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Chair

Ms. Hélène LeBlanc

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● (1100)

[*Translation*]

The Chair (Ms. Hélène LeBlanc (LaSalle—Émard, NDP)): Good morning.

Welcome to the 44th meeting of the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. Today, we are resuming our study on promising practices to prevent violence against women.

We have with us Jane Doe, an author and activist appearing as an individual. We also have Rosemary McCarney, from Plan International Canada Inc., and Todd Minerson, from the White Ribbon Campaign.

Thank you all for being here.

Each witness will have 10 minutes to give their presentation.

We'll start with you, Ms. Doe.

Ms. Jane Doe (Author, activist, litigant in Jane Doe v the Toronto Police Force, D.U. LLD, As an Individual): Thank you, Madam Chair.

[*English*]

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today.

Among other things, I'm the woman in the lawsuit Jane Doe versus the Toronto police force. You may recall that in 1998, after an 11-year court battle, I successfully sued them for negligence and gender discrimination in their investigation of my rape and sexual assault generally. I argued that even though police had identifying information about the man dubbed the “balcony rapist”, they chose not to warn women in my area about the danger. In doing so, they violated my equality rights under section 15 of the Canadian charter.

I'm also an author, researcher, and educator. I have developed sexual assault policy in a number of sectors, including with the police. I lecture extensively in Canada and internationally on a topic I call the politics of rape.

I need not remind any of you of the complicated and systemic nature of politics of any sort. When it concerns the growing incidence of sexual assault in our country, the failure of our systems and institutions to deal with it, the low rate of reporting, the minus 1% conviction rate, as well as the sexism that we all agree exists in a rape trial, that's politics of a particular sort.

As a woman who has been sexually assaulted and who continues to use the relative anonymity of the publication ban, I thought that might be a good place to begin today.

Every few years or so and currently, the media and a politician or two opine that women who have experienced sexual assault should report to the police and use their own name when they do that. They argue that if women would just do that little thing and let us know their name and face, we could connect to their humanity. They could speak for themselves. And before you know it, things would change for the better.

Of course, they are right to suggest that women should be able to do these things, but no matter what I say, what scores of thousands of experts have been saying for decades, it doesn't work like that.

We appear to be allergic to the reality that a woman's past sexual, medical, mental, familial and work history, as well as what they read, watch and believe are used to annihilate them in a court of law. That's why we use the ban.

How upside down that we aren't focusing on ending that treatment as a remedy instead of dropping the publication ban. It is simply not safe, civilized, or just to identify as a rape victim. The term itself, rape victim, conjures feminine passivity, helplessness, and lack of agency, or says that we have survived an illness or an injury that has rendered us broken, marked, or even fallen.

In 2008, I travelled to four provinces and I interviewed sexually assaulted women who had and who had not used the publication ban about how their decisions affected them. I have provided you with a copy of that research, which details what I can't say in these few moments. I hope you will have a look at it.

The research overwhelmingly supported that the treatment of the 42 women who do or do not use the ban is itself criminal. It shows that they would not have proceeded without it or that they regret not using it. The publication ban isn't really that effective anyway. It keeps you anonymous from people who don't know who you are. If you live in a more urban area or small town or city, the ban barely works for you at all.

Its stated purpose as it reads in the legislation is to foster complaints by victims of sexual assault by protecting them from the trauma of widespread publication resulting in embarrassment and humiliation. That wording is confirmation of the disgrace and dishonour we attach to a raped woman, and to the manner in which her virtue and body are understood to be sullied and defiled.

Women I interviewed spoke about having their divorce, their abortions, and their pregnancies, as well as any criminal convictions that they might have, any child abuse or other assaults they had suffered in their lives, or any mental health conditions or diagnoses, used against them in a court of law.

● (1105)

One woman talked to me about how her red bikini underwear was used as evidence against her in a court of law and how the accused's lawyer waved it around in court. These and other outrages are reported in the media, and if a woman is using it, her real name is part of the story.

If you really believe that the prohibitive effects of the ban outweigh the scrap of protection it provides sexually assaulted women, what are you doing to make it easier, to make it safer, more dignified for women to use their own names in a court of law? That is what we would like to do, especially for women who are racialized or colonized, who are young or sex-working women, transgendered and disabled women, substance users, immigrant or homeless women, or women who have dated, married, or partnered with the man who raped them.

The ban offers those women a shadow of protection when those very identities that I just mentioned are used against them in a court of law, and they are used against them every day, in any sexual assault trial, in any city, at any time in our country. What Canadian women must deal with in our homes, reserves, and workplaces, in Parliament, on university sites, at our doctors, dentists, in the military, and in sports is a national crisis. We expect women to report sexual assault and use their own names when we all know that the system they asked them to report to, engage with, simply does not and cannot work in their best interest.

Nor can we look at the publication ban in isolation of the other offence of dehumanizing legal practices that women who do report their rapes endure. These are things, for instance, like the sexual assault evidence kit, or the rape kit, which is used only 10% of the time, and which women experience as a second assault; the use of paid and so-called expert psychiatric witnesses who are used to discredit women and who set rapists free; and the fact that judges and lawyers flaunt the law when they allow such practices in the first place. Then there is the police warning or alert that we must regulate our movements, monitor the actions of strange men around us, and avoid shortcuts, transit, or parking spaces when a sexual assault is committed in our area or neighbourhood.

We have to examine the very language that we use to “speak rape”, and on that note, what is it anyway, sexual assault or rape? Certainly with the very legislation, I have led to that contradiction or problem with those terms.

Most critically, if we are at all serious, it is imperative that we take the focus off women and place it on men, the perpetrators of the crime. I'm not talking about lengthier prison sentences as a remedy. I don't believe they work at all. I refer to the need to look at masculinity and the manner in which we are socializing men, our baby boys and youth, who are born to us free of malice or ill will, and how those wonderful creatures are raised and socialized to understand violence as acceptable. We must look at the need to design and support bystander and sex education curriculum that is consent-based and speaks to the pleasures as well as the responsibilities of sex, and it must begin at a very early age. We must understand that nothing can be meaningfully accomplished unless we incorporate issues of race, sexuality, and ability into our dialogue and our actions, and that goes for any politic that we are examining.

Few can deny the issues that I've raised, the need to look at all of the pieces and intersections of sexual assault, and yet we don't. We do not do that. Is that because we are a nation, an institution, or an individual who benefits from keeping things the way they are? Until we examine the multiple and systemic nature of sexual assault, until we spend the money and take the time to do that, the social band-aids that we've been applying will continue to fall off and will result in more crime.

I assure you that there are experts across Canada who work on the front line of sexual assault directly with women who experience it, experts who have lived it, or experts who write, research, and develop policy about sexual assault. That's who we must be consulting with and listening to if we are to draft any policy on violence against women, sexual assault in particular.

● (1110)

These experts, of which I'm a member, are legion, and today I offer you my services to assist you in accessing that expertise in addition to the expertise at the table today in order to consult and organize effectively on this subject that this committee has adopted and is examining.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Doe, for your presentation.

Just a note to the members, the research document that Ms. Doe mentioned is in translation and will be distributed to all the members of the committee.

Ms. McCarney, you have 10 minutes.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney (President and Chief Executive Officer, Plan International Canada Inc.): Thank you very much.

I hope I can add a different perspective from what Jane provided, which is so compelling.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to appear today. I'd like to share with you some of the best practices drawn from our international programming and policy experiences. I hope these lessons will offer practical steps to help shape a comprehensive and coordinated response to any violence against women and children, including girls here in Canada.

My name is Rosemary McCarney, and I'm the president and CEO of Plan lnternational Canada. With over 75 years of experience, we're one of the world's oldest and largest international development agencies in Canada and overseas. Without political or religious affiliation, all the work we do is founded on children's rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the human rights instruments and documents in practices that exist here in Canada and overseas.

Women and men, girls and boys all have the same rights but face different obstacles in accessing them as a result of inequality. In our conversation before the committee hearings we talked about how inequality isn't working for boys and men either, and we need to address this. But the challenges faced by women and girls are unique, and girls versus women are unique. Girls require specific attention because their vulnerability stems from the fact that they're both young and female, a very dangerous intersection for girls everywhere.

As the organization behind the Because I am a Girl campaign, we welcome your decision to conduct this study, but Because I am a Girl is a global initiative for gender equality, to promote girls' power and rights so that girls themselves can lift themselves and their communities out of poverty. In Canada the campaign has inspired a movement of over one million Canadians committed to creating a safer, more prosperous world for our girls and the girls of the world.

Access to safe, quality education is central to that campaign. What gets in the way is the persistent, systemic, and endemic incidents of violence in schools and universities in Canada and around the world.

I'd like to start by highlighting a global report that we did, "A girl's right to learn without fear", which has been submitted to the committee for consideration. Together with the University of Toronto faculty of law's international human rights program, we launched this report, the Canadian edition, to bring a focus to gender-based violence in and around our schools. It sets out a global policy framework based on the experiences of best practice, good practice around the world, to end gender violence at the local and national levels.

While the report focuses on the school context, the key lesson we learned was that to be effective, efforts to address violence against girls have to be multi-sectoral and integrated. Jane said the same thing. Schools are only one of the first. Based on the experience of other countries, including Australia and the United Kingdom, we found that one-off initiatives do not address a core issue: that many of the victims of violence are from marginalized and vulnerable groups and they're largely invisible or choose to remain invisible, and therefore an integrated, multi-sectoral national action plan is needed to prevent these young women from falling through the cracks.

In Canada there's a range of different types of vulnerability and forms of violence: rape, physical abuse, sexual violence, and bullying, which is amplified by the use of online social media. We know the statistics in this country, but we generalize and we're approximating because we do not have good statistical evidence in the country to be able to bring some of these issues to fruition so we can create an unassailable empirical base. But my view is we do know the statistics and we know the problems are prevalent and pervasive, so these points should not be debatable. I think that's what Jane said as well.

