The Chair: One minute.

Ms. Wai Young: I wanted to quickly ask you about the fund transfer from the main estimates. This is something that the minister alluded to earlier, but we didn't quite have a spotlight on it, I guess. I'll give you a small example. Last year, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Police Department actually held a conference to celebrate 100 years....I want to put that on the record that the City of Vancouver has had women police officers in Vancouver for 100 years. Last year, they held a conference. They invited speakers from all over Canada to profile this, which is an incredible thing for Vancouver.

I worked with Minister Ambrose to get funding for that conference, and we were actually able to get some from the Department of Public Safety, eventually, for this conference. Basically, we did exactly what was happening with this transfer of funds. That is—

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Young, I am sorry, but your time is up.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young: Very quickly, what the minister alluded to was in fact not just the actual money from Status of Women, but that's expanded through other departments by collaborating with them.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Young.

We now move to Ms. Day.

You have seven minutes.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Thank you, Madam Chair.

A little earlier, I asked the minister some quite lengthy questions. She did not answer the last part. It was probably too long. So I am going to ask my question again.

Given the seriousness of the problem of sexual violence against first nations women, is Status of Women Canada recommending a national inquiry on missing or murdered aboriginal women?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Studying that question or recommending that an inquiry be held is not part of Status of Women Canada's mandate. The matter is the responsibility of the Department of Justice and the Department of Public Safety. It is a matter that deals with police decisions in criminal matters.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I am going to ask another question, Ms. Clément.

Though the committee has not yet had the opportunity to examine the report on plans and priorities for the present financial year, we note in the estimates that funding for operational expenditures will be reduced by \$150,000 compared to the expenditures budget to date, and that funding for statutory spending will increase by only \$20,000 for the present financial year, according to the current estimates for 2012-2013.

Can you describe the internal measures taken to adjust to the reduction in operational expenditures?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: The figures are complicated. I know that there has been no change to our budgets. There are often variances because of transfers between departments for projects, such as the "Women in Canada" report. Last year, we received a transfer of \$25,000 from Health Canada.

There are also on-going adjustments related to collective agreements with employees. All those amounts are added to the budget as the year progresses. So there are variances in those budget items. There were no cuts in salary from last year.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: There is a reduction of \$150,000. The question was about internal measures. Where will the cuts be?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I would need to know the source of your information.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: We are talking about operational expenditures. We are told that operational expenditures will be reduced by \$150,000 compared to the previous budget. We would like to know where the budget will be reduced.

• (1220)

Ms. Johanne Tremblay (Acting Director, Corporate Services, Status of Women Canada): Are you saying that internal operating expenditures for this year will be reduced by \$150,000 next year, that is, in the Main Estimates 2013-2014.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: I am talking about current expenditures for 2012-2013 compared to expenditures for 2013-2014.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: You are talking about current expenditures, in the same year, is that correct?

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Could you provide us with the answer later?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I am not sure I understood. You would have to give us the source for your information.

The Chair: We will find it and the clerk will be in touch with you about it.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Fine. Thank you.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: The information comes from the House of Commons, so it will be easy for you to find it.

The committee has also noticed that Status of Women Canada's strategic outcome referring to the equality of women and their full participation in the economic, social and democratic life of Canada has been replaced by the promotion of equality between men and women in Canada.

What repercussions will this change in strategic outcome have or may possibly have on equality programs?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I will ask Sébastien to answer that question.

Mr. Sébastien Goupil (Director General, Policy and External Relations, Status of Women Canada): Actually, there are really no repercussions. If you look at our organization's documents, you will see that we use different terms interchangeably. We talk about the promotion of gender equality as well as the promotion of equality for women and the promotion of equality between men and women.

One of the aspects we are highlighting is the recognition that genuine equality, substantive equality, as we call it, has not yet been fully achieved, in spite of some great advances in the last decades.

In any case, the terminology we use has not the slightest impact on our daily activities or our approach to programming.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Does that mean that using this terminology does not change anything for programs that provide funding to women's rights groups, and that you have not started to fund new men's groups? There are no changes in fact?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: No. We have actually changed the terms and conditions, as I mentioned earlier. This makes it possible to carry out larger projects where men can work with women's groups and other non-governmental organizations.

In other words, the program priorities have not changed. The three priorities are still the same.

Mrs. Anne-Marie Day: Thank you.

