



RFNB

Regroupement féministe
du Nouveau-Brunswick

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

Progressive Conservative
Party of New Brunswick

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BACKGROUND

The *Regroupement féministe du Nouveau-Brunswick* (RFNB) is leading a project entitled “*Chantier féministe N.-B.: pour des partis politiques égalitaires*”. The purpose of this initiative is to work with the province’s political parties to develop mechanisms to facilitate the active participation of women in politics.

This project aims to find solutions to a problem that is systemic. This project is non-partisan and seeks to reshape politics in New Brunswick from a feminist perspective. It is within the framework of this project that the RFNB and representatives of the Progressive Conservative Party met in order to identify possible courses of action to support the Party in increasing the number of women candidates and the number of women elected.

Many studies have identified significant advantages of having women on a team. Even if these studies were mainly conducted for the private sector, it is reasonable to apply some of the results to the political sphere. Notable studies and results include (but are not limited to):

- An economist from Carnegie Mellon found that teams that included at least one female member had a collectively higher IQ than teams that had just men.
- According to McKinsey Global,¹ advancing parity and equity policies across its institutions and businesses could help Canada add \$150 billion in incremental GDP by 2026. New Brunswick could add 3 to 4% to its GDP over the same period.
- Gallup found that companies with more diversity on staff have a 22% lower turnover rate, and if an organization has a more inclusive culture that embraces women, it’s easier to recruit a more diverse staff.
- Studies in 17 different countries in all different industries found that across the board, having a larger number of women on a team accounts for greater psychological safety, team confidence, group experimentation, and team efficiency.

¹ The Anita Borg Institute for Women; *The Cold, Hard Proof That More Women Means Better Business, The Case for Investing in Women*, Lily Herman

CURRENT STATE

New Brunswick (22.4%) and PEI (22.2%) have the lowest percentage of women MLAs in Canada. Federally, Canada ranks 57th internationally with 29% of elected officials in the lower chamber (House of Commons) being women.

The Progressive Conservative Party (PCP) is a traditional party which has its origins in the pre-Canadian Confederation Progressive Conservative Party. It tends to hold a moderate stance, being socially and fiscally centrist. Four women members of the PCP were elected during the last provincial election and are now part of the government.

STRENGTHS

Three women are now members of the Provincial Executive, including the President of the PC Women Association. Eleven women (22.5%) are Riding Association Presidents.

The PC Party's Constitution includes an article on policy development which calls for the creation of a Policy Advisory Committee. The members of the Committee are appointed on the recommendation of the Party's Leader, and the Executive Director shall provide adequate staff support to the Committee.

KEY CHALLENGES

As mentioned, the Party has a long tradition and like all parties, has been mainly composed of men over the years. As such, the Party operates as an old boys club with traditional management approaches and values. There are no references in the Party's official documents to the importance of gender equality or equity. In addition, the responsibilities of the PC Women Association are not well defined in the Party's official documents.

VISION

The Progressive Conservative Party embraces feminist approaches to ensure the significant participation of women in all their diversity on all levels of the Party and in the Legislature.

OBJECTIVE

To work with political parties and electoral district associations in New Brunswick to create policies and procedures that will increase the number of women recruited, nominated and elected.

OUTCOMES

In the next provincial election, at least 40% of conservative candidates are women, and 35% of them are elected. At least 40% of the conservative elected members are women in the following election

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

ACTION	FOCUS	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME / TIME FRAME
The Party includes in its policies the obligation or targets to have an equal number of men and women on its Policy Advisory Committee.	Policies and procedures	Party Leader / Provincial Council	The obligation/ target to have gender equality within the Policy Advisory Committee is included in the official documents of the Party by 2021
The Party includes in its policies a mechanism to support and mentor women wanting to be candidates.	Policies and procedures	Executive Director / Women Association	A mechanism is in place by 2022
The Party creates a fund to help local associations in the recruitment of women candidates.	Policies and procedures	Party Leader / Provincial Council	All local associations have access to a fund to support their efforts and results by 2023
The Party encourages and supports members to play a full and active part in supporting women who want to run for office through mentoring and facilitating the development of networks.	Policies and procedures	Party Leader / Provincial Council / Caucus / Women Association	Guidelines are developed and distributed to members by 2022

ACTION	FOCUS	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME / TIME FRAME
The Party includes in its bylaws the obligation to conduct gender-based analysis in the preparation of nomination campaigns.	Policies and procedures	Executive Director / Women Association	2021
The Party includes in its Constitution a principle on gender equality and the importance of women's participation within the Party.	Policies and procedures	Policy Advisory Committee / Women Association	2021
The role of the Women's Association is defined in the official documents of the Party.	Policies and procedures	Executive Director / Women Association	2021
The Party develops and launches a communication strategy aimed at increasing awareness within the local associations of the importance of recruiting women candidates, and this while respecting and paying special attention to the diversity between women.	Awareness	Executive Director / Women Association / Local Associations	2022
The Party offers training sessions to women who want to run for nomination.	Awareness	Executive Director / Women Association / Local Associations	2022

ACTION	FOCUS	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME / TIME FRAME
The Party ensures that the representatives on the Provincial Council and Provincial Executive reflect the New Brunswickers' diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and age.	Organizational Structure	Party Leader / Executive Director / Provincial Council	Obligation to have an equal number of men and women on the Provincial Council and Provincial Executive is included in the official documents of the Party by 2021
The Party encourages local associations to ensure gender equity within the executives of their association.	Organizational Structure	Executive Director / Provincial Council / Local Associations / Women Association	Regular meetings with the local associations are organized to discuss the situation by 2022
The Party encourages local associations to actively recruit women candidates in preparation of nomination campaigns.	Organizational Structure	Executive Director / Provincial Council / Local Associations / Women Association	Regular meetings on the issue with the local associations by 2022