Through extensive research and consultation with global experts and 17 leading organizations across Canada, we put forward eight key principles that we think could guide the work of this committee. These are critical for the recommendations, because they address prevention, response, and then the provision of services. We call for a comprehensive and integrated action plan, effective legislation and regulation, safe and effective reporting for women and girls, evidence-based policy formation on a foundation of statistical evidence, well-supported and well-trained personnel, partnerships across government and local groups, across school boards, police commissions, policing, and police officers, as well as shelters and the experts who are legion across this country.

● (1115)

We're very pleased to see Canada addressing the problem. We certainly recognize that since 2007 about $146 million has been invested to support more than 720 community-based programs across the country. We can celebrate that, but at the same time, I urge the committee to step back from that statistic and ask if we have had a good return on investment for that. While these investments are critically important, they're uncoordinated. It's really a patchwork of initiatives and small projects that permeates this country without any cohesive, coherent approach.

I've said to media and others that depending on where you live in this country, as a young girl or as a woman you will be more or less protected, and you will have more or less access to services. It shouldn't be a matter of where you're born in Canada in terms of the level of prevention and response you receive.

While we applaud the call for a national action plan and support it, we want to ensure this plan considers the needs and rights of, and our obligations to, children, especially girls. In the call for the national action plan to end violence against women, we urge you to consider embracing that whole piece. Violence against women doesn't begin at 18, when they're legally adults. It begins very early on. It begins in the first decade of life. Our little girls across this country know very well what it is to experience gender-based violence in all of its forms.

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that Canada, “Develop and implement a national strategy for the prevention of all forms of violence against all children, and allocate” resources to it. This call has been reiterated by the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.

Furthermore, as part of the ongoing global negotiations toward the post-2015 agenda, the sustainable development goals, all countries are looking at the principle of universality. It's not good enough for us to create foreign policy with respect to the rights and obligations toward girls and women; we also have to address our national context first. That's why Plan Canada calls for a very effective consultation process to develop this national action plan to end violence against women and children. There are very important precedents for doing so.

Experience from other countries has shown that the causes and consequences are interrelated. I've found in my conversations with members of Parliament and others across Canada that often the issue of our federal system is thrown up, that it's too difficult, that the provinces have control over this and the municipalities have legislative responsibility over that, and what can the national government do?

What I'd like to bring to your attention is that we are very much behind colleagues such as those in the United Kingdom and Australia who have complex federal systems as well. ln their respective national action plans, the U.K. and Australia have articulated the respective responsibilities of various levels of government departments at different jurisdictional levels, including status of women, justice, health, and education. They've set out a strategy to support and fund front-line workers, wherever located, law enforcement agencies, teachers, health care workers, and the voluntary sector.

From their experience there's a process we can learn from to develop the plan. What those in the U.K. and our colleagues in Australia have told us is that the process of developing the plan is as important as the content of the plan. That legion of experts, of practitioners across our country, must be consulted in this. Both the U.K. and Australia have demonstrated that this process of meaningful consultation with provincial and territorial governments, aboriginal governments, and front-line service providers will, in fact, inform the substance and content that will work, but that it's an iterative process.

In both countries they have revisited. The U.K. began their process in 2010, as did the Australians, but they have revisited and redrafted, and they continue to think about these 10- and 12-year plans. They will never get it right. It will never be perfect. We learn as we go. But we need to get started, and we need to put this into writing.

On a final note, Plan is an active supporter of the Up for Debate campaign. This campaign is led by an alliance of over 100 women's organizations from across Canada. The goal of the campaign, which you'll be hearing a lot about over the coming weeks and months, is to facilitate a national debate to give party leaders the opportunity to speak directly to the issues identified by women, including violence.

● (1120)

In conclusion, we're a bit behind the times, but we can catch up. While our peers in the U.K. and Australia have the same jurisdictional challenges, they've already undertaken national action plans and national action consultations, and they are now implementing.

The expectations are high, for sure, on this committee, and the national action plan will need to be all of what Jane and I have said —well funded, well thought out, integrated, multi-sectoral, and have wide consultation—because violence against women and children is unjustifiable, but it's also absolutely preventable.

I look forward to your questions.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. McCarney, for your testimony.

We'll go to Mr. Minerson for 10 minutes, please.

Mr. Todd Minerson (Executive Director, White Ribbon Campaign): Madam Chair and honourable members, it's a real honour to be here, especially with my fellow panellists, two women for whom I have a great deal of respect and admiration. They've done a fantastic job already of laying out some of the things that I'd like to talk about.

My name is Todd Minerson, and I'm the executive director of the White Ribbon campaign. We're a Canadian based non-profit that's working on ending violence against women and girls, but our unique approach is to engage men and boys on that issue.

I want to talk to a few different aspects around engaging men and boys in violence prevention, and really I want to focus on three distinct things today.

I have to tell you a little bit about White Ribbon or else my board of directors will kill me, so I'm going to share a little bit about what we do. But I really want to focus in on two critical questions: why should we engage men and boys, and how should we engage men and boys in prevention of violence against women and girls?

Finally, I would like to pose some challenges and make a few concrete recommendations for the committee. It warmed my little heart on this cold Ottawa day to hear both of my fellow panellists mention the importance of engaging men and boys on this issue.

Here's a little bit about White Ribbon, and I promise to be brief. Many of you probably know that White Ribbon has its roots and origins in the tragedy of the Montreal massacre of December 6, 1989, when 14 women were tragically murdered at École Polytechnique in Montreal. After that tragedy, a small group of men, including the late Jack Layton, sat around a kitchen table in Toronto and tried to understand what the roles and responsibilities were for men on ending violence against women and girls. Some 24 years ago now, they came up with a pledge and an organization that we still use today. That pledge is to never commit, condone, or remain silent about violence against women. In the ensuing 24 years, a few very interesting things happened.

First of all, we've grown to be the only national organization that's looking at prevention of violence against women with men and boys. We do this work in partnership with women's organizations, first nations, Inuit, and Métis groups, educators, community builders, and many others. Second, in that time, we have become a globally recognized issue leader on this, working with the United Nations, governments around the world, major institutions, multinational corporations, and other international NGOs. Finally, out of a grassroots movement, we have become the largest effort of men and boys in the world. We now support activities in over 65 different countries, where men and boys are organizing around this little Canadian idea that we have a role and a responsibility as men to work to end violence against women and girls.

I'll move on to the key questions. Why should we work with men and boys? What does the evidence tell us?

If nothing else, these high-profile and tragic events of the past few months have brought men's roles around violence against women to a more significant place in our collective consciousness. If I were to play a little word association game with you and say the names Ray Rice, Jian Ghomeshi, Bill Cosby, or if I were to mention some university hockey teams or dental colleges, you would all know what I'm talking about. lt is no doubt evident to this committee that there is a serious problem when it comes to violence against women not only in this country but around the world, and that men have both a prominent and a troubling role in that violence.

I want to put the names of some other men out to you here, which you may not be as familiar with. I want to start with the name Glen Canning. He's the father of a young woman named Rehtaeh Parsons. Now he's become a tireless advocate for working to end violence against women.

You may have heard of a gentleman named Paul Lacerte. He is the executive director of the B.C. Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, and he started a campaign called the Moose Hide Campaign with his daughter while he was out hunting. This is to encourage first nations, Inuit, and Métis men to get involved in ending violence against women.

I want to tell you also about a 13-year-old boy named Max Bryant who I met a couple weeks ago at the United Nations. Max raised $40,000 for girls to go to school after he heard an interview with Malala Yousafzai.

I had a chance to talk to Max. I went up to him and I said, “Why did you do this?” Honestly, he looked at me like I was from Mars. He said, "What do you mean why? Why not? Girls have a right to go to school safely just like boys do.” It was completely natural for him to assume that gender equality is the norm.

My point here is that the traditional narratives around men, when it comes to violence against women, clearly focus on the problem and not so much on the solution. At White Ribbon, we want to vigorously dispute that narrative. While most men will never use violence against women or girls, too many men are silent about it. We believe that all men, as Jane was saying, have both the promise and potential to be part of that solution, and we are engaging thousands of men and boys across the country to do just that.

If we want to understand why and how we get men involved, we need to get a deeper understanding of the core causes of violence against women. My colleagues have already mentioned them in some detail. It's a complex issue, but there really are, according to our perspectives, three core root causes.

● (1125)

The first, as both panellists have already said, is the reality of gender inequality. If we think of the whole spectrum of gender inequality, on the tragic and traumatic end is the murder, sexual assault, and violence that happens to too many women across this country. Over 1,400 indigenous women are murdered and missing, and too many women suffer violence at the hands of intimate partners or families. Also, we have to remember the new and extremely troubling forms of violence that more women experience online and in social media than men do.

The second root cause is this idea, which Jane also mentioned, of harmful masculinities. When a baby boy is born, he is not born a violent human being, but there is something that happens. What is it about masculinity that makes some men feel it is acceptable to use violence against women? Are there links to the ways that boys are socialized at a very young age with an impossible-to-meet standard of what it means to be a real man, or where the worst thing you can do to a boy is call him a girl or gay or anything less than a real man? These phrases: “man up”, “boys will be boys”, “boys don't cry”, “you throw like a girl”, “don't show emotions”, “fight”, “take what's yours”, all these negative aspects of masculinity come with tragic costs to women and girls and, as Rosemary pointed out, also with a tremendous amount of harm for men and boys. This system of patriarchy is killing all of us.

Finally, the third root cause, which we have come to appreciate in our work with indigenous communities around the world, is the history of colonial violence and community trauma. We know that in many of these communities violence as a gendered act did not exist before contact. As a non-native person, I must bear witness to that.

