

**WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
EVALUATION REPORT: 2003–2006**

September 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An evaluation study of the Women's Leadership Development Programme was carried out to **determine the extent to which its three main objectives have been achieved:**

- Development of leadership capacity
- Increased number of women moving up the career ladder
- Increased number of women at Chief Executive level

The evaluation **methodology** consisted of:

- An online web-based survey of all those who have attended the Programme from 2003 to 2006 (N=75).
- Telephone interviews with a sample of participants from 2004 and 2005, and with programme sponsors and facilitators

The survey had a very impressive 60% response rate, and the major **findings** were:

- Majority of participants had made career changes, including
 - Promotion or actively seeking promotion
 - New roles with increased responsibilities to broaden their experience
 - A considered decision not to make an upwards career move at this time
- A great majority of participants have developed leadership capacity, especially in the areas of:
 - Reflecting on roles, goals, and potential
 - Expanded range of contacts
 - Improved knowledge of other organisations
- The most valuable aspects of the Programme seem to be those that provided interaction with their peers and the opportunity for self-reflection.

- The Programme does not need any substantial changes or additions, according to the survey results, and the overwhelming majority of past participants would recommend the Women's Leadership Development Programme to their colleagues.
- From the telephone interviews, it is evident that the Programme provides a personal learning forum with long-term individual and organisational outcomes. Even with only 75 'graduates' the Programme has created many organisational 'ripple effects'. It is also seen as an important tool for developing leadership capacity within the current Review of Public Administration.

Conclusions:

Although it is true that none of the Programme graduates has yet reached Chief Executive level, substantial progress has been made on the other two programme objectives.

Recommendations:

- Continue to track both short-term and long-term effects by means of an annual survey
- Pre-screen applicants to make sure that they will gain the benefit of this type of learning challenge
- Track organisational 'ripple effects' and publicise examples of good practice
- Strengthen the cross-cultural and international component
- Highlight the Programme's value in building leadership capacity within the current Review of Public Administration
- Build on the best aspects of the Programme to offer a mixed-gender version.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME EVALUATION REPORT: 2003–2006

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Women's Leadership Development Programme was spearheaded by the Women Chief Executives' Group of the Chief Executives' Forum, in order to achieve three main objectives:

- To provide opportunities for senior women to develop themselves as leaders, to enhance their visibility and to enable them to network and influence the wider external environment.
- To develop a programme for senior women to increase the number of women progressing up the career ladder from deputy principal and analogous grades to higher level management positions within the next five years.
- To increase the representation of women at chief executive level and above from its 2003 level of approximately 12% of the public service chief executives in Northern Ireland to 20% in five years and 30% in ten years.

The Programme was launched in 2003, and has been held every year since then. To date, a total of 75 women have attended, from across the Northern Ireland civil service and public service bodies.

1.2 Initial Evaluation Study: 2003

An initial evaluation was carried out after the first offering of the Programme, focusing on three relatively short-term outcomes:

- Participants' personal learning
- The experience of the mentoring process
- System-level effects of the Programme

The findings of the 2003 study were:

- Participants greatly increased their self-confidence and networking skills
- The mentoring process was valuable, but needed minor improvements
- Early indications of organisational 'ripple effects' were identified

The 2003 study also recommended that continuing evaluation be carried out to track the longer-term programme outcomes.

2. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY 2006

The purpose of this next phase of the evaluation process was to build on the findings of the initial report, in order to find out what has happened to the participants since they attended the Programme, and specifically, to what extent the Programme's three main objectives have been achieved.

The study sought to gather both **quantitative** and **qualitative** data, using the following methodology:

<p>Quantitative data:</p> <p>Participants' current grade, promotion and career history in order to track senior women's career progression.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online questionnaire emailed to all 75 participants. Overall response rate = 60%
<p>Qualitative data:</p> <p>Extent to which the Programme has enabled participants to develop themselves as leaders, to enhance their visibility and to enable them to network and influence the wider external environment.</p> <p>System-level effects of the Programme (i.e. organisational 'ripple effects')</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online questionnaire emailed to all 75 participants. • Follow-up telephone interviews with a sample of participants from the 2004 and 2005 groups. • Telephone interviews with Programme sponsors and facilitators.

3. FINDINGS

3.1 Findings: Online survey questionnaire

(See Appendix A for sample survey)

The survey was posted online and emailed to all 75 participants from the past four offerings of the Women's Leadership Development Programme. The response was a very significant 60%, which means that we can assume that the responses are highly representative of the entire sample. The following is a summary of the key findings from each section of the survey questionnaire.