The committee noted that there are more conditions attached to the first of three annual transfers for the Department of Justice to develop the knowledge for aboriginal service deliverers have so that they can better deal with the sexual assault of girls.

The committee also noticed that a total amount of \$1.2 million was granted to a Montreal organization, the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent. This organization seeks to ensure that child victims of sexual assault receive services adapted to their needs across Quebec.

How was this project developed or selected for funding?

Ms. Linda Savoie (Director General, Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate, Status of Women Canada): You mentioned a project of approximately \$1.2 million provided by the Status of Women Canada to the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent in Montreal. In fact, this project ended more than a year ago. As part of the project, we noticed that aboriginal communities were often going to the centre for similar services. Given that the first project did not focus on aboriginal peoples and their needs, the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent has approached us to share their interest in creating a project specifically for aboriginal peoples and service providers.

The Chair: I will have to stop you there, Ms. Savoie. Thank you for your answer.

We will now go to Ms. Crockatt, who has seven minutes.

[English]

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Thank you. I'd just like to pick up on that, please.

On the centre for expertise against sexual aggression Marie-Vincent—I'm sure I'm not saying that correctly—is this the \$250,000 that it received from Justice for that project?

• (1225)

Ms. Linda Savoie: There were two projects. The first one was solely funded through Status of Women Canada. The second one, which was the result of the identification of a need that surfaced during the course of the first project, is a joint collaboration between Justice and Status of Women Canada. Because this project that was proposed by the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent was well aligned with both of our objectives, we decided to get together as funders, and under one agreement, to simplify the process and be administratively streamlined, to fund the second project for the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent, which is what is in the supplementary estimates and we've been referring to, and the minister mentioned earlier today as well.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: I'll just go back to Suzanne, if I could.

And I don't want to quantify everything in dollar terms because we're interested in outcomes, not just expenditures, but I did want to talk.

We have a budget here of \$29 million for Status of Women, which essentially is pretty much flat in this tough economic time. But we're really spending more money than we ever have before—are we not?—because we now have Justice contributing \$250,000 more to Status of Women projects that are key priorities? Am I right about that?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: We are partnering with other organizations and we are getting some other departments interested in some of the work we do. I can't say whether it's something that would have happened separately if it hadn't happened together, but it was because of the first project that Status of Women Canada funded with Marie-Vincent that the expertise was identified, and the need with the aboriginal communities was identified, in particular. I think we're pretty safe in saying that the project that Status of Women Canada funded is what sparked that interest with Justice afterwards.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: So in dollar terms there is more money that is being spent on these projects than previously?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: In terms of program dollars, like grants and contributions, definitely since 2007 there's been an incredible increase, almost double the programs and agencies. That's the money that goes out to organizations to fund projects in communities.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: It's almost double over what timeframe?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Since 2006-07.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Okay, that's great. I think that's important for Canadians to know.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about the programs that shelters deliver. My mom was one of the founders of one of the first shelters in Alberta, and “they’ve come a long way, baby”. I know there’s a lot of programming going on, the economic development and leadership training, in particular. I was hoping you could tell us more about that.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: One of the things that we’re really, really proud of at Status of Women is the project that we funded three years ago for the creation of a network for shelters in Canada. One of the issues with shelters—as I’m sure you know if you’ve had someone close to you involved—is their capacity is very limited, and they’re constantly having to reinvent the formula as to how they deal with victims of abuse because the population changes, and the types and forms of violence change. Particularly in urban centres, where you have new families who immigrate, there are different forms of violence that may come up, and different forms of response to that violence.

So instead of having shelters trying to learn all of this and educate themselves and develop tools on their own, we created a network that would connect all of them together. We have all of the provinces and territories that are connected through the network, that then connect to all of the shelters within their provinces or territories. They launched a call for innovative ideas, so all of the shelters fed in. Some of them were selected, further developed, and then shared out with the shelters again.

It’s a way of making sure we’re not having this limited capacity to reinvent the wheel constantly out there as they’re working with the communities. So that has been very, very successful, and we’re very proud of it. In fact, it’s been featured internationally as a good project.

Ms. Linda Savoie: I agree with Suzanne Clément that this is definitely one of the most efficient means we’ve found to work with shelters across Canada.

We’ve also undertaken some other targeted actions. For instance, a couple of years ago we launched a call for proposals. We asked specifically for proposals that would assist women in second-stage shelter circumstances. We’re working with a number of shelters on this as well, trying to improve services for women.