If we accept these root causes, then we also must accept that men and boys have a role to play, not merely as perpetrators or potential perpetrators, but in the myriad other roles we play in society, such as fathers—which is a key entry point for engaging men—as bystanders, as faith and community leaders, as employers and business leaders, as government and institutional policy-makers, and as human beings.

We have come to call this work at White Ribbon primary prevention. Simply put, it's to stop the violence before it starts. If we want to do that, we have to engage men with practical means so that they can speak up and speak out to challenge and change social norms around men and violence, and to activate and amplify the roles that we can already play to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence. The important thing to note is that this is a complementary piece to the vital work that must continue to happen in supporting women who are leaving violent and abusive situations, as well as addressing those conditions that perpetuate the violence.

We think that this is an untapped approach to violence prevention. It has potential to be a game changer and it's difficult and frustrating work at times. It can also be fraught with challenges, but when we talk with guys like Max Bryant or the other men I mentioned earlier, we do have a lot of hope.

I want to touch a little bit on what we've learned about promising practices.

● (1130)

The Chair: You have two minutes.

Mr. Todd Minerson: Sure.

Some of them relate directly to a project we're doing funded by Status of Women Canada called our national community of practice. White Ribbon is facilitating a connection of nine Status of Women-funded projects across Canada working on prevention efforts with men and boys. These diverse, incredible partners are implementing innovative programs across the country from Whitehorse, Yukon, to London, Ontario, and Moncton, New Brunswick, to Edmonton, Alberta.

We'll be producing in November an impact and promising practices report, which is looking at the evaluation data from all of those nine projects, and from that evaluation data we're creating a tool kit for action, which will help communities across the country do this kind of work.

There is one last section I need to get to which we call the non-negotiables about working with men and boys. There are four things that are absolutely essential when we talk about this work.

The first, recalling that it is part of a struggle for greater gender equality, is that engaging men and boys must take place from a human rights and women's equality perspective. If we aren't working on gender equality, we're not doing it right.

Second, it also has to be gender transformative. It has to challenge and change those harmful ideas about masculinity that are causing so much harm to so many people.

Third, it also has to take into consideration the shortage and scarcity of resources for women's issues already. As men working on gender equality and as allies, we can't contribute to structural inequalities around resources or lack thereof for women's issues. That's something we have to think about: building a bigger pie instead of cutting another piece from an already small pie of resources that are there.

Last, it has to be evidence based.

There are a great deal of challenges and I have three recommendations that we have to address in this.

I knew when Rosemary was here that there was going to be a lot of detail about a comprehensive whole-of-government national plan, so I won't go into a lot of detail on that. But any plan also has to include primary prevention work with men and boys across a spectrum and a life cycle of engagement. What we also need is increased support for opportunities to collaborate and work together, because there really is nothing that can accelerate innovation and the pace of change more than face-to-face work and the sharing of best practices.

In closing, I hope I've made a compelling case for the positive role that men and boys can play in preventing violence against women and girls. Not only is it an effective intervention, but there is a moral imperative to create a safer world for women and girls. In 2015 we must be outraged that 51% of our daughters, sisters, mothers, and female friends and colleagues are going to experience an act of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.

There are also some practical considerations. In 2011 some research from a woman named Colleen Varcoe estimated the cost of violence against women at $6.9 billion per year. At the Shift project at the University of Calgary, they have estimated that for every $1 spent on prevention, up to $20 could be saved in downstream costs for engaging violence against women. Let's be clear: most of this violence can be prevented. For every perpetrator, there are hundreds of Glen Cannings, Paul Lacertes, and Max Bryants. We're engaging them and we think we can do better.

Thanks.

The Chair: Thank you very much. You make my job very difficult when I have to cut off people, but I hope that during the question and answer period you will be able to continue to raise in your answers the issues that you would like to raise. I'm sure the questions will be very interesting.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Truppe, you have the floor for seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe (London North Centre, CPC): Welcome. Thank you very much for all of your testimony. It's very helpful to us when doing the study on best practices, so we can gather up things that are actually working and hopefully share them with other organizations.

Seven minutes goes so fast, and I never have enough time to ask all my questions, but my first question is for Todd in regard to White Ribbon.

White Ribbon is so well known, certainly across Canada and, as you said, across the globe, so congratulations on making that happen. It probably started out, as you've said, around a kitchen table, but with very few people knowing about it. When I ask anyone if they've heard of it, I don't think I've ever had anyone who has not. Whether or not they wore a ribbon, I don't know, but they all know about it.

You received some funding from Status of Women. Did you say it was the national community of status or...?

● (1135)

Mr. Todd Minerson: It's a national community of practice.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Do you know off the top of your head how much funding you got for that?

Mr. Todd Minerson: Yes. It's $300,000 over three years.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay.

Where do you get most of your funding? Is it from donations or from other organizations?

Mr. Todd Minerson: At White Ribbon, probably about 25% to 30% of our funding is project-related funding from different levels of government across the country. Another 10% to 15% is traditional fundraising, non-profit fundraising. We do an event called “Walk A Mile in Her Shoes”, where we have a thousand guys in high heels walking through downtown Toronto.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Yes.

Mr. Todd Minerson: The remaining 55% or 60% of our funding actually comes from what we bucket as social enterprise, which is essentially consulting work for other NGOs, for multinational corporations, and for post-secondary institutions, where we're developing projects and interventions both here in Canada and around the world.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: That's great. It's very well spent.

I'm quite familiar with the “Walk A Mile” day. My husband does it every year. It's nice that I sit on the sidelines and he gets to dress the part.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Todd Minerson: We encourage all women to wear their most comfortable shoes.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Yes. He knows how it feels.

To go back to that Status of Women funding with the project you're doing, I think you said that there are nine projects and there's going to be a tool kit that comes out. Did you say that would be in November?

Mr. Todd Minerson: Yes. There are nine projects being funded by Status of Women that are separate from this. They are independently funded projects happening across the country—

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Separate. Okay.

Mr. Todd Minerson: —on violence prevention work with men and boys.

We are facilitating a community of practice with those nine projects and bringing them together to collaborate and to identify training and capacity-building needs, but then as well to build what we've called a national evaluation framework. Each project has its own evaluation model, and we've layered on top of it a national evaluation model so that we can take all that data from those nine projects, understand what's working and what's not, where the gaps are, and where the challenges are. In November we'll be issuing the first analysis of that evaluation data. We're going to take those results and build a tool kit so that other organizations and communities can take those made-in-Canada real-time best practices and initiate programming in their communities.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: That's great. That will be very helpful.

I think you mentioned that you do training and presentations for educators and teacher candidates. I think you're talking in the classrooms too. Are you speaking to the boys and the girls, or is it a special class just for the boys?

Mr. Todd Minerson: That's a great question. There are appropriate places and times for mixed gender, for separate gender, and for bringing everybody together. A lot of the work we focus on is with men and boys, and a lot of times we'll partner. For example, we've partnered with some of the Because I am a Girl initiatives in Toronto. We'll work with the boys for a little bit and other groups will work with the girls, and then we bring them together. That's when sometimes the magic happens: sharing some of that learning.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I know we've started doing a lot of different initiatives with men and boys. You can do as much as you want to help women and girls, but it'll never be successful; it's always going to be the same old same old because the men and boys aren't engaged. It's really good that everyone is now engaging the men and boys.

Back to what you're doing in the schools, with all the training you've done, is there a best practice, something that has worked within the school programs that you'd like to share?

Mr. Todd Minerson: There are a couple of challenges in working in the schools. Some are structural. How do you get to every school and every classroom? We also sometimes call it the dosage challenge: how many interventions, how many assemblies, and how many workshops before change really starts to happen?

We try to tackle it from a bunch of different angles. We try to maximize the dosage and the exposure that young people get. We try to get them involved, but we also work a lot with educators. We've tried to leverage and scale up the impact that we're able to have. For example, we've worked with teachers' unions in Ontario, with both the elementary and the secondary school teachers' federations. With both of them, we've developed e-learning modules for teachers. We can go to maybe 10,000 kids a year with the staff capacity we have, but we've now also created learning tools for teachers that reach 160,000 teachers in Ontario.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Wow. That's excellent.

Mr. Todd Minerson: So there's a way that we can scale up and leverage some of that impact.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I have one final question for you. We always talk about White Ribbon as the world's largest movement of men and boys. Do you have numbers on that? How do you track that?

Mr. Todd Minerson: It's hard to track it entirely accurately around the globe, because we're very decentralized. Some of my favourite people are like the guy in Scotland who e-mails us and says he wants to do something in his community.

What we do know is that in Canada each year we ship about 150,000 ribbons across the country. Those are communities and organizations that are doing activities and are ostensibly not getting more ribbons than they need. We also can track about 70 different communities across Canada that have done White Ribbon activities in the past calendar year. We have partnership projects with probably close to 30 different organizations across the country as well.

● (1140)

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Great. Thanks for the good job you're doing.

Mr. Todd Minerson: Thank you.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Rosemary, I have a couple of questions for you. I'm just not sure how much time I have.

The Chair: You have one minute.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Okay.

I know that you work with communities for 10 to 12 years before they are phased out. What happens after the phase-out? Do you monitor them every few months? How do you know they're successful after that?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Typically it's an 8- to 12-year path to build local capacity in communities, but the reality is that because the communities we work in are on the edge from a vulnerability perspective—natural disasters, war, conflict—lots of times you step back and then you cycle back in. Hambantota, Sri Lanka, after the tsunami might be an example; we had literally just moved down the road when the tsunami devastated it. You know where things are and where people are supposed to be, etc., so you move back in. As the purpose is all about building sustainable communities that have the capacity to manage water systems and manage teachers councils, etc., oftentimes what we're doing is pulling that expertise from the community itself to move on down the road with us so that they're training other communities.