1. What year did you attend the programme?

Year	No. participants	No. responses	%
2003	19	8	42%
2004	20	10	50%
2005	18	14	78%
2006	18	13	72%
TOTALS	75	45	60% overall average

2. What is your current grade?

Grade	2003 N=8	2004 N=10	2005 N=14	2006 N=13
Grade 5	1	1		
Grade 6	3	1	1	
PO6				3
Grade 7	1	4	4	4
PO7			1	
Grade 9		1		
PO10				1
Senior Manager			2	
Senior Manager I		1		
Senior Manager II	2		3	
Senior Professional Officer	1			
Principal Social Worker			1	
Consultant (NHS)		1		
Assistant Director (Administration)		1		
Grade A			1	1
Operations Manager				1
Deputy Principal			1	1
Principal Officer				1
Chief Officer				1

The responses to this question are difficult to interpret, since there are different grading structures between the civil service and the various public service bodies.

For the same reason, participants' entry level data does not provide an easy baseline comparison, since titles and grades are not equivalent across the board.

However, as one would expect, the participants from 2003 and 2004 seem to be higher on the career ladder, although none has yet reached Chief Executive level.

3. What has been the most significant career choice you have made since starting the programme?

The written responses to this question fall into roughly four main categories, as these sample comments illustrate:

Promoted

- *"I have since gained promotion in my current organisation. The support of my mentor has been the key link in the chain for me, her key tips and advice I took on board from just 2 sessions."*
- *"Going for promotion from G7 to G6 and being successful in that venture"*

Actively seeking promotion

- *"I have started looking for positions elsewhere at a more senior level. I have applied for and been interviewed for one post and was third in the selection process."*
- *"Nominating myself for consideration for promotion to the Senior Civil Service"*

New role, new responsibilities, broader experience

- *"Taking on a new role including expanding my management responsibilities"*

- *“I have changed jobs twice since the programme, largely to widen my experience.”*
- *“Ways of working; consolidating my approach to management, this is my first senior management position. Most of all about making time for myself, to plan how I want to work, and where I want to go.”*

Decided not to make an upwards career move at this time

- *“I now work condensed hours which are more acceptable to me from a work/life balance perspective at this time on [sic] my life”.*
- *“To take a year study leave to complete my MBA”*
- *“To stay where I am for the next few years, given the RPA”*

4. Have you changed jobs since starting the programme?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Yes	75%	40%	14%	31%
No	25%	50%	86%	69%
Did not answer		10%		

As one would expect (hope?), there has been considerable job movement for the women who attended the Programme in 2003 and 2004, and a surprisingly high percentage for the class of 2006. The anomaly here, (and throughout the survey results), is the group from 2005.

5. Your current job is....

(N= number who answered ‘Yes’ in Q. 4. Respondents can tick more than one item)

	2003 (N=6)	2004 (N=4)	2005 (N=2)	2006 (N=4)
A promotion	4	3	1	4
A career move/sideways transfer	2	1	1	1
A secondment			2	
The result of a positive decision on your part on make a change.	2	4	1	1

Half of the 2003 respondents and a third of those from 2004 and 2006 have been promoted since attending the Programme. Again, the experience of the 2005 respondents has been different, where only one respondent said that she had been promoted.

6. Have you changed your employer?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Yes		10%		
No	100%	90%	21%	38%
Did not answer			79%	62%

This question may have been misleading, since the responses do not tally with the comments in Question 3, where several respondents said that they had changed organisation. As a result, no useable data was gathered from the supplementary sections of Q.6, which sought to identify the types of organisation to which individuals had moved.

7. To what extent has your participation in the Women's Leadership Development Programme.....

This question sought to gather qualitative opinion data on the extent to which the Programme achieved its first objective (i.e. provide opportunities for senior women to develop themselves as leaders, etc.) Participants were asked to rate a list of personal learning factors using a 5-point scale, where 1 = 'not at all' and 5 = 'very much'.