• (1230)

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Can you be specific for me? I’d like to know what kind of programming is moving women forward. We’ve gotten beyond just housing, as important as that may be, into programming so that they can move their lives forward. Are there mentorship programs? What is this leadership and economic development training that they’re receiving? Could you give us some specific details so that we could get a handle on it?

Ms. Linda Savoie: Yes, certainly.

On the shelter side, we’re trying—

The Chair: There is one minute left.

Ms. Linda Savoie: One of our concerns is always trying to address root causes, whether of violence or of poverty. One tool to address root causes is to invest in leadership projects whereby women are themselves equipped to address these barriers to their financial, social, and economic success.

Some of our leadership initiatives have been focusing on that, trying to get the women to identify the issues, identify the barriers to their success, and work at addressing these barriers. That’s where we focus our leadership efforts, if you will.

It was one of the components of the girls’ call for leadership. We wanted the young girls to tackle barriers to their full involvement in Canadian society. We’ve had groups come to us with all kinds of excellent ideas. We hope to see the results in the next year and a half or so.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Crockatt, your time is up. You have used up your seven minutes. Thank you.

We will now continue with Ms. Sgro for seven minutes.

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Again, thank you to the departmental officials. I know how much time you have to put into preparation for coming before the committee. I don’t think we call you too often, so it’s nice to have you here today.

The issue of mandate is one we have discussed before. The official mandate versus focus and changes in direction is one thing, but have you thought any further about looking at the mandate? It hasn’t been updated—or changed, I should say—since the seventies. Now that we’re in the 21st century and you’re dealing with many of the issues facing women today in the 21st century, have you thought about changing the actual mandate of Status of Women Canada?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: It wouldn’t be a decision of the organization to change—

Hon. Judy Sgro: Yes, I recognize that.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: —or make a policy decision of that nature.

But I would say that the current mandate is very flexible and very broad. It has allowed the minister, for example, to define her priorities as part of the RPP every year.

When you’ve covered violence, economic security, and leadership, you’ve covered the gamut of issues that can be addressed by Status of Women Canada.

Hon. Judy Sgro: But—and I’m not going to say “if”, because I believe we are all very serious about trying to remove barriers and things that stand in the way of women’s advancement—even such organizations as the status of women committee, I think frankly, should have a 50-50 gender split. It would be a bit difficult in my case, since I’m the only one here; I’d have to give it up to a man.

If we were pushing to have more men sit on committees like this so that they understood more of the complexities and the challenges women are facing, it would be helpful in trying to meet the objectives that have been set out by the minister today. It would be quite helpful.

I’m putting this forward as a suggestion to you. I’m throwing out to the government and to the rest of us, that this would be another small step we could take as we move forward.

I'm not going to ask you to comment, because you're not in a position. But if you just take that as a little—

Ms. Suzanne Clément: No, I wouldn't mind commenting on it.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Well, then, please do.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I think one of the things you may have noticed at Status of Women is that we have more men.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Yes.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: We do believe that gender equality is not a women's issue, it's a societal issue, and everybody is part of the solution.

Through our gender-based analysis work, we have done some amazing things in the last few years within the federal family. Last year we developed, in-house again, an online training course on GBA, which all policy research evaluators in government are asked to undertake. We've had close to 450 take it since its launch very recently.

We've now developed a gender-based analysis awareness week in the federal family. All departments join in for a whole week. We do activities and exchange knowledge with our colleagues. We're really reinforcing the consideration of gender equality issues in all aspects of departmental activity.

This committee certainly plays a key role, but I think that departments, and the committees that also oversee the work of the departments, need to be active in that area as well. I think more and more we are seeing more men involved in gender equality issues in the departments, as we are at Status of Women, and certainly more work is being done in that way.

• (1235)

Hon. Judy Sgro: The budget is coming down. How much additional funding has the department requested for a variety of initiatives that you want to put forward?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I would not be at liberty to say.

Hon. Judy Sgro: If we were blue-skying, how much would you like to have?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I'm not sure, to be—

Hon. Judy Sgro: I'm not going to put you on the spot.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: No, no; I think we have a substantive budget, so the answer is not necessarily more money but what we do with the money we have. And that's what we've been really focusing on—making sure that we try to get as many results, and positive results, as we can with what we're spending, and get partners.