When I say “down the road”, it is: it's down the road. You seldom get to exit a country, but you do get to say that the human indicators are at a certain level so that we can exit the community, and then use those practices by engaging local leaders to transfer that knowledge.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Freeman, please go ahead. You have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Mylène Freeman (Argenteuil—Papineau—Mirabel, NDP): Thanks to all our witnesses for being here today. I'm very, very glad to have you here.

My first question is for Jane Doe.

Ms. McCarney and Mr. Minerson were pretty clear about the fact that they see a national strategy to ending violence against women as something that's necessary. They had quite a few things to contribute, and I thank them for that. How would you see a national strategy for ending violence against women in Canada? What would be the essential elements? Would you see it as something useful?

Ms. Jane Doe: I am a critic; that's kind of my job. My job and my passion are to look at what's not working specific to sexual assault and violence against women generally. My position is that we do not understand the harm or the nature of the crime of sexual assault or rape; therefore, any solutions that we craft or any committees that we form, governmental or otherwise, that are working towards a solution, I question.

We are so far behind and so upside down about the nature of that crime and the effect it has on women who experience it, their children, and society as a whole. Everyone is affected by it. My position is that the national committee, and of course we need one, needs to spend a great deal of time first on process, as was mentioned. It's critical that this be done and that any committee understand the nature of the crime.

Does that sort of answer your question?

Ms. Mylène Freeman: I think that makes a lot of sense. You were talking about the difference between how we're treating victims of violence and what we need to be doing to actually support them.

Ms. Jane Doe: And we don't understand that. We don't even believe it. We do not believe that women are treated this way in a court of law. With that denial and disbelief, it's impossible to....

We need to look at that before we can even think about solutions or national committees specific to that crime.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Can you expand on what it is we're doing to women who come forward in terms of the tendency to question victims in a certain way?

Ms. Jane Doe: I think it's interesting; we've all seen it on television and it's pretty much the same. Sometimes life is exactly like television. Women are annihilated. Everything about them is used against them in a court of law. It's general practice, and as I said, it goes on every day. I can't even begin to make a list or talk to you about the kinds of atrocities that take place. It's happening right now in this country.

I think we all need to go to a sexual assault trial. This is my thing; you are not allowed to form policy or committees until you've sat in on a sexual assault trial and you have witnessed what happens there, or at a minimum spoken to experts who have been there and brought you that information.

If we're going to go to the legal system as remedy—and it appears that the legal system is all we have—women must have their own legal representation. The crown does not represent her. We have to—we must—the government must look at how judges and lawyers are flouting the law on a daily basis.

● (1145)

Ms. Mylène Freeman: We need to concentrate on empowering the women.

Ms. Jane Doe: Absolutely.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Is the part about the ability to remain anonymous and for confidentiality a big piece of that too?

Ms. Jane Doe: Absolutely.

Personally, I'm very proud of what I did. I would actually prefer to use my real name, but as I spoke to this sort of shaming and blaming.... I do many things in my life. I work in many different ways and I'm quite public under my real name. If I were to come out, all of that would fall away and I would be the rape victim. I refuse to wear that label. I simply refuse to wear it. It's too damaging; it's too harmful. Therefore, the publication ban assists me in that way.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Yet in a sense, the system is currently set up in a way so that unless a woman is almost willing to do that.... Even as Jane Doe you still wear this.

Ms. Jane Doe: Absolutely.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Do you see other ways we could redress something that has happened? When it comes to sexual assault, it's obviously more, but when it comes to sexual harassment and other forms of violence against women in society, how else could we redress it?

Ms. Jane Doe: I think that I and my colleagues have both, as you know, spoken to that.

Sex education that's consent based is critical, and that talks about pleasure and joy in addition to responsibility and sharing at a very early age. My standard programs, which are being initiated across the country, are showing young men and young women what they can do, how they can get involved in what they see happening without putting themselves directly in harm's way.

As for education, I think that we need to look at our universities and our colleges. One thing that I would suggest and that I'm working on currently is modules—say three or four classes—that are dropped into the existing curriculum in law, in journalism, in health care practice, in religious studies, in humanities, and in social work. All of these people deal with sexual assaults; they're all first-liners in different ways. None of them, including lawyers, have any background education about the crime.

That's one or two or three....

Ms. Mylène Freeman: I'll come back to the idea of understanding consent in society. Do you think that we can spend a lot more time educating specifically on that issue? It seems that there's a complete misunderstanding of what that is.

Ms. Jane Doe: Yes, and we must.

What I like to say is, rather than consent, I always say consent that is hot—hot and consensual sex. We lie to our young people about sex. We never speak to the pleasure component, which is extremely natural. From a very young age we are engaging in some form of it, whether it's masturbation, it's the pleasure you get from touching yourself.... We're so in denial. Our children at about the age of two or three understand the pleasure they get from their bodies and begin to understand their sexuality even when we think they don't and stop them from doing that.

Consent is critical. As you said, we need to be really careful about what we mean and the definition that we put on it.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Ms. O'Neill Gordon, the floor is yours for seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon (Miramichi, CPC): I want to thank all of you for your presentations today. You certainly gave us lots of food for thought.

My first question is for Todd.

I certainly liked your words and agreed with your points of how important it is for young boys to be shown the proper way and be led and how important it is that we all work together. I found your presentation to be very positive and very powerful. I want to congratulate you on your presentation, as well as all the hard work you are doing. We certainly value the White Ribbon campaign.

I have one question for you. Being a former educator, I was just wondering if there is any certain age on which you focus your presentations? What is the age group that you pretty well work with on this topic?

● (1150)

Mr. Todd Minerson: That's a great question. Thank you for those nice remarks as well.

One thing we talk about at White Ribbon is what we call a strength-based approach. We know that fear-based, guilt-based, and shame-based approaches with men don't actually make the kind of behaviour change we want to see, so that's something that is very important to us.

To specifically answer your question about age, I would say that every time we go and talk to educators, they say to us, “What are you doing before they get here?” A lot of our programming actually starts to focus around ages eight to fourteen, because that's where a pretty transitional moment happens for young people and they can start to think about gendered relationships and things like that.

But we can start even earlier. It looks a little bit different. It looks more like talking about respect, diversity, equality, tolerance, and inclusivity. You have to make the links to things like bullying and other elements of violence that happen in schools. But much of the funding for programming that we do and much of the access for young people comes around age eight at the earliest.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: That's a good age. I taught primary students in grade 1, so I know that there would be some links and some very important ideas that we would be presenting to them in the classroom. But to go and speak, it would have to be to eight-year-olds and up.

Mr. Todd Minerson: The ideas are already starting to form. We do a workshop with nine-year-old boys in grade 4. I have an eight-year-old son, so this is very near and dear to my heart. We ask them the question, “What do you not like about being a boy?” The number one thing on this list that some young boys put together was not being able to be a mother.

We talked to a boy afterwards and asked him what he meant by that. He told me that from what he sees on TV and around the world, it is always moms that get to care for the kids; it's always moms that get to be loving. Dads are always portrayed as dumbbells, goofballs, klutzes. At age nine, this boy already knew that was potentially inaccessible to him as a boy.

There were other things on that list, like growing hair everywhere and smelling bad, which we couldn't do much about, but there was also having an automatic bad reputation. So at age nine, these boys felt that the thing they didn't like about being a boy was that people would automatically assume they have a bad reputation.

So to Rosemary's point earlier and to what we're trying to say at White Ribbon, this is a terrible system especially for women and girls, but also for men and boys, when our nine-year-olds are telling us that.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: That's very interesting to hear.

Thank you for your presentation and your good words.

My next question is for Rosemary. Plan Canada is, as we all know, one of the oldest international development agencies working in partnership with millions of people around the world to end global poverty. This is such an important initiative, and I'm wondering how many countries Plan Canada works with around the globe.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: We work in more than 70 countries.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: How successful have the efforts of Plan Canada been in achieving your goals?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: I think we're very practical in how we go about it. Our goal is to actually empower communities and individuals to take ownership and responsibility for their own communities, because it really is about empowering others to do the work.

Our teams across the world have about 8,000 staff across those 70 countries, and maybe all but 100 are local citizens of those countries. So we are supporting them with both technical assistance and financial assistance to achieve the key priorities that communities themselves identify.

The consultative process we talked about with the national action plan holds true wherever you go in the world, because if I sat down and spent a year consulting with a community about its priorities, the chief or the traditional leaders might say what they need is a health clinic, because there is not a health clinic; that's down the road. What the women might say is, no, what they need is early childhood education and a primary school classroom right there in the village because it is too full. If I sit down and talk to the adolescents in the community, they might say that what they actually need is safe transportation to the high school because they won't be able to go to high school if they have to go to another town. The little children might say something entirely different.

Those perspectives are all valid, but it's about the community and bringing a community together to decide its priorities in laying out a plan of what they can contribute and the help we might be able to bring to be able to achieve those goals that they set.

Those goals are very contextualized.

● (1155)

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Yes. That's for sure.

You mentioned funding. I know you certainly do a lot of work, so you would require a lot of funding.

I'm wondering if you receive funding from Status of Women, and in what areas.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: We do actually. Status of Women is a terrific partner of ours.

As with Todd, the vast majority of our funding comes from individual Canadians. We have about 250,000 Canadians who are recurring donors to our work and who every month make a decision to contribute across the country, and then we have other support from foundations, etc. But the balance is projects with DFATD, Status of Women, and with international organizations such as the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the World Food Programme, etc.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: That's good to hear.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: That includes Status of Women. We're doing some wonderful work with Status of Women right now and with the Ys across the country helping young girls identify actions they want to take to address problems that they are identifying in their communities around violence and discrimination, exclusion, etc.

Mrs. Tilly O'Neill Gordon: Do you know offhand how much is received from Status of Women?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Over several years...because we've done a number of different things with Status of Women, so aggregated, I wouldn't know, but I'm happy to provide that to you.