Percentage of respondents who rated each statement 4 or 5 (Highest scoring items shown in boldface)

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
	%	%	%	%
Boosted your confidence	63	90	57	69
Made you more aware of your abilities, leadership qualities	88	90	71	77
Increased your ability to lead/influence change	75	70	50	62
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, potential	88	80	79	85
Made you more politically aware	63	80	71	38
Improved your networking skills	75	70	57	54
Expanded your range of contacts	88	80	79	85
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond	50	60	57	46
Improved your knowledge of other organisations	75	80	57	85
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries.	63	100	43	62
Developed your ability to work across cultures (N/S/E)	63	30	14	15
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved.	75	100	43	77
Encouraged you to further your career.	50	90	50	77

In nearly every case, a majority of participants gave a score of 4 or 5, and there were very few scores of 1 or 2. (See Appendix C for the full responses to this question) Therefore, it is safe to conclude that the Programme met its personal learning objective, particularly in terms of:

- Reflecting on roles, goals, and personal potential
- Expanding participants’ range of contacts
- Improving participants’ knowledge of other organisations

The least effective personal learning strand seems to have been ‘developing your ability to work across cultures – North/South/East’, which suggests that the international component of the Programme needs to be strengthened.

Once again, the participants from the 2005 group are different, in that they tended to give lower scores than the other groups, and a surprisingly unenthusiastic response to the statement; ‘led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved’ (see Appendix C for complete data).

8. What aspect of the Women’s Leadership Development Programme has been of most value to you?

The comments are scattered, but seem to cluster around those aspects of the Programme that provided interaction with their peers, and the opportunity for self-reflection.

Factors cited by 2 or more respondents

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Learning set	4	2	2	3
Networking, contacts	4	3	8	2
Sharing experience with others	3	3	2	4

Time out for reflection	1	2		3
Identify strengths/weaknesses			3	2

When asked to explain why they had found particular aspects of the Programme valuable, their comments again highlighted the importance of interactive reflection with supportive peers:

- *“I have used the contacts made to help me in my job and my own profession, but I have also benefited from becoming more aware of the role of other parts of the public service, particularly the civil service.”*
- *“It was a non-threatening forum in which I could discuss issues with like-minded people in a challenging environment.”*
- *“When you are the only female in a senior management team, you can lose confidence in yourself and your approach, especially if it is very different to how the organisation has worked before you arrived in. This course re-established my confidence in my ability to think strategically and confirmed that my approach to change would work.”*
- *“Learning set has helped provide space for discussing difficulties and ways to deal with them. The learning set also boosted my confidence because it allowed me to help problem-solve with others using my experience and helped me to realise that I have something worth sharing.”*
- *“Don’t often get a chance to think about myself and where I want to be and certainly not with the positive support of other women in similar situations.”*

9. Anything you would suggest adding to or deleting from the programme?

No significant items recurred in the responses across the four years, and most suggestions came from one person only. The suggestions coming from two or more individuals are summarised below:

Items to add to the programme?	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 N=13)
European dimension	2	1		
Better mentor matching, preparation, improved mentor role	2	1	1	1
More support, guidelines for setting up & running the learning sets	1			2
More contact with politicians, more on political dimension			2	
More on self-presentation			2	
Assessment centre exercises				2
More time for individual feedback in King's Fund session; schedule too tight				2
Nothing needs to be added		3	2	2

Items to delete from the programme?	2003	2004	2005	2006
The London module			2	
Less travel time, more discussion time			2	
Nothing to delete				4

10 Would you recommend this programme to a colleague?

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Yes	100%	100%	86%	92%
No			7% (1 response)	8% (1 response)
Not sure			7% (1 response)	

The overwhelming majority of past participants would recommend the Women’s Leadership Development Programme (and many already have done so). Two of the three individuals who answered “no” or “not sure” qualified their answers with comments reflecting value for money (“*Very expensive for what we got*”) and selection criteria (“*I think it would depend on the person and what their needs are*”).

3.2 Findings: Telephone Interviews

(See Appendix B for interview outline)

Telephone interviews of 20 to 30 minutes were conducted with three participants from the 2004 group and two from the 2005 group. A list of suggested respondents was drawn up by the course facilitator, and an email sent to these individuals asking if they would be willing to be interviewed. Five persons responded, and all were interviewed in late August 2006.

Telephone interviews were also conducted with two of the Programme sponsors from the Chief Executives’ Forum and one of the Programme facilitators.

