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## **Appendix E: Labour Market Partner Group Report Summaries**

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The following are summaries of four reports Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) commissioned on labour market partner groups (LMPGs) and equity groups to determine the implications of Bill C-112 on these groups' employment and training requirements. The summaries were obtained from the HRDC publication, *Labour Market Profile: Toronto Training Board— Area #9*, June 1997. It was prepared by Michael Di Trani, Economist; and Barry Caven, Debbie James and Ailsa Mulla, Labour Market Information Analysts, HRDC, Toronto, Ontario.

Two more reports were produced but executive summaries are not included in the above report. These reports are:

- ◆ HRDC's *Visibly Invisible: A Survey of the Employment Training Needs of Canadian Born Visible Minorities in Metropolitan Toronto* (Study on employment services) prepared by Joyette Consulting Services and Rexdale Microskills (March 1998).
- ◆ HRDC's *The Will to Work: An Employment Related Service Needs Assessment for Persons with Disabilities in Metropolitan Toronto* (Study on employment services) prepared by GGA Management Consultants (Toronto, May 1997). Contact: Deborah Briggs, Lead Director— Persons with Disabilities, Human Resources Development Canada, Metropolitan Toronto.

For more information on the reports we suggest that you contact HRDC or the authors.

### **Report Summary: *ACTEW Survey of Employment and Training Services for Women in Metro Toronto***

prepared for HRDC  
by A-Z Learning Associates  
January 13, 1997

This study examines women's employment and training services. It provides information on current services, gaps in service and the existing continuum of services, as well as assessing the impact of discontinuation of program funding. Recommendations are made on how the needs of women can best be met under the new HRIF guidelines of HRDC.

#### ***Section One: The Unique Position of Women as Job Seekers***

##### **A. THE CONTRADICTIONARY SOCIETAL ROLES OF WOMEN**

The role of many women as caregivers calls for a reactive approach to problem solving rather than a pro-active one. By contrast, the client-centred model for finding and keeping a job calls for an entrepreneurial spirit of independence and self-reliance, a difficult role for many women to play.

## B. THE CHANGING NATURE OF WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

Women are finding that the occupations in which they have traditionally found employment are disappearing or changing rapidly. The difficulties they experience, in upgrading their skills and looking for work in non-traditional areas, include finding dependable day care, re-evaluating their skills, looking for new types of work, and moving from a reactive to pro-active mode.

There are six areas that illustrate the changes and new demands affecting women's training needs:

1. Ever-changing business technologies
2. The need for continuous learning
3. Different ways of finding work (the project manager approach)
4. Different ways of advancing
5. Different modes of being employed, including self-employment and entrepreneur, part-time and contract work
6. Changing occupations and a broadened vision of career paths

### ***Section Two: What We Heard in the Focus Groups***

#### A. DESCRIPTION OF THE FOCUS GROUPS

Women were interviewed who were in four programs, including YWCA LEAP, YWCA Working Skills for Women Assessment, Dixon Hall STEPUP, and Humber WIT.

#### B. WHAT WE HEARD IN FOCUS GROUPS

The women described the programs as empowering, allowing them to take control of their lives and focus on career paths. However, they emphasized their need for the following tools and resources:

- ◆ information, readily accessible and broad in scope,
- ◆ adequate financial support, enough to access training and meet basic needs,
- ◆ programs designed to provide knowledge and tools that help them make their own choices,
- ◆ a supportive learning environment,
- ◆ support in planning and executing long term goals,

- ◆ and a continuous learning environment designed for the special needs of women.

### ***Section Three: The Five Competencies***

#### WHAT A CLIENT-CENTRED SERVICE SHOULD OFFER: THE FIVE COMPETENCIES

People looking for work need to be competent in five areas to successfully find and keep a job. These are:

1. the ability to decide on a career or occupation
2. having the skills necessary to be successful in the chosen career or occupation and acquiring experience in using the skills
3. the ability to search for a job
4. the ability to maintain employment
5. the ability to find and access the resources to master the first four competencies.

If a client lacks one or more of these competencies, the HRCC or its partner must decide if it is due to lack of skills and/or lack of tools and resources.

### ***Section Four: Employment Training Services***

#### A. SURVEY OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

##### *Community-Based Training Programs*

The interviews were conducted with Rexdale Microskills, TimesChange Women's Employment Centre, STEP UP Program, and Skills for Change.

What they do best: Community-based programs give women an almost complete set of job searching skills in a supportive environment, especially disadvantaged women and new immigrants.

What they do not do: They do not have the resources to provide a variety of professional skills.

##### *Private Training Companies*

Interviews were with York University Corporate Computer Studies, offering one full time computer training program, and two private trainers focusing on individual skill development, The Drake Institute and The Academy of Learning.

What they do best: Private training companies respond to market demand, keeping up with what are the most popular needs of the business commu-

nity. They invest heavily in equipment and training materials, and offer a variety of learning methods. The students in E.I. benefit from being in the same learning situations as people already employed.

What they do not do well: They cannot provide the full range of competencies needed by most women looking for work.

### *Community Colleges*

Interviews were with Humber College WIT program and George Brown College Employment and Training Services, involved in three partnerships with HRDC.

What they do best: An immense array of resources are available. The lengthy and costly courses offer professional certification.

What they do not do: Short term programs are few. The locations may be hard to reach or intimidating, and study arrangements inflexible.