The Chair: Thank you very much. We would appreciate it if you could send that to the clerk. We'll distribute it to all the members.

Thank you very much Mrs. O'Neill Gordon.

Ms. Bennett, you have seven minutes.

Hon. Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's, Lib.): Thank you all. I particularly appreciated all of your focus on the young boys. As a mother of two sons, it's worrying every day that kids can grow up thinking it's okay.

Since 2002, when the WHO's first report on violence came out, I don't think we've done a good enough job explaining what violence is. Whether it's online, or it's a put-down remark, I don't think we've done a very good job.

I think the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health...or a lot of people have felt that we need to flip this around to explain what respectful relationships are and what they look like, as opposed to this really narrow definition that we don't seem to be able to break out of, that if you don't punch somebody, you haven't been violent.

I was wondering if in addressing violence you have examples of how you get in early with little boys and girls about respectful relationships, as opposed to immediately labelling it something that people will deny.

I was wondering—this is for the clerk—if the committee has the Australian action plan and the British one, as well as both the WHO 2002 study, and its report from 2014 that actually tried to examine how well we've done, which doesn't seem to be so great.

I think, Jane, you would agree that long before people get to court, the work has to be done to prevent it such that people get what “unwelcome” means and what “consent” means.

Can you share with me any experiences you may have in the work you're doing in regard to flipping it onto respectful relationships instead of just talking about violence?

Mr. Todd Minerson: If I could, I'll start with one quick one.

We have a project that's funded by the Ontario government that's part of their healthy and equal relationships funding stream. It's called “It starts with you. It stays with him.” It's about a research insight. When we asked men about how they wanted to get involved, the one thing that jumped out was that they would talk to young men in their lives.

This is a project that encourages men as fathers, as educators, as community leaders, and as faith leaders and coaches to do exactly that kind of thing in conversations and engagements with young men in their lives.

What we have tried to do is identify the barriers and take them out of the way. Men tell us they don't know how; they're afraid they'll get it wrong; nobody ever modelled it for them.

This campaign is all about building those resources for men to actually activate that role and to talk to young people in their lives about healthy, equal relationships, about active consent, about all of those things as part of their—

● (1200)

Hon. Carolyn Bennett: So where does I Am a Kind Man fit into that?

Mr. Todd Minerson: I Am a Kind Man is a project that we helped initiate with the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. That's an adaptation of a lot of our work for aboriginal communities. It's an unbelievable project as well.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Every year we put out a report called “State of the World's Girls”. About three years ago, the report was entitled “So, what about boys?” As part of that report we did primary research across five countries, including Canada, and surveyed boys nine to twelve years of age to figure out the inflection points, and how to get at those issues.

If you look at that report, you'll see that the Canadian boys were very similar to the Indian boys, etc., and 96% said they believed in equality; they believed that the girls in their classrooms could do whatever they do—high 90s, great attitudes. Then we asked about what they think is the role of men and boys, and they said that the role of men and boys is to protect girls; their job when they grow up is to earn the living. Three years ago ,these were Canadian boys age nine to twelve in our brilliant school systems across the country.

While they had the lead in equality, what they hadn't learned was what that meant in practice in terms of society's expectations of them, and the violence issues that came out, the violence they experience as young boys on the school ground because of our silly, narrow definitions of what it means to be a boy and masculine was just heartbreaking. It was probably my first time in doing these annual reports, and you know, we're working in northern Nigeria and Syria, but it just sent a tremor down my spine that these young Canadian boys were struggling so much with exactly these issues.

Why I urge you to take a look at the Australian report is that they've taken a 12-year horizon on this. You can't turn this on a dime. One group, one association, cannot do it. They looked at not just prevention and accountability, but also the behavioural change that's necessary and the things that my colleagues are talking about that are absolutely necessary, but we have to get started and we have to start very young.

Ms. Jane Doe: I certainly would agree.

I'm familiar with a project at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. It's called the anti-violence project, and it's university-based of course. They're late in the game, but they've done an incredible job of looking at sexual assault specific to the campus site and building programs, including the bystander program and mandatory programming in sexual education for athletes, and for men in general where men can come together and talk about what's going on.

I've been doing a lot of work with the Linden School for girls, which is in Toronto. It's a private school, so the access is much easier. Getting programs of any kind into the public school system is very difficult, primarily because of parents' objections. Perhaps I could also get you looking at parents about sex education.

I think one thing that is really critical is it's not enough to just come in with these programs once and have them once or twice a year. The information has to be integrated into all our other subjects. It can't just be someone who shows up and says these things. As I mentioned earlier, modules need to be inserted into all our education that specifically talk about issues of violence.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thanks very much everyone.

Ms. Crockatt, you have five minutes. Please go ahead.

[*English*]

Ms. Joan Crockatt (Calgary Centre, CPC): Thank you Chair, and thank you again to all of our witnesses here today. I think when each one of you was speaking, I had a wow moment. We were really learning some new stuff which I think is very critical.

My family has been involved; my mom started one of the early assault centres for women, and I started one of the sexual assault centres. We started out by removing women from the situation. Then we moved to removing women and children from the situation. Then we went into charging men. Then we went into sort of educating families. Now it looks like we're educating communities. I see some progression in where we're going, but I think all of you are talking today about educating communities. I'm taking that as a really strong takeaway that that's where we actually need to be now, rather than keeping it as a tight issue just with the people who were involved, and that stopping this cycle is also involving us in schools and in sport, which I think are two really important things that we learned here today.

I appreciate, Jane Doe, that you're raising the alarm that we have some significant issues that we need to deal with. I really liked this idea of the role models, particularly for young boys. I remember a moment with my son when he was about 11. He had been kind of acting out, and he got a teacher in grade 7 that was really a good guy, a young teacher who had just graduated from university, so he was cool. My son came home one day, and he said, “Mom, I've figured out that you don't have to be bad to be cool.”

I think that's what we're learning with the Toronto Argonauts, the Calgary Stampeders and the Edmonton Eskimos, and things like that. I was reminded of the Changemakers program in the States, Dads United for Parenting. I think that's where a lot of this is going.

Todd, I want you to talk more about that, because I think that's the Kodak moment that we actually have to take away in this study. Could you talk about that please?

● (1205)

Mr. Todd Minerson: Yes. The power of role models is really important. It's partly about that strength-based approach which I mentioned before, that the way we change attitudes and behaviours is by showing the right way, not by condemning all the wrong ways. Obviously, we have to hold people to account for those things, but if you want to actually change behaviour, you have to give people a road map about how those behaviours should look. One way to do that is through role models.

Another piece of that is who the messengers are for this kind of thing for young men and boys. We think about that a lot. In certain places, for things like raising awareness, celebrities, athletes, musicians, and football players are great messengers, but for everyday behaviour change, people also want to see themselves reflected in that. That's where projects like our “It starts with you. It stays with him.” are so important, because men who want to be better fathers, who want to be more involved in their children's lives don't want to have to think that they have to be celebrities or superstars to do that. They want to see their own experiences reflected in that effort.

Many men, particularly when we think about fatherhood now, want to do things differently for their kids, whether they're young boys or young girls. Many men also tell us they don't know how because nobody did it for them. That's not blaming their fathers, because probably for a lot of us our fathers are from a different generation, my own father included, whom I love dearly. He has probably said about six words about consent and sexual health education and healthy relationships to me in my entire 43 years of life, and that's probably a lot.

Having these kinds of ideas around role models is a critical way to change it, but it's not the only way. What we know from some other work that the World Health Organization has done in evaluating projects with men and boys is that these things are most effective when the work can happen in small groups, when people can see it reflected in the communities that they're part of, whether that's a school, a family, or a faith group, and when they see those messages reinforced in the public. If you can tackle it from all three places where they're learning in small groups and testing out the role modelling behaviour they're seeing and the messages are reinforced publicly, that's when we see the best and longest lasting change in attitude and behaviour.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Are we reaching aboriginal boys with this message?

Mr. Todd Minerson: There are two amazing campaigns. One is the I Am a Kind Man campaign, which Ms. Bennett already mentioned, and the other is the Moose Hide Campaign in B.C. They are doing some unbelievable work, but are we reaching enough? No.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you Ms. Crockatt.

[*English*]

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: On the front page of the *Globe and Mail* this morning, Chief Bellegarde of the Assembly of First Nations said that it's also about us: the violence. It's a large article, if you haven't seen it yet. I thought, I'm going to be seeing Todd today; I bet everyone is celebrating that. It was a huge courageous act of leadership to say that yesterday.

● (1210)

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Freeman, you have five minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Mylène Freeman: I have another question for Jane Doe.

We've heard a lot of experts from the legal community—across different committees and the evaluations of different bills—saying that there's a strain on the legal aid system. There's been a reduction in funds from the federal government and there's a need there.

From your experience through a lengthy legal process and through working with others, could you speak to how legal aid is helpful for victims of violence and sexual violence in accessing the legal system? Also, what other things can we do to help access the legal system itself?

Ms. Jane Doe: Any strain on the legal system has not come from women who experience violence. You're not eligible to apply, whether the issue is intimate partner violence or sexual assault.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: You're saying that people aren't even getting to the legal system.

Ms. Jane Doe: You don't get that financial aid, which then of course makes it incredibly difficult to get to the legal system. Personally, my civil suit was scores of millions of dollars. I was funded, but it's erroneous to say the courts are open to everyone. They're open to those who can afford to enter the system. But certainly that minimal aid that legal aid does offer is not available to women who experience violence and are in the legal system.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: Then that would be something that would at least be helpful, even though we know that the numbers of people who will be reporting and going into the process, even with financial support, are incredibly low.

Ms. Jane Doe: Absolutely.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: What else can we do to even just encourage...apart from anonymity, from legal aid? Do you have any recommendations there?