➤ *Overall value of the Programme: more than just career progression*

From the interview conversations, it is clear that many participants have moved up as a result of the Programme. (*“Four in our cohort made significant moves during the programme”*) But in addition to the kinds of changes that appear on the organisation chart, the Programme has had a profound impact on the way the participants think about themselves and their potential careers within the public service. *“The main benefits of the course were to help us think things through, to build confidence, networks, exposure, and contacts.”* For some, this meant raising their profile within their own organisation. As one participant told me, *“I’m better skilled now, and my colleagues have noticed this and remarked on it”*. For another individual, the Programme provided her with *“the tools and the approach”* to look for a career move outside her organisation. And in more than one instance, the Programme helped women decide not to look for a promotion at present, perhaps because of the RPA, or because of family commitments. But this does not mean that they have dropped off the career ladder forever, far from it: *“I will move up in the future, but the time isn’t right just now. Thanks to the programme, I’m better prepared – it’s helped my decision-making process”*.

The Programme sponsors highlighted a number of success factors in addition to the promotion statistics, i.e.:

- The learning groups have continued to meet
- A significant number of women want to attend the Programme
- The mentor/mentee coaching has made a major contribution
- Heightened awareness in the wider public sector of the role of women, and of the Women Chief Executives’ Forum.
- Networking links across the wider public sector
- Careers have progressed in breadth and depth, as well as upwards

➤ *Organisational ‘ripple effects’: the challenge of critical mass*

Seventy-five women have attended the Programme to date, and they have been drawn from all sections of the civil service/public service. In most cases, participants are the only ones in their organisation to have been exposed to this type of learning event, so there is a danger that the learning will be limited to the individuals themselves, unless they can find a way to bring it back to their workplace.

One of the interviewees felt that because the course was about *“introspection, not knowledge”*, there was little that she was able to bring back and use in her organisation. This was a minority viewpoint, however. Each of the other interviewees had a different example of how she had been able to create both minor and major changes as a result of the Programme. The MBTI was a *“rude awakening”*, but helped women see themselves from the outside, and adjust their leadership style if necessary. Some typical comments reflect this self-knowledge in action:

“I now have ways of listening to take the other stakeholders with me”.

“My approach is to work ‘with’, not just to ‘blow the whistle’, and that style works well in this particular role within a very macho organisation. I’m now more conscious of what I’m doing.”

“I’m more aware of how I’m perceived, and how others react to me, so my leadership style has changed.”

In one significant case, a participant reported that she had prepared a synopsis of the learning points from the Programme, and debriefed her Director and Chief Executive when she returned. She then went on to persuade the entire senior management team (including the Chief

Executive) to undertake a management development programme themselves. She has sourced an external consultant, and organised an in-house programme that will start with the MBTI.

Networking across sectors has been one of the most powerful learning outcomes for programme participants. At a personal level, participants *“have the confidence to know how to network (at a conference), how to approach other people and introduce yourself, how to take the first step”*. One of the interviewees who had been appointed President of her professional association in Northern Ireland, saw her role differently as a result of the Women’s Leadership Development Programme, and went out of her way to make links with her counterparts in the UK and the Republic. As a result, she has now been elected to her association’s international committee, so her network circle has expanded even further.

➤ ***Career management and the Review of Public Administration***

Finally, several interviewees referred to the ongoing Review of Public Administration, and the uncertainty this process has created about future career opportunities. Attending the Women’s Leadership Development Programme has given participants an understanding of this process, and helped them *“survive”* and even *“navigate”* the RPA.

The sponsors pointed out that Nigel Hamilton’s continuing support has been crucial to the success of the Programme, and that as a result, there is an awareness of the Programme at senior level, and an interest in the women graduates and what they have done. One sponsor described the Programme as *“about leadership, not ‘how to manage people’*”, and sees it a vehicle for eventually changing the civil service leadership style. As such, there is a need for *“continuous support for this way of learning”*, especially within the context of the Review of Public Administration, where *“this programme is vital to ensure that women are well placed and confident in facing the change”*.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Significant short-term and long-term effects

The Women's Leadership Development Programme has clearly helped women to progress in their careers, through taking part in an innovative, challenging, and reflective learning process. As one participant said *"The Programme was the best I've ever done. It wasn't a 'course'. The free flow was the challenge I needed. I was invigorated, energised and enriched"*.

This powerful personal learning experience has created organisational ripple effects ranging from changed leadership styles to ongoing senior management team development activities, inspired by the Women's Leadership Development Programme.

Recommendations

An annual web-based survey to all participants

Regular tracking of the participants' careers should continue, in order to identify the long-term impact of this Programme. This could be done via an annual web-based survey (similar to the one used for this study), which provides a quick and easy way of gathering individual data. The 2006 survey has shown which questions need to be reworded in the future in order to eliminate ambiguous responses.

Better baseline data re grades and job responsibilities

It would also be useful to gather more robust baseline data about participants' grades as well as their (less helpful) job titles. This would allow better tracking of their subsequent career progression.

