

# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ***Muskrat Falls project must include women's experiences and perspectives***

The Mokami Status of Women Council is calling for a moratorium on the Muskrat Falls Hydro-Electric Development Project until NALCOR carries out a gender-based analysis with key community organizations.

"We need a broader plan to prevent and reduce the anticipated negative social consequences not yet addressed by NALCOR," says Petrina Beals, the council's executive director.

"While we see there are opportunities for some community members, we also know that if we don't plan for the negative effects and provide sufficient resources and supports, our community will not be better off once this development is completed. The experience of other communities has shown that these kinds of developments can lead to an increase in violence against women, reduce access to housing, and create barriers to employment due to limited childcare options."

The presentation focused on five key priorities: violence against women, housing, childcare, poverty, mental health, addictions and substance use. The Council described NALCOR's Environmental Impact statement as inadequate because it has largely ignored these socio-economic impacts and made assumptions about the capacity for existing social service agencies to handle these problems without additional resources.

"But we're going to face some huge challenges in supporting women in our community as a result of this development. Our research has shown such large-scale development means we can expect other problems to develop, problems we are not going to be able to respond to effectively given our current experience of limited and strained resources and services."

Ms. Beals says a detailed gender analysis includes baseline research, impact assessment, mitigation and monitoring. "This kind of analysis begins with looking at employment and economic level impacts looks but goes further and also includes those factors affecting the health and social well being of women and their community."

The Mokami Status of Women Council is a feminist, equality-seeking organization operating in Happy Valley-Goose Bay since 1979. FemNorthNet is a network of researchers and community-based organizations focused on researching issues of sustainable economic development and its impact on community health and social well being in northern Canada.

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For more information, please contact ***Petrina Beals, Mokami Status of Women Council, (709) 896-3484***  
***Denise Cole, Women in Resource Development, (709) 899-3730***  
***Noreen Careen, Labrador West Status of Women Council, (709) 944-6562***  
***Website: <http://criaw-icref.ca/femnorthnet>***