Ms. Jane Doe: Well, one recommendation I have specific to violence against women is that women have to have their own legal representation. In a sexual assault case, the woman has no legal representation. The crown attorney purports to be that, but he is there to represent the state, or Regina more specifically. That's his job. It is not to represent the women involved.

I was the first woman to successfully secure my own legal representation in a court of law in a criminal rape trial, so it's quite possible. But we are in denial of that, and we fear that if the woman has that representation or right, it somehow diminishes the full and best legal representation possible for the alleged perpetrator. That's one recommendation.

Similarly, for women who experience intimate partner violence, in Toronto, quite recently, in 2011, a domestic violence court was established. Women have a very difficult time there because they have no voice; they are not able to speak for themselves.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: If we're going to do anything when there's someone who has lived violence or been sexually assaulted, or any sort of violence that we experience, the first thing we need to do is to try to empower them, right? It's not trying to take away their—

Ms. Jane Doe: Absolutely, and one way to empower them, aside from that, is that women need information, so they can make an informed decision about where they're going and how.

Ms. Mylène Freeman: I am wondering if you could talk a bit about rape culture in the workplace. How do you see that? As I understand it, you do have experience speaking about this.

Ms. Jane Doe: I'm not separating rape culture from the workplace, from the family, from sports, or from the government. I think we separate these things way too much. We live in a rape culture, period, and it is out of control in all of our sectors and all of our institutions. We just don't know it is or the degree to which it is, because women don't report. The conviction rate is under 1% for women who file those charges. It's the same with sexual harassment: when you do report, all kinds of horrible things start happening to you, particularly to children or very young women who report. You lose your job. That's a very likely outcome of doing that. For young girls who report that they've been sexually harassed at school or sexually assaulted, their lives are over. They are pretty much banished from the schoolyard because they have told. They usually have to leave school and go to another school.

● (1215)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Next, it is over to Mr. Barlow for five minutes.

[*English*]

Mr. John Barlow (Macleod, CPC): I want to get us back on track with best practices. What we're really here for today is to talk about some of the successes that are out there and how we can address some things, and promote those and try to bring them onto a more national scale.

Last week Dr. Katz was here talking about changing the narrative significantly from violence against women to men committing violence, and about changing what is really the root cause of this.

Todd, I want to ask you a little bit about a program that was done by the White Ribbon campaign called “Give Love, Get Love” which was, I think, a partnership between White Ribbon and Dad Central. Can you expand on that a little bit? I think it was really to talk about some of the positive role models that fathers and dads can take. As a father of two daughters, I think this is, as you said, also something that it's important for us as men to start taking the forefront on. I understand that study has been done. Can you expand on that program a bit?

Mr. Todd Minerson: I mentioned I have an eight-year-old son, but I also have a four-year-old daughter, so this job is a little bit overwhelming sometimes since I have to factor in both perspectives.

We did a research project with Dad Central Ontario called “Give Love, Get Love”. Because fatherhood is such an important access point for talking to men about gender equality and healthy relationships and violence against women, first of all we wanted to understand whether men recognized the changing nature of fatherhood and how that was supporting the goal of achieving gender equality, and whether they could connect those dots. We also wanted to spend some time asking them where they were accessing information, how they were relating to people, and how they were learning about this. We wanted to know where we could find them to share some more of this stuff and help them along that journey, because fatherhood is definitely changing in this country. More men now than ever before are taking parental leave. More men have and live in double-income families in which the hard reality of income inequality hits home when a female partner doesn't make as much as a male partner does. More and more men are taking an active role in caregiving for their children.

We found that a lot of men didn't really understand the connection between being a more involved parent and advocating for gender equality, but it was very natural to them. Very few men wanted the outcomes for their daughters to be different from those for their sons. The equality of opportunity is there. The desire for a life free of violence is there. But as Rosemary was saying earlier, how that happens and what the implications are were not all there for fathers.

We also investigated where they were getting this information and how they were trying to access it. Not surprisingly it wasn't through a lot of formal means, but it was through networks of friends and peers who were also fathers. It gave us a lot of insight on where to reach these guys and how to share with them that so much of what they were doing already was promoting gender equality and working to end violence against women that some of the fears and barriers they experienced didn't need to be there, and that they just have to get out there and keep doing a lot of the good stuff they've been doing.

Mr. John Barlow: Thank you.

Rosemary, you mentioned that you've had some substantial funding since 2007 and that 720 community programs have been funded. That's something you want to celebrate, but you mentioned that we need to take a cohesive approach to some of these best practices, some of these programs that are working. Can you expand on that? How do you see that and what do you mean by that? Do we need to take some of these successful programs in communities and make more of a national cohesive unit? Can you expand on that a bit?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Yes, I think what's fundamentally important is that this has to be multi-sectoral, as we've all said. It is about the justice system. Reforms are needed. Better training of the judiciary, for example, is a piece. Legal aid access is another piece. Jane has mentioned a number of them. I'm a lawyer by training so I can wear both hats on that.

We need to address the health care system as well so there is access and understanding about the reproductive health of young adolescents, which is abysmal.

Frankly, there is the education sector that we've talked about, and the important role the school boards play in making sure that the curriculum doesn't just talk about rights, but talks about responsibilities as well, that talks about the importance of young people standing up and taking action and not condoning and not being complicit.

It's about the policing systems that need to be done in a way that will provide confidence and comfort so women and young girls will come forth.

It's about funding the front-line health care people and the front-line social service agencies.

It's a spectrum, and you have a massive job in front of you, there is no question. This is multi-jurisdictional and it's multi-sectoral and it has to go from prevention to accountability and on to provision of services and behavioural change running straight across it. It is all of those things.

If you want to dig in, there are a couple of places in which we need specific help. Jane has mentioned some. Todd has mentioned one. One that's not talked about is that we need good data. This has to be done on a solid empirical foundation that's not for debate. That means funding Stats Canada to be able to get disaggregated data, because we don't have good disaggregated data to inform smart investments and policy choices.

● (1220)

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. McCarney.

Please finish.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: I'll add one last one. When the dentistry students thing began, I took a deep breath and asked why the hate laws of Canada weren't being applied here. One of my colleagues said that they didn't apply to gender. When we created the hate laws 25 years ago as a carve-out from freedom of expression and the limits of free speech, we didn't put gender in them. It's another specific piece that I hope this committee will look at as well.

The Chair: That's fascinating. I couldn't stop you because you were giving us food for thought and food to put in the report, not on the table.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Bateman, you may go ahead for five minutes.

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

[*English*]

I want to thank every one of you for the perspective and your testimony today. It will be immensely helpful to us all, and certainly to the committee going forward.

Every one of you has mentioned resources and money, so I want to touch briefly on that. I recognize the importance. I'm a chartered accountant from way back, so I want to get an understanding at the start of my question period.

Rosemary, the research I have on your organization—and you very modestly said we've got to start—my goodness, you have an international organization. You have 8,200 staff. You have 60,000 well-trained volunteers who help you connect. You're making a huge impact. I'm thrilled that DFATD, as well as Status of Women, is a big player. Obviously, the nature of the work you're doing is congruent with how proud we are as a country to make a difference in the world.

You mentioned your individual donors. You mentioned DFATD and Status of Women. If you were cutting a pie—we don't have to be precise—would you get about one-third or half of your resources from DFATD, or is it 99% of your resources from individuals? I'm just curious.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Because I have a financial side to my head as well as a legal one, from the Canadian resources, DFATD, and I would add Status of Women as well, but DFATD is the largest piece, it bounces a little, but it represents under 15% of our total revenue every year. About 12% to 13% of total revenue is DFATD.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Wow. That's great. You have a presence in the world, in so many communities, in so many....

Anyway, in terms of levering the resources that you have, because they are mammoth and impressive, how do you share the information? You have 8,200 employees. How do you share? How do you make sure that the best practices within your organization are shared? How do you nurture the volunteers? I'd love to hear about that.

● (1225)

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: We work in about 103,000 communities within those countries. We're very much a community-based organization. Each of those countries has a strategic plan, a country strategic plan that is in formation over a couple of years of massive consultation with those tens of thousands of communities and millions of people in those countries, as well as the ministries of education and health and status of women in a country, like, from Zimbabwe to Laos. Those strategic plans are formed very much from the bottom up, and the prioritization and the context is set from those. That's the way we do that. Then a budget is attached to that and they pass that up to the global leadership. That's how we target how we mobilize resources, whether it's a British donor or a Canadian donor, whether they have particular interests in their strategic philanthropy being in this part of the world, in this area of water sanitation, or girls' rights, or....

Ms. Joyce Bateman: How do you cross-fertilize?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: The cross-fertilization is both through the strategic plans and then through third party evaluations and assessments of the work done, which is all public information and knowledge. We also have what's called the Plan Academy, where that work comes together with trained educators who bring the best practices, bring the assessments and evaluations, say, from a response in Haiti, or on a particular issue, for example, on the humanitarian side. That's shared in the same way a multinational corporation would in terms of online curriculum across all of those things.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Thanks so much. Time is always short.

I want to follow up on your comments. I just loved that that little boy wanted to be a mom. I think that's a beautiful story. In our family, I happen to be married to a very gentle man and....

The Chair: Briefly, Mrs. Bateman.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: Okay.

To me that has been the big beneficiary for our children.

Your comments about the industry and how children...that little boy said he can't see nurturing from parents. Have you considered lobbying the entertainment industry? Have you considered, I mean, my goodness—

The Chair: Mrs. Bateman, your question, please.

Ms. Joyce Bateman: I just gave it.

Have you considered lobbying the entertainment industry?

The Chair: Very well. Thank you very much.

Your answer, briefly.