4.2 Participants need to be ready for this type of learning

The Women's Leadership Development Programme is not a course in the traditional sense, and participants must be willing to take part in a self-reflective, open-ended learning experience, where they are expected to share experiences with peers. For some participants (particularly in the 2005 group, I would suspect) this type of learning format may have seemed frustratingly unstructured.

Recommendation:

Telephone pre-screening of applicants

Course facilitators should be able to pre-screen applicants via a brief telephone conversation, in order to clarify the learning challenges and determine whether participants will be able to gain full value from the Programme.

4.3 A wide variety of ripple effects

This survey has identified some of the examples of the impact of this programme at the organisational level. These effects can often be detected only after each programme has finished and participants have returned to their workplace. It is important to try to capture these examples, since they will help build up a picture of the ways in which this programme has affected leadership styles and cultures across the wider public service in Northern Ireland.

Recommendations:

Publicise 'good practice'

Gather “good practice” stories by profiling programme graduates via e-newsletter, or by inviting graduates to return as programme speakers.

Senior management debriefing

Encourage participants to debrief their Chief Executive when they return from the Programme, so that senior management is aware of what participants have learned, and thus able to pave the way for significant ripple effects.

4.4 Keeping the Programme up to date : the cross-cultural aspect

Although participants did not see a need to make significant changes to the Programme (see Questions 8 and 9), the responses to the item in Question 7 about the ability to work across cultures suggest that the international aspect of the Programme needs to be strengthened. The cross-cultural element is unique to this programme in that it helps participants connect with the wider environment beyond Northern Ireland.

Recommendation:

Extend the international links

The Programme already includes links with the Irish Republic and with mainstream organisations in Britain, but it would be useful to look for European links as well, in order to emphasise the importance of a global perspective.

4.5 A tool for navigating the RPA

In this period of dramatic change within the Northern Ireland public service, the Women’s Leadership Development Programme provides a critical mechanism for building dynamic leadership for a modernised public service. The Programme provides a working

example of the integration of public services, and highlights the importance of a strategic approach to personal career planning.

Recommendation:

Highlight the Programme's RPA value

Make a strong link in the Programme to the current RPA in order to raise awareness of future career choices, so that women can take advantage of opportunities that arise, and be ready to take proactive leadership roles in the change process.

4.6 A model for leadership development throughout the wider public service

The Women's Leadership Development Programme has provided an innovative model for building public service leadership capacity. However, its impact is limited by the lack of 'critical mass' if it is offered to women only. Perhaps it is time to widen the base, while still maintaining the women-only Programme.

Recommendation:

A mixed-gender pilot project

With the support of the Chief Executives' Forum, it should be possible to build on the best aspects of the Women's Leadership Development Programme in order to offer a similar programme to a mixed gender audience.

In summary, it is clear from this study that substantial progress has been made on two of the three programme objectives. It is true that none of the participants has yet been promoted to Chief Executive level, so the targets set in 2003 may have been overly-ambitious. However, the

Programme has already produced significant effects for both the participants and their organisations:

- Development of personal leadership capacity and the confidence to build connections across the wider public service
- Career development in terms of breadth and depth, as well as upwards progression.
- Personal learning used to influence change and create organisational 'ripple effects' when participants return to their workplaces.

Finally, the Women's Leadership Development Programme has exceeded its original objectives in two important aspects:

- Preparing leaders for a modernised public service post-RPA
- Providing a model for innovative leadership development which could be applied to all senior managers, both men and women.

**APPENDIX A:
ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What year did you attend the Women's Leadership Development Programme?

2003 2004 2005 2006

2. What is your current position? _____

Grade? _____

3. What has been the most significant career choice you have made since you started the Programme?

4. Have you changed jobs since you started the programme?

Yes No (If NO, go to Q. 7)

5. Your current job: Is it (tick one or several boxes)

A promotion

A career move/sideways transfer

A secondment

The result of a positive decision on your part to make a change

6. Have you changed your employer?

Yes No (If NO, go to Q7)

If YES, What sector are you working in? (Tick one box)

Public

Private

Voluntary & Community

If **PUBLIC** sector, which part (tick one box)

- Government
- Local government
- Health service
- Education
- Housing
- Other?

What is the name of your current organisation?