Hon. Judy Sgro: I hope you can get some of that \$30 million spent on media. I hope it will go into your department.

In terms of the gender audit that you did on the RCMP—and I thank you for jumping in immediately on the RCMP issues when they were raised and your department was given the opportunity to do a gender audit—is that complete?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I'll just clarify that Status of Women Canada does not conduct gender-based audits. I had asked the

commissioner if he was interested in meeting with us to discuss the situation, and he very kindly accepted, very quickly.

We had a discussion about what he believed the issues might be. One of the suggestions in that meeting was for him to hire a specialist. We did supply a list of names of consultants who specialize in gender audits, and we provided some recommendations as to where the gender audit could be conducted.

At the same time, at Status of Women we realized there wasn't a lot of information on gender impacts in policing, so Status of Women Canada hired a consultant as well to do an examination of what had been done internationally in this area. We have that on our website. We have shared how to address gender issues in policing with all policing organizations.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Following that exchange of information with Commissioner Paulson, did he reach out to share with you the results of the work he has done, or has there been any further collaboration on those issues?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: The gender audit has been completed. In fact, the commissioner has tabled with Minister Toews a 37-point action plan dealing with a series of recommendations in order to address those issues, yes.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Was there any discussion with the department before that was finalized?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: At the officer level, there are always some contacts and relationships. Our policy officers always deal with departments as they are undertaking GBA, so I'm sure there were contacts. I wouldn't know specifically what they were.

Hon. Judy Sgro: There wasn't a direct “This is what we're suggesting: what do you think?”

Ms. Suzanne Clément: No.

Hon. Judy Sgro: Okay. Thank you.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you.

We now move to Ms. Bateman.

You have five minutes.

Ms. Joyce Bateman (Winnipeg South Centre, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I have a few questions along the same lines as those of my colleagues.

Ms. Clément, could you tell us exactly how the projects have contributed in terms of leadership?

[English]

This builds exactly on what Joan Crockatt was asking previously, the leadership question. We're not just funding abuse centres and shelters; although we are, but we're taking it to the next step.

I'm very interested in hearing some project descriptions. Are you giving business skills to women who have to reorganize their whole lives because they are fleeing from abuse? Are you giving them career start skills? What kind of projects are you putting in to make a difference so they can be economic contributors in the same way you are, and it seems we all want to be?

• (1240)

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Just to clarify, we don't put in projects. We respond to projects that are submitted by organizations.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Of course, but you approve projects. You decide which criteria you are going to accept. My understanding is that there is now a focus on not just the sheltering piece but building up leadership programs and responding to economic development programs.

Can you speak to that a little bit, Madame Clément?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Leadership is one of the three priorities for Status of Women. We look at leadership in different contexts.

Your needs in the area of leadership are dependent on your starting point. For young girls, for example, leadership was one of the two focuses in the girls' call we had issued. Some of the initiatives for girls could be as basic as girls being aware of the opportunities that are open to them and having mentorship kinds of relationships, for example, with political mentors within their communities, having access to mock parliaments, those kinds of initiatives.

Leadership initiatives for a first nations community could include, for example, providing information to women on how they can access resources within their community to make a difference. There are so many.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: You have touched on leadership, and I appreciate that.

What about the economic development piece?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Economic security? Again, the projects are very different. They are just as different as there are differences in women and girls in Canada.

Economic security for one individual may be financial literacy. For another individual, it may be targeting non-traditional kinds of employment.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: These aren't individual people making.... You're saying "for one individual".

Do you have a financial literacy program? Have you actually responded in your call for proposals on the literacy piece?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: There are groups that offer that as part of their response. We don't go out and do financial literacy.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: No. But when they come to you and say they would like to help women who are currently at shelter X with developing financial literacy skills, how do you assess that? Do you help that?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: What they do is provide us with an analysis of the community needs. They tell us what the community issues are.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: The community being the women at the specific shelter.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: The women they are wanting to assist. Usually they have a defined population they want to target. Then, they will outline the response, how they believe they can address those needs, and that response could be financial literacy.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Have you done one like that? Have you actually supported projects like that?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I'm sure. I can't think of exactly the names of the projects.

They do basic life skills in some of the projects, depending on the situation of the population they are dealing with.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: We're all agreed that it's critical information. I'm curious if you have given people that kind of assistance through the leadership piece. It is a priority.

[Translation]

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Are you talking about a specific project?