Mr. Todd Minerson: We call that group our nine-year-old experts and then we go to our 11-year-old experts for the really tough questions like this. We've asked them that question, where do these things come from. Not only do they come from family and schools, but they come from the media, an important place, and they come from sports and culture, and all of those things. There's a vast web of things that contribute to these notions that are instilled in these nine- and 11-year-old boys. There's not one place to go. We could spend our entire life against sexist ads and things like that, but that's not showing men the right way to do things. It's focused on the fight, not the solution.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Duncan, over to you for five minutes.

[*English*]

Ms. Kirsty Duncan (Etobicoke North, Lib.): Thank you all for coming. We're enormously grateful to all of you in the work you do.

Ms. McCarney, you were talking about good data. Could you outline what the challenges are in the data as you see them, and what specific recommendations you would like to see in the committee's report?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: We're big believers that good policy formation happens on an empirical basis. The reality is that we have not desegregated data over time. It is not just Canada; it is around the world. But if we're going to do good policy formation out of the recommendations of this committee, we actually have to fund good data collection, desegregated data, not just by gender but by age and gender. Todd has brought that very much home in terms of both the quantitative as well as the qualitative. When Jane cites statistics that only 10% of reported cases, for example, go through the evidentiary gathering of a rape kit, or only 1% of something else, one of the data pieces that I use, and I use it to make a point, is that one in four girls reports being sexually assaulted before her 16th birthday in this country.

That data is about 17 years old, because we haven't collected this data in that long. Do I think the situation has improved? I'm not sure, but I want to be able to answer those questions on a foundation of solid evidence to be able to know where the right place to put the investment is.

When Mr. Barlow said all of these different projects—

● (1230)

The Chair: There is a lot of noise.

Thank you.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: There are so many of these projects across the country, and it is a patchwork of holes across the country. There are some amazing things happening in certain provinces and in certain school boards. Toronto District School Board is doing some very good work. But we don't know any of this because it's not being collated. We don't know what's really happening in the lives of girls and boys across this country so that it can shape our policy and make sure we are putting the right money in the right places to get the biggest return on investment.

Statistics Canada needs to be empowered and funded in a way, and directed to get this evidence that we need to support the legislative and policy changes that are required. It has to be both quantitative as well as qualitative data, because qualitative data with young people can be actually more reliable than quantitative data, but can be more expensive to collect.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: If there's a specific recommendation to the committee, what is it? You've talked about good collection of data. Do you want to expand on that?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Sure. It would be to provide sufficient support to Statistics Canada to collect and consolidate desegrated national data, so that we can be informed on an evidence basis on the information for policy initiatives that we are going to be taking.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: Thank you.

You also urged us to take stock of our investment in addressing violence. I was wondering if you could speak more to this and give your thoughts on this approach. You've talked about a patchwork that is lacking coordination.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: In my earlier remarks, what I said was that really there is an accident of birth in Canada that should not be allowed. Whether I'm born a child of a first generation family, whether I'm born as an aboriginal child, whether I'm born in a remote region or an urban region, the services I get, the prevention measures in place, the kind of policing to which I'll have access, the kind of legal aid to which I'll have access are up for grabs. They shouldn't be. On this issue of violence against women and children across the country, we should be able to know that we have access and equity in terms of the preventions that are in place to protect us, the provision of services if something happens to us, and the justice to which we will have access to remedy that.

Ms. Kirsty Duncan: I know I'm running out of time, but perhaps you might like to table this with the committee. You talked about a need for effective legislation. What kind of legislation are you looking for?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Specifically, what I would love to table with the committee is the national action plan of the Government of Australia. The Government of the United Kingdom did a very accessible national action plan in 2010. From a Canadian perspective, in terms of our complex federal system of different jurisdictional levels, the Australian plan frankly is something which we could take almost wholesale and translate into the Canadian condition. A lot of the work has been done. What was brilliant about the Australians is that they did cross the spectrum. They addressed behavioural change. They identified six national outcomes. They gave themselves 12 years. They revisit that national action plan about every 18 to 24 months to see what's happening and where it needs to be tweaked and adapted.

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

If you would kindly provide the links to the websites or the documents, we'd very much appreciate it. We could then distribute the information in both official languages, perhaps in the form of an executive summary, depending on how lengthy the documents are and whether they are available in French. They seem to really tie in with our study. Since we must provide the information in both official languages, our analyst will tell us whether it's possible to provide an executive summary to the committee members.

Thank you very much. That was very helpful.

Ms. Perkins, over to you for seven minutes.

● (1235)

[*English*]

Mrs. Pat Perkins (Whitby—Oshawa, CPC): I certainly have found all of this very enlightening. I appreciate the work that has gone into each of your presentations and all the work you continue to do.

I've looked at this, and perhaps there are some missing pieces. Maybe they've been addressed in other ways and I'm not familiar with them, but when I look at things I want to see the more holistic approach: what all the factors are.

Ms. McCarney, you in particular talk about putting the complete data together, but is it going to be complete enough? Are there going to be portions of it that would deal with the various types of home environments, ethnic environments, and cultural environments and what piece they have? What piece does media have, whether it be the gangster rap or the degrading type of music videos? What portion of it does sports have? Perhaps we should be looking.... The Argos' program and all of those things are great, but I also see that on American sports teams, in particular—I'm not too familiar with what is going on in Canadian sports teams—there are significant numbers of rapists, convicted rapists, on American sports teams. These people are being idolized. They're NBA players or whatever they are and they're being idolized by these young folks.

The folks who grew up in the fifties, sixties, and seventies had this thing about women liberating themselves and becoming equal. Society in itself has taken a massive turn; it has gone all the way around a corner in latter years and is putting women back down on that slope. Women rose, but they've taken a turn by virtue of some of this sort of stuff, because the girls are seeing in these videos that's what they are supposed to be like, that the gangster rap is acceptable. For some of the stuff that we're filling young people's heads with, I question why we're allowing that stuff to happen. Is that wholesome? Is it giving them good nurturing and an understanding of what life is about, or is it giving them a twist on what...?

How do you figure in all of those factors? They all exist. How do you figure all of them into how we move forward?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: I could start, but I think my colleagues will have something to say.

I'm not sure what we can do about those negative images and the stereotypes in terms of shutting them down, because we live in a free and open society. What we can do is strengthen the other side so that those are not the only messages that young people are receiving and they're not the only role models that young people will look up to. We have to strengthen this other side so that it is as appealing and as attractive, and maybe stigmatize, use stigmatization in reverse on the other side.

We're not going to have a perfect plan. We're not going to have a perfect society. We are imperfect human beings. But we need to start. It's going to be raggedy and it will get better as we go, and I think we'll turn the behavioural issues and the prejudicial issues around over time. Certainly, we did that on race, and we've done this on class. We've done it on other things. We did it on cigarette smoking in 10 years.

We can do this. We can change attitudes in the face of all of those negative images and stereotypes.

We can do it. We just have to get started.

● (1240)

Mrs. Pat Perkins: I have a belief that we can, but I'm just pointing out that we are not addressing those pieces. Should they not be addressed in that these are the challenges that are out there? You have to look at the challenges as well if you are going to approach it and have it all on the table is what I'm saying.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: That's true. In empowering young boys and girls to speak up and to take a stand and giving them the confidence to do that, I think they'll lead the way for us.

Mr. Todd Minerson: There is this notion that Rosemary brought up of creating alternative content, because it's overwhelming to think of every sexist ad, every sexist music video, every convicted felon on a professional sports team in the world, and how to approach those is so complex and so vast that it's almost overwhelming.

One thing that we focus on at White Ribbon is this notion of creating the content that shows the positive way. But the other thing, and I think probably the most concrete solution to dealing with that overwhelming challenge, is to teach young people how to be critical of those things.

When we work with young men and boys and we point out some of these harmful and toxic ideas of masculinity, for example, we do an exercise with them. We talk about sexual violence myths, the things we hear all the time: what was she wearing, what was she drinking, why was she there alone, all of these types of things. Obviously we deconstruct a little bit about what that is saying about women and girls, which is awful, but what is this also saying about men and boys: that we are a mini-skirt away from being a rapist, or that we're unable to control ourselves and we're just barely able to contain ourselves from sexually assaulting somebody if we have a beer? That's what those myths are reinforcing on the critical side for men and boys.

If you teach young boys to see some of that, all of a sudden they can see it in lots of different places and they become the change agents who you need to recruit to get that kind of transformative change happening across society.

It's extremely taxing and incredibly frustrating as an organization to spend your entire life every time a petition comes for a sexist ad, every time a music video raises some controversy.... Obviously you have to stand up and model that kind of intervention and behaviour as well. But how do you change the music industry? How do you change a pro sports league? How do you do those things? That's the bigger question.

Mrs. Pat Perkins: The family piece I guess is the one we haven't addressed in all of this, because children throughout the world and even just the kids in our country because of the entire multicultural nature of what we are, there are a lot of beliefs in ethnic.... So how does the family piece work into it?

The Chair: The family piece is a very important component, but that's all the time you have for now. You may want to raise that question later on.

[*Translation*]

I'll now turn the floor over to Ms. Sellah.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah (Saint-Bruno—Saint-Hubert, NDP): Thank you, Madam Chair.

I would like to thank all the witnesses for joining the committee today.

I want to echo the sentiments of all my colleagues and commend you on your tremendous leadership and all the work you are doing at the ground level to combat violence against women in all forms.

You have probably heard about Bill C-570, brought forward by Rob Anders, which seeks to impose minimum penalties in the case of rape. The bill focuses on rape.

My question is for all three of you.

Were you consulted when the bill was being put together, yes or no?

[*English*]

Ms. Jane Doe: No, nor am I familiar with anyone working in the area who was.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Very good.

Is it the same thing for the two of you?

[*English*]

Mr. Todd Minerson: We were not consulted, but we don't work on the justice side of things. We work on prevention, education, and awareness.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Ms. Doe, my next question is for you.

If we want to create legislation to address violence against women, shouldn't that legislation target all forms of sexual assault?