7. To what extent has your participation in the Women’s Leadership Development Programme...

	Not at all			Very much	
	1	2	3	4	5
Served to boost your confidence					
Made you more self aware, particularly of your abilities and leadership qualities					
Increased your ability to lead/influence change					
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals and potential					
Made you more politically aware					
Improved your networking skills					
Expanded your range of contacts					
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond					
Improved your knowledge of other organisations					

Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries					
Developed your ability to work across cultures (N/S/E)					
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved					
Encouraged you to further your career					

8. What aspect of the Women’s Leadership Programme has proved of most value to you?

Why?

9. Is there anything you would suggest adding to or including in the Programme?

Deleting from the Programme?

10. Would you recommend the Programme to a colleague?

Yes No

Thank you very much for your feedback.

APPENDIX B: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW OUTLINE

The survey results have shown that the Women's Leadership Development Programme has certainly had strong results in terms of personal development and personal effectiveness (confidence, visibility, networking, self-awareness). I'd like to find out more about the organisational effects of the programme, i.e.

- 1. In your opinion, has the programme helped women move forward in their careers more quickly than would have been the case without the programme?*
- 2. What effect (if any) has the programme had on the organisational climate/attitude towards women in leadership roles within the Northern Ireland public service?*
- 3. Has the programme affected the leadership style/culture within the Northern Ireland public service in any way?*
- 4. Any other organisational "ripple effects" from the programme?*

**APPENDIX C:
SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES**

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: WEB QUESTIONNAIRE SUMMARY

Response rate = 60%

1. What year did you attend the programme? (responses broken down by year)

2. What is your current grade?

Grade	2003 N=8	2004 N=10	2005 N=14	2006 N=13
Grade 5	1	1		
Grade 6	3	1	1	
PO6				3
Grade 7	1	4	4	4
PO7			1	
Grade 9		1		
PO10				1
Senior Manager			2	
Senior Manager I		1		
Senior Manager II	2		3	
Senior Professional Officer	1			
Principal Social Worker			1	
Consultant (NHS)		1		
Assistant Director (Administration)		1		
Grade A			1	1
Operations Manager				1
Deputy Principal			1	1
Principal Officer				1
Chief Officer				1

3. What has been the most significant career choice you have made since starting the programme?

2003

Promotion, new job

- Taking up new Grade 6 post
- Going for promotion from G7 to G6 and being successful in that venture
- To apply for NICS senior civil service external competition

New role, broaden experience

- Broaden experience
- Taking on a new role including expanding my management responsibilities
- Complete change of role and organisation

In same role

- I am in the same position
- I moved to my present post just prior to commencing the course, and have remained in same post

2004**Promotion, new job**

- I have started looking for positions elsewhere at a more senior level. I have applied for and been interviewed for one post and was third in the selection process.
- I applied and was successful in the competition for my present position.
- Nominating myself for consideration for promotion to the Senior Civil Service in Spring/Summer 2004.

New role, broaden experience

- Changing organisations
- Encouraged my CEO to put our whole SMT through a joint leadership development programme. Taken on a much more focused/forward leadership role alongside my CEO.
- I now work condensed hours which are more acceptable to me from a work/life balance perspective at this time on [sic] my life.
- I have changed jobs twice since the programme, largely to widen my experience.

In same role

- N/A
- Remain in post
- Not seeking promotion to Senior Management Team position

2005**Promotion, new job**

- Dealing with a role and job issue regarding my grading and to be prepared to apply for an appropriate post paying attention to time.
- To change my role and take up my current position.
- Moving to this post.

New role, broaden experience

- I will need to broaden my experience within the next 2 years.
- Whether to stay in present post or seek a career development move.
- Deciding to stay with Social Services through and in the aftermath of RPA
- To take a year study leave to complete my MBA
- Am still undertaking programme and am hoping to consolidate my current position which I have been in for 1 ½ years.
- Whilst not moving out of the NICS I now have decided that I shouldn't rule that out.

In same role

- To stay where I am in organisation
- N/A(2)
- When I started the programme in Feb 2005, I had only been appointed to my current post in the previous Nov on promotion from another NDPB.
- I have not changed my job since completing the programme.

2006

Promotion, new job

- It has provided me with the reassurance that if you want to make a career change or progress within current organisation that the choice is your own. I have since gained promotion in my current organisation—taking up a post on 1/7/06 as Principal Officer. The support of my mentor has been the key link in the chain for me, her key tips and advice I took on board from just 2 sessions.
- Accepting the job as Head of Urban Development
- To apply for another job, also to approach my chief executive about a serious human resources issue which involved him directly.
- I am about to move on promotion to Head of Legislation, Grade 6 OFMDFM.