[English]

Ms. Linda Savoie: I don't have a specific project I would refer to, but we always try to—

Ms. Joyce Bateman: I'm actually very interested in specifics. For example, when you evaluate the projects that come in....

By the way I so commend what you're doing with making it more accessible to everyone with the website, opening things up, moving to electronic access so it doesn't matter where you live. You don't have to be in the heart of Ottawa to get help.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Bateman, I will have to stop you there, because your time is up.

Perhaps you could send us an answer in writing. Would that be possible?

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Madam Chair, perhaps what we need is a list of good examples of similar projects from across Canada.

• (1245)

The Chair: The clerk will get in touch with you to follow up on that.

We will now go to Ms. Ashton. That will be the last set of questions, since we then have to proceed with the votes.

Ms. Ashton, you have five minutes.

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton (Churchill, NDP): Hello.

I'd like to continue on a point that my colleague referenced with respect to the funding of the Centre d'expertise Marie-Vincent in Montreal. Have any similar projects been funded to support aboriginal service providers outside Quebec?

Ms. Linda Savoie: I'd have to get back to you on that. I'm doing a review of our aboriginal-specific projects.

Ms. Niki Ashton: Sure. If you could get back to us with both the reference to the programs and how much funding they received, that would be very helpful.

I want to go back to the issue of Status of Women's involvement in missing and murdered aboriginal women in Canada. Was Status of Women the funder of Sisters in Spirit?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Yes, it was a five-year agreement for \$5 million.

Ms. Niki Ashton: It was an excellent program that unfortunately the government chose not to renew. But I think it also indicates an involvement on behalf of Status of Women in this very critical file that women in Canada grapple with, particularly indigenous women.

Madam Clément, you were very quick to note that this is an issue for Justice and an issue of policing, something that I would disagree with most vehemently as somebody who's very involved with this file as well. I'm concerned with that statement coming from Status of Women, particularly given the work that you've been involved in by directly funding programs that attempt to find a solution and put an end to the violence.

I wonder if you have any thoughts to share on that.

Ms. Suzanne Clément: My response was specifically to the question of the inquiry and that it is an inquiry on the policing response to the situation.

Following the end of the Sisters in Spirit project, Status of Women Canada funded two subsequent projects with NWAC to continue some of the work to build on the information that had been gathered in the first initiative. The first project was \$500,000 and the second was \$1.8 million that we funded with NWAC. It was to look at some of the root causes of what makes aboriginal women more susceptible to violence. That project is ongoing.

I wouldn't want you to take my answer to the inquiry as meaning Status of Women is not concerned about violent situations with aboriginal women. It's quite the opposite. When we put out a call for proposals on violence, definitely one of the target populations that we want to look at is aboriginal women and girls in Canada.

Ms. Niki Ashton: What is the program that you are currently funding?

Ms. Suzanne Clément: With NWAC? It's a project called Evidence to Action to end violence against aboriginal women. It's a \$1.8 million project. It has a number of sub-activities but its main function is to look at some of the root causes that have led women to be vulnerable to violence and try to address that. They also work with the families of some of the victims.

Ms. Niki Ashton: It's a very important program. I know people in my constituency find that kind of programming essential, given the tragedy they face.

Given the emergence of this special committee, this parliamentary committee, what role does Status of Women Canada envision itself playing—this is something we raised with the minister as well—around making sure that this committee takes into account the work that you've done, but also the work that you may realize needs to be done to put an end to violence facing aboriginal women?

[Translation]

The Chair: You have one minute left.

[English]

Ms. Suzanne Clément: For the time being what I can say is we will be following the work of the committee with a great level of interest. To determine what our role will be I don't think is up to us but up to the parliamentary committee to decide.

Ms. Niki Ashton: I have a quick question with reference to the priorities in terms of funding. Does Status of Women Canada give preference to grants that focus on working with men and boys?

● (1250)

Ms. Suzanne Clément: Preference? No. We did a call on violence, and there were four sub-components of that call that we wanted to address. One of them was engaging men and boys to end violence. Another one was to address issues of violence within high-risk neighbourhoods—

Ms. Niki Ashton: If I could just note, we have received some questions from funded organizations, organizations that have had their funding rejected—

[Translation]

The Chair: Please be very brief, Ms. Ashton.

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton: —around the concern that perhaps their proposals were too focused on women and girls rather than engaging those two priorities, especially the male gendered priority.