I'd also like to ask another question. Do you believe that the way to stop violence against women is through a bill that imposes minimum sentences? Are there not other, more appropriate ways to solve the problem?

● (1245)

Ms. Jane Doe: Thank you, Ms. Sellah.

[*English*]

I do not believe that longer or extensive prison sentences work in any way, especially for the 80% of women who are raped or sexually assaulted by the men to whom they are economically and emotionally tied. In fact they suffer from those sentences, especially economically. I support the context of smaller prison sentences, but I think—and I believe this is what you are asking—we have to do the work before we get to court. We have to do the work before the legislation is passed.

I'm not quite sure I'm answering your question.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: You answered it in a way.

I think Mr. Minerson has something to add. Please go ahead, sir.

[*English*]

Mr. Todd Minerson: There's one thing I would add around sentencing and rehabilitation that we think about when we look at the spectrum of engaging men. We don't work in particular with men who have used violence, but I know from colleagues who do that work that unlike domestic violence, interpersonal violence, where a number of provinces have diversionary programs that work to rehabilitate men who have used violence, there's no such equivalent for men who've perpetrated crimes of sexual violence. Sending them to prison is purely punitive and does nothing for rehabilitative purposes.

In terms of one gap that we're in conversations about with some of our colleagues in this work, there is nothing for men who have perpetrated sexual violence. In fact, there's no diversionary programs even for groups of men, like the dental students at Dalhousie. A prison sentence is probably not what's appropriate for those particular men, but some kind of remediation, some kind of rehabilitation, is probably very much required. There's nothing out there for men in those situations at the moment.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Rosemary?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: If you haven't heard from them yet, I believe the John Howard Society would be able to provide terrific insights to this committee on the diversion programs they offer in the physical assault area. I'll defer to Todd in terms of his understanding of the programming around sexual assault, but they have had decades of experience working with male offenders and physical violence against women. I cannot speak to the sexual side, but I think they would be very good witnesses for this committee, if you haven't already had them here.

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: Okay, good.

Jane Doe?

Ms. Jane Doe: From my understanding of the programs at John Howard, which does some very good work, their anger management programs don't work. It's crazy; it's a course that you're mandated to take, but they are not as informed as they should be. The issue isn't just anger. The anger is coming from a place, and that's where we need to go. The programs are not effective. Women are saying that they're not effective and men are saying that they're not effective.

In aboriginal communities we've seen great success in restorative justice. That has certainly been adopted and trumpeted. I do have to tell you, sadly, that aboriginal women are telling us that it does not work in instances of rape, sexual assault, or interpersonal violence. It doesn't work in those cases.

Mr. Todd Minerson: I would submit to you the names of two organizations that might be great witnesses on this issue. They are doing, in my view, really exceptional work with men who have used violence.

One is from London, Ontario. It's an organization called Changing Ways. They are looking at a holistic approach that's far, far beyond just the traditional anger management approaches. Another is the Bridges Institute in Halifax. Again, they're looking at more narrative experiences that hold men accountable for their actions, but they also try to understand the underlying trauma, pain, and hostility that caused the men to make some of those choices around using violence.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Djaouida Sellah: To summarize, then, I gather that the work has to happen at the ground level with the partner organizations already in place before addressing the situation in court or raising minimum sentences. That is what I took away from your comments.

Would that be correct?

[*English*]

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Absolutely.

Ms. Jane Doe: Yes.

● (1250)

Mr. Todd Minerson: Yes.

[*Translation*]

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Sellah.

I'd like a point clarified, please.

You seem to be saying that restorative justice works in some cases, but not in the case of domestic violence because of the intimate relationship between the couple. Is that a fair statement?

Voices: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you very much for clarifying that.

Ms. Truppe, you have seven minutes.

[*English*]

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Madam Chair, depending on how long the answers are, I'll be sharing my time with Madam Crockatt.

Rosemary, the questions that I have are for you.

I think you said that there are over one million Canadians who want a safer world for girls. Is that right? Yes.

Do you have a plan to increase the number so that maybe it's 1.5 million? How are you getting these million?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: I love growth trajectories for sure.

We are actually out there every day and every hour with our Because I am a Girl campaign. We are working in hundreds of schools across the country where girls are initiating their own actions and activities. We're very active on social media and in blogs. Also, we're publishing another portal to get to young children about attitudes that start very young. We're about to publish our third book in the children's literature category on young girls and boys taking action when they see things that are wrong in their communities.

I wouldn't stop at 1.5 million. I'd like to double that number.

Mrs. Susan Truppe: I didn't want to scare you by saying two million.

You also mentioned the Because I Am A Girl campaign. I do love that campaign. I think it's great. I've had the opportunity to go to the United Nations during the status of women conferences for the last few years. Everybody is so positive about it.

You said that you're working with the Y across the country. Is there a best practice that you would like to share, for instance, something that's worked that you've done with the Y?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Sure.

Best practice is always contextualized to communities and the readiness of young people to participate. Sometimes you have to lay the conditions and create a safe space where young people can feel that they can participate and be respected for views that may not be in the mainstream. I think of the Y, organizations like Girls Inc., and what the White Ribbon campaign is doing. I think one of the best practices that we all use is allowing young people to be heard. We hear their voices. We're not there to convey good information adult to child, or adult to adolescent. It's about laying the table and facilitating the space where they can actually speak and be heard in a place of respect and safety.

We published a report called “Hear Our Voices”. Young girls across the world, including in Canada, said, “Listen to us. We have important things to say. Sometimes we don't think you're listening, and sometimes perhaps we're not in a place where we can speak loudly enough.”

Mrs. Susan Truppe: Thank you.

I have a final question before I turn it over to Madam Crockatt.

You had mentioned the $146 million for 120 programs across Canada. Are these separate programs? Is this not including the Y's program? Do you have a best practice from all these programs as well?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: Since 2007, $146 million has been invested to support 720 community-based programs across the country, with nearly half of those dedicated to ending violence against women and girls. I believe that people are trying to do what's right, provide funding, and to learn, etc., but if they're tiny perfect projects that never get joined up, I don't think we're getting the return on that investment that we absolutely need and that we owe to these girls and women.

● (1255)

Mrs. Susan Truppe: That's a lot of programs.

Ms. Crockatt.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Thank you for sharing your time with me.

I want to delve a tiny bit more into the idea of rape versus sexual assault.

Jane Doe, you mentioned it at the beginning of your testimony and sort of left it hanging. I'd like to hear what your thoughts are. As I'm sure you're aware, some people believe that people treat sexual assault far too lightly, because they think it could just be a brush-by in the elevator; therefore, they don't treat those crimes as significant, life changing, and societally changing as they perhaps would be. Others don't like the idea of going to the word “rape”.

What are your thoughts are on that, please?

Ms. Jane Doe: We do use the terms interchangeably just to register the contested nature of that language, which is not specific to sexual assault. The legislation, as you know, was enacted in about 1984, which changed the terminology from rape to sexual assault and three categories were constructed.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Yes, for that reason.

Ms. Jane Doe: It needs to be revisited and certainly anyone working in that area would agree that it needs to be revisited. What has happened is that we've taken violence out of sexual assault, out of rape, and we are presently in a condition where sexual assault three, third level, which means a weapon has been used, can be argued down in court to a sexual assault one. It's the same with two; it can be argued down to one. I think we need to focus more on the fact that rapes are argued down to one as opposed to what we are hearing, that one is not serious enough.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Okay.

Ms. Jane Doe: I think any woman would tell you that. I think we've gotten into a situation where one woman's rape is more violent or is different from another woman's, and the legislation has supported that and created that. It was seen as progressive at the time. Certainly many feminists—a word none of us uses today, including myself—were extremely active in drafting that legislation. It's no longer effective for the reasons that I have indicated.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Thank you very much for that.

I want to ask Rosemary a question about data.

You've talked about data. We have also heard testimony here today about the difficulties because a very small number of women will report. How much of our efforts do you want to be spent on trying to collect data, or do you think we're better to move ahead on the things that we know are working?

I see that Jane has her hand up as well, but could I ask you that first? This is always the challenge for us: where is our money most effectively placed? In this particular area, it's a tough one for us to get any kind of data that looks in any way accurate.

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: I think that if we don't have good data, a couple of things happen. We don't close the door on “that can't be”, so we can't end the debate about what is actually happening and the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls in the country. Without data we're vulnerable to having to constantly debate. Is it that bad? Is it really happening here? Is it really happening with young girls? Did one in four girls under 16 really say they were sexually assaulted?

It's a constant discussion that we should have moved beyond, so I think it's important.

Ms. Joan Crockatt: Is the data any better than polling though?

Ms. Rosemary McCarney: No, I think data has to be both qualitative and quantitative because it's a way for the young people, girls and women, to have their voices heard. When they want to be anonymous, they can be anonymous and still report what happened to her. Well done qualitative and quantitative data is fundamental and it underlies how we make good investments with scarce resources. We will not have finite resources for this.

The Chair: Thank you. I'll let Ms. Jane Doe say a few words and we'll close.

Ms. Jane Doe: Thank you.

I agree with everything that you're saying. I think there is good data out there. I think there's incredible research out there, magnificent research, specific to violence against women, that has not been incorporated into a data collection process by Statistics Canada. There's so much wonderful stuff out there that we don't know about.

One piece of data that we do have, and that StatsCan has collected, is this: in Canada, a woman is murdered every six days by her male partner. That's a surprise to many of us. Why is that a surprise? The data that we have, we don't believe it and we're certainly not using it or reflecting it.

● (1300)

The Chair: Thank you.

[*Translation*]

And "merci beaucoup" as we say in the other official language.

Thank you for your passion and your dedication to the cause, not to mention your tremendous contribution to our study. Have a good afternoon.

The committee will meet next on Thursday, at the same time.

The meeting is adjourned.