New role, broaden experience

- To address serious line management issues in my organisation.
- Starting to look out for new career opportunities
- Deciding that it would be a good idea to look at the possibility of other positions which would not be pure legal positions, but in which a legal background would be of benefit.
- Ways of working; consolidating my approach to management, this is my first senior management position. Most of all about making time for myself, to plan how I want to work, and where I want to go.

In same role

- None to date (3)
- To stay where I am for the next few years, given the RPA
- None as yet; more time needed for reflection which it has certainly stimulated.

4. Have you changed jobs since starting the programme?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Yes	75%	40%	14%	31%
No	25%	50%	86%	69%
Did not answer		10%		

5. Your current job is....

(N= number who answered 'Yes' in Q. 4. Respondents can tick more than one item)

	2003 (N=6)	2004 (N=4)	2005 (N=2)	2006 (N=4)
A promotion	4	3	1	4
A career move/sideways transfer	2	1	1	1
A secondment			2	
The result of a positive decision on your part on make a change.	2	4	1	1

6. Have you changed your employer?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Yes		10%		
No	100%	90%	21%	38%
Did not answer			79%	62%

7. To what extent has your participation in WLDP....

(Percentage of respondents who scored 4 or 5 on a 5 point scale , where 1= “Not at all” and 5 = “Very much”)

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
	%	%	%	%
Boosted your confidence	63	90	57	69
Made you more aware..of your abilities, leadership qualities	88	90	71	77
Increased your ability to lead/influence change	75	70	50	62
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, potential	88	80	79	85
Made you more politically aware	63	80	71	38
Improved your networking skills	75	70	57	54
Expanded your range of contacts	88	80	79	85
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond	50	60	57	46
Improved your knowledge of other organisations	75	80	57	85
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries.	63	100	43	62
Developed your ability to work across cultures (N/S/E)	63	30	14	15
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved.	75	100	43	77
Encouraged you to further your career.	50	90	50	77

Total number of responses broken out by year

2003

	1	2	3	4	5
Served to boost your confidence		1	11	111	11
Made you more aware, particularly of your abilities and leadership qualities			1	111111	1
Increased your ability to lead/influence change			11	11111	1
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, and potential				11111	111
Made you more politically aware			111	1	1111
Improved your networking skills		1	1	11	1111
Expanded your range of contacts		1		111	1111
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond?		1	111	111	1
Improved your knowledge of other organisations			11	1111	11
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries?		1	11	1111	1
Developed your ability to work across cultures (North/south/East)	1	1	1	1111	1
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved	1		1	1111	11
Encouraged you to further your career?		1	111	1	111

2004

	1	2	3	4	5
Served to boost your confidence			1	11111111	1
Made you more aware, particularly of your abilities and leadership qualities				11111111	1
Increased your ability to lead/influence change			111	111111	1
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, and potential			11	111	11111
Made you more politically aware	1		1	1111111	1
Improved your networking skills			111	111111	1
Expanded your range of contacts			11	1111	1111
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond?		1	111	111111	
Improved your knowledge of other organisations			11	11111	111
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries?				111111111	1
Developed your ability to work across cultures (North/south/East)		11	11111	111	
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved				11111111	11
Encouraged you to further your career?			1	11111111	1

2005

	1	2	3	4	5
Served to boost your confidence			111111	111111	11
Made you more aware, particularly of your abilities and leadership qualities			1111	1111111	111
Increased your ability to lead/influence change			1111111	11111	11
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, and potential			111	111111	11111
Made you more politically aware		1	111	1111111	111
Improved your networking skills		1	11111	1111111	1
Expanded your range of contacts			111	111111	11111
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond?			111111	11111111	
Improved your knowledge of other organisations			111111	11111	111
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries?			11111111	111111	
Developed your ability to work across cultures (North/south/East)		1	11111111 111	11	
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved			11111111	1111	11
Encouraged you to further your career?			1111111	1111	111

2006

	1	2	3	4	5
Served to boost your confidence	1	1	11	11111	1111
Made you more aware, particularly of your abilities and leadership qualities			111	11111	11111
Increased your ability to lead/influence change	1		1111	1111111	1
Led you to reflect on your roles, goals, and potential			11	1111	111111 1
Made you more politically aware	1	111	1111	111	11
Improved your networking skills	1		11111	111111	1
Expanded your range of contacts			11	111111	11111
Led you to raise your profile within your organisation and beyond?	1	1	11111	111	111
Improved your knowledge of other organisations	1		1	11111111 1	11
Developed your ability to work across organisational boundaries?	1		1111	1111111	1
Developed your ability to work across cultures (North/south/East)	1	11	111111 11	1	1
Led you to think more strategically about what you and your organisation are about and the outcomes to be achieved	1	1	1	111111	1111
Encouraged you to further your career?		1	11	1111	111111