I'd like to put that on the table.

[Translation]

The Chair: Your answer will have to be very quick.

[English]

Ms. Suzanne Clément: I would just like to say that—and I heard him mention it again recently in New York at the UNCSW—one of our key partners in Canada on engaging men and boys is the White Ribbon Campaign in the person of Todd Minerson because he's such a great leader for that organization.

He mentioned again that the absolute last thing that they would ever want to do is to take funding away from women's organizations or women's issues, that the work that they're wanting to do is to complement the work that they're doing.

[Translation]

The Chair: I am sorry, but I will have to stop you there. We are pressed for time. It is not always easy to interrupt people like that.

My sincere thanks to all of you for coming here and for sharing your expertise with the committee. I will now let you go.

On our side, without further ado, we will proceed with the votes.

HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

The Office of the Co-ordinator, Status of Women

Vote 25—Operating expenditures.....\$9,339,148

Vote 30—Grants listed in the Estimates and contributions.....\$19,033,333

The Chair: You have all received the document with the votes. You must have surely taken the time to familiarize yourself with it. Let me read you a quote from the House of Commons *Journals* so that everyone is aware of what we are voting on:

Pursuant to Standing Order 81(4), the Main Estimates for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2014, were deemed referred to the several standing committees of the House as follows:

[...]

(22) To the Standing Committee on the Status of Women

Human Resources and Skills Development, Votes 25 and 30

Shall vote 25 under Human Resources and Skills Development carry? You will have that...

Yes, Ms. Ashton?

Ms. Niki Ashton: We would like to make a request. We think it is a bit too early to vote today. We would like to have some time to review the main estimates and to defer the vote by one day.

The Chair: Okay.

Does anyone have something to say about that?

Yes, Ms. Sgro?

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: There are some timelines here. What are they? Do we have enough time? What's the deadline that we need to have this approved by the committee or else it's automatically adopted?

[Translation]

The Chair: We have until May 31 to table the report in the House.

Does that answer your question?

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: ... it seems to me that there would be no reason why we couldn't defer the actual adoption of the report until a later point.

[Translation]

The Chair: Actually, the clerk told me that the reason why we are voting today is to determine whether we are going to continue our study or not. In terms of money, it means that, if we are going to continue it, it will be after April 1, 2013.

I am sorry. I am not an expert in finance.

Yes, Ms. Truppe?

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: That's correct, Madam Chair, and we would like to vote today.

[Translation]

The Chair: Ms. Truppe is asking that we vote today.

Yes, Ms. Ashton?

• (1255)

Ms. Niki Ashton: I would like to thank the members for their comments, but our team has provided us with some information about the vote. This is not even the last week of March. You said that we are a bit pressed for time, but I think we could still wait a few more days.

The Chair: Okay.

Let me remind you that another committee is sitting at 1 p.m.

Yes, Ms. Sgro?

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: What we are doing here is important, equally as important as what they are going to be doing.

Would you just clarify with the clerk? What we're talking about is moving forward. If we have this vote next week or after the April break, it's not going to have anything to do with what our schedule is, other than putting the time for the vote in it. No funding or expenditures are going to stop, if this isn't approved for, let's say, three weeks.

Could you just answer that?

[Translation]

The Chair: We are probably not going to have time to vote anyway.

[English]

Hon. Judy Sgro: I'm sorry, Madam Chair, could the clerk please...?

Is there anything in this, if we do not adopt this, or if we defer it or whatever today, that is going to have financial implications on the work we're doing on the committee right now?

No? So, there are no....

I just wanted to make sure that was clarified.

Thank you.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Are we going to vote today, then?

We would like to put it to a vote. It's not going to change.

[Translation]

The Chair: Yes, Ms. Ashton?

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton: The issue here is that if we have more days at our disposal to look at something as important as the main estimates, this premature deadline, when we know that the end of the fiscal year isn't tomorrow but that we still have some days ahead of us, seems to be rather moot.

This is a very important vote for us. We need time to look at what's before us. We need time to consider the plan. We disagree with voting today, and we find that the reasoning for doing it today rather than waiting for a few days down the line is a moot point, given the window of opportunity we still have ahead of us.

I would like to also second the thoughts brought forward by my colleague Ms. Sgro and respectfully ask the chair that we take time and delay this vote to another day.

[Translation]

The Chair: Yes, Ms. Truppe?

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I want to check with the clerk on something.