8. What aspect of the Women’s Leadership Development Programme has been of most value to you?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Time out for reflection	1	2		3
Leadership styles	1	2		
Mentoring	1		2	1
Learning set	4	2	2	3
Networking , contacts	4	3	8	2
Sharing experience with other women leaders	3	3	2	4
Confidence building	1	2		
Team sessions	1			
Understanding other organisations	1			
Self management		1		
360 degree feedback			1	
Residentials			1	2
Exposure to political world			1	
Learn about NI public sector			1	
Identify strengths and weaknesses, self knowledge			3	2
MBTI			2	2
Safe environment			1	1
Image/voice projection			1	1
King’s Fund session				1
Irish Embassy				1
Didn’t find programme of value			1	

Why? (The following is a selection of representative quotes)

- *I have used the contacts made to help me in my job and own profession, but I have also benefited from becoming more aware of the role of other parts of the public service, particularly the civil service.*
- *It was a non-threatening forum in which I could discuss issues with like minded people in a challenging environment.*
- *When you are the only female in a senior management team, you can lose confidence in yourself and your approach, especially if it is very different to how the organisation has worked before you arrived in. This course re-established my confidence in my ability to think strategically and confirmed that my approach to change would work.*
- *A mixture of practical leadership development and wonderful exposure to the political and public sector framework.*
- *I can call on these contacts when I need to – to seek advice, guidance, etc. or even just to let off steam in a ‘secure’ environment.*
- *Mentoring: 1:1 contact; exposed to mentor’s broader network of contacts; focused & structured meetings; agreed actions.*
- *Learning set has helped provide space for discussing difficulties and ways to deal with them. The learning set also boosted my confidence because it allowed me to help problem-solve with others using my experience and helped me to realise that I have something worth sharing.*
- *Don’t often get a chance to think about myself and where I want to be and certainly not with the positive support of other women in similar situations.*
- *I used the Myers Briggs exercise as the basis for a very effective team building exercise which made a set of people with very conflicting personality types more understanding and forgiving of one another.*
- *The three-day residential gave me the opportunity to take a step back and consider what I really want out of life from a professional and personal point of view. It also allowed me to stop thinking about success in the narrow confines of my current career path and to think about what I really wanted to do.*
- *It was interesting to learn that successful women had consciously developed their knowledge and skills without any promise of tangible reward, but that this had often been the critical factor in securing jobs, particularly jobs outside their own specialism.*

9. Anything you would suggest adding to the programme?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
European dimension	2	1		
Better mentor matching, improved mentor role, better preparation	2	1	1	1
Male and female mentors,	1			
Peer mentoring			1	
More support for setting up/running the Learning Sets; guidelines	1			2
Offer of facilitation for learning sets			1	
Ongoing followup/conferences	1			1
More opportunity for debate & discussion with other participants	1	1		
Emphasise external focus, overcome tendency to be insular		1		
Leader's role re. team effectiveness (e.g. work/life balance)		1		
Publicise benefits of this programme to senior managers in the Service		1		
More contact with politicians, more on political dimension			2	
More local input			1	
1:1 with course directors at end, plus one year later			1	
1:1 counselling on MBTI exercise			1	
More on self-presentation			2	
More on networking skills			1	
Assessment centre exercises				2
More time for individual feedback in King's Fund session; schedule too tight				2
Olivier Mythodrama				1
Winding-down session at close of 3-day residential				1
Nothing		3	2	2

Anything to delete?

	2003 (N=8)	2004 (N=10)	2005 (N=14)	2006 (N=13)
Reduce outside speaker input to create more discussion time,	1			
Tighter time control of speakers		1		
Shorter initial residential (1 overnight only)		1		1
Reduce number of residentials, create more workshop events			1	
The London module			2	
Less travel time, more discussion time			2	
Mentoring			1	
Bringing 'guests' to dinner (cuts into networking time)			1	
The drama coach session in London				1
Nothing				4

10 Would you recommend this programme to a colleague?

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Yes	100%	100%	86%	92%
No			7% (1 response)	8% (1 response)
Not sure			7% (1 response)	