If we delay this, can we still continue our study? Is that what you're saying? It doesn't affect our study in any way—the witnesses, anything?

Do you know this for sure?

[Translation]

The Chair: Our clerk has confirmed that it is the committee's responsibility to decide on that. At any rate, this whole discussion is not leaving any time for us to vote. I am sorry. So we will have to add this to the agenda of an upcoming meeting. What do you think? Can we reach a compromise?

Yes, Ms. Truppe?

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: The votes were on the agenda paper, though. We knew we were voting on it.

[Translation]

The Chair: Yes, but the time allocated for our committee has run out and another committee will be sitting soon. I am sorry, but we cannot vote.

Yes, Ms. Ambler?

[English]

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Madam Chair, I think we do have time to vote. Can we call the question, please?

[Translation]

The Chair: Okay, but I feel bad for those waiting for the room.

First, we must vote on...

Yes, Ms. Ashton?

[English]

Ms. Niki Ashton: I'm not sure what's going on here. The date today is March 19. We're talking about the end of the fiscal year. We are 11 days out of that and somehow we have this ultimatum, which is unacceptable. If we're talking about having to make financial considerations before the end of the fiscal year, March 19 is not the end of the fiscal year.

[Translation]

The Chair: Unfortunately, that is not a point of order, Ms. Ashton.

I'm not sure what you would like to do, but we would have to start by voting on Ms. Sgro's motion.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young: On a point of order, the question has been called by my colleague.

[Translation]

The Chair: It is 1 p.m., Ms. Young. The meeting is over and another committee has to do its work. I am sorry, but we cannot proceed with the vote. We will vote some other time.

• (1300)

[English]

Ms. Joyce Bateman: The question has been called. Madam Chair, we're not here for administrative efficiencies; we're here to get the

job done. We're not here to accommodate administrative efficiencies. You have spent the last five minutes not addressing the call for the question. I think that's important for the record, with respect, Madam Chair. You have terminated the meeting because of administrative efficiencies.

[Translation]

The Chair: I don't agree with your accusation, Ms. Bateman. I have been listening to you for 10 minutes.

[English]

Ms. Joyce Bateman: The question was called within time.

Some hon. members: Call the question.

[Translation]

Ms. Joyce Bateman: The question has been called and we asked to vote.

The Chair: The clerk told me that the members of the opposition have left, so we cannot vote.

Yes, Ms. Truppe?

[English]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Madame Chair, can I make a motion that we extend the meeting so we can finish the vote? Can we do that?

[Translation]

The Chair: Unfortunately, we cannot do that, because the members of the opposition have left. We do not have a quorum at the moment.

The clerk has confirmed that we cannot vote right now. We will add this to our next agenda or as soon as possible.

In addition, other people have reserved the room for another committee meeting.

One moment, please. The clerk will see if she can address your concerns.

Yes, Ms. James?

[English]

Ms. Roxanne James: I want to point out as well that you did not officially adjourn the meeting, so the members who were sitting opposite got up in the middle of our meeting and left. The motion or the question had already been put to this committee, and the fact that some people have left is not the problem on this side. We'd like to proceed with that—

[Translation]

The Chair: You are right, Ms. James, but we cannot vote when there are no opposition members.

We apologize. We are checking the rules of procedure.

We have never had a situation like this before. We are looking into it.

[English]

Ms. Wai Young: Please note the question was called at 12:58, and the opposition members were all still here, but the chair refused to call the question.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: I did not refuse to proceed with the vote; I simply noted that we did not have enough time, since there were several votes. There is a difference there.

The clerk has checked and we can vote on Ms. Truppe's motion.

Let me remind you that Ms. Truppe moved that we proceed with the vote right away.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: In that case, shall vote 25 under Human Resources and Skills Development carry?

(Vote 25 carried)

The Chair: Shall vote 30 under Human Resources and Skills Development carry?

(Vote 30 carried)

The Chair Shall I report votes 25 and 30 under Human Resources and Skills Development to the House?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you.

On that note, I...

Yes, Ms. Truppe?

● (1305)

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Madam Chair, I just want to say thank you for letting us complete the business at hand that we were supposed to finish. Thank you.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

Published under the authority of the Speaker of
the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the Parliament of Canada Web Site at the following address: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>

Publié en conformité de l'autorité
du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web du Parlement du Canada à l'adresse suivante : <http://www.parl.gc.ca>