### B. GAPS IN SERVICES

1. Resources— women found insufficient information in resource centres.
2. Basic needs— women who couldn't meet basic survival needs, could not be successful in their job search.
3. Financial resources— OSAP was not practical as women could not repay loan within tight time frames.
4. Day care— a significant obstacle especially for low-budget community based programs.
5. Job search support— not offered, yet essential to help women through this challenging phase.
6. Length of programs— insufficient range of short, and long, programs
7. Self-employment programs— despite labour market trend, such programs not readily available.

### ***Section Five: Recommendations***

#### 1. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HRCC'S

Ease access to information, encourage publication of comprehensive course guides. Purchase training of varying lengths, covering the competencies, and fitting into a continuum. Programs in non-traditional areas and self employment are needed.

#### 2. HRCC'S AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO SERVICE DELIVERY PARTNERS

Develop a continuum of training opportunities from pre-employment to more advanced skills, with particular emphasis on needs of women. Ensure resource centres have up-to-date linkages.

### 3. MEETING WOMEN'S SPECIAL NEEDS

Support women-only programs and a prior learning assessment. Support day care in neighbourhood learning centres and for duration of a job search project. Support non-traditional training methods such as learning clubs, self-paced learning, and advanced learning technologies with more flexible schedules.

### 4. POLICY SUPPORT FOR LIFE-LONG LEARNING

Ensure people remain employed by providing flexible funding, and supporting long-term programs with follow-up. Negotiate with province to provide loans for lengthy programs to be paid back once client is working. Support training and retraining by employers. Use neighbourhood learning centres to extend retraining opportunities.

## **Report Summary: *Market Analysis of Employment Needs and Services for Youth in Metro Toronto***

prepared for HRDC  
by EDUCON Marketing & Research Systems  
January 1997

To help with the implementation of the operational aspects of the *Employment Insurance Act*, HRDC funded this study to look at the youth employment situation in the Toronto region. The report summarized the impact of the new *E.I. Act* on youth employment service agencies. It concluded with recommendations on how the youth employment service agencies could work together to better address employment needs of youth, within the confines of the new *Act*. The new *Act* embodies a number of key operational concepts, such as forming partnerships across governments, communities and the private sector; empowering the client to identify his or her employment needs; focusing resources on locally-identified needs; reducing overlap and redundancy; and evaluating program success to ensure the maximization of resources.

Based on 1994 statistics, the youth population, aged 15–24 years, in Metro Toronto was 13% of the total population of the region. Unemployment rates for youth in 1994 ranged from 26.5% for those with high school to 8% for university graduates. These rates have increased significantly from the late 1980's. Despite the economic recovery, youth are continuing to experience a higher rate of unemployment compared to the total population of Metro Toronto. To enhance their prospects of employment, many young people are prolonging their attendance in school. However, stiff competition for jobs, lack of job experience and educational programs not targeted to

high demand skills, create barriers. Graduates are finding it difficult, taking up to two years to find employment in their field.

Under the new regulations of the *E.I. Act*, eligibility of youth for benefits will decline. Youth may, or may not, be targeted by local HRCCs in their annual business plan. Financial support for agencies will become more volatile, with increased competition for funding of contracts and budget cuts. A further concern arises with the withdrawal by HRDC from provision of labour market training over the next three years.

Research, funded by HRDC in Metro Toronto, consisted of questionnaires to 24 youth agencies, and interviews, discussion groups and focus groups with a sample of funders, agency staff and youth clients.

Most agencies have three clear service objectives: they assist youth in becoming self sufficient in obtaining employment, they provide support to marginalized and disadvantage youth in employment activity and they reach out to disadvantaged youth to facilitate access to support and services.

The agencies target unemployed youth aged 16–24 with barriers to employment. Half of the agencies provide Metro-wide services and half have a community focus. Almost 60% indicate some partnership activity with other youth service providers. The majority of funding comes from the provincial government.

Where statistics are reliable, just over 16,000 young people received some form of service in one year ending in March 1996. Almost half had between grades 9 and 11 and gender was equally split. Visible minorities formed 70% of group. Just over one third had no reported source of income. Outcomes were approximately 30% employed, 30% in educational programs, 15% in the Futures Program and 11% unemployed at the three-month mark.

## ***Recommendations***

### 1. THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Due to limited funding, some agencies lack consistent, statistical mechanisms for tracking unemployed youth. Because of lack of co-ordination among agencies, data is not comparable, or complete, for recording client intakes, profiles and outcomes. This calls for a standardized computer information system that will link reported youth activities across Metro. It should identify strengths and gaps in the system, track youth, evaluate the impact of programs, and assist with strategic program planning.

### 2. PROCESS ASSESSMENT

To resolve duplication of assessment of youth across some of the employment service agencies, there is a need to develop guidelines and criteria, and a standardized assessment form to be used by these agencies.

### 3. CO-ORDINATION

Strategic co-ordination of youth employment services is nearly non-existent. There needs to be better co-ordination and integration of the agencies, in terms of information sharing and consultation on assessments, referrals, and employment marketing. Areas of overlap and duplication need to be identified.

The measuring of effectiveness indicators and the value-added of programming is not consistently conducted across some of the agencies. To be eligible for funding, these agencies need to develop measurable outcome indicators to indicate their programs are value-added. The development of a common measurement tool to address the effectiveness of program outcomes would enhance program effectiveness among agencies.

### 4. PARTNERSHIPS

There is a need for partnerships among agencies and confusion exists over the concept of partnering. To close service gaps and maintain a continuity of service, agencies need to develop partnerships with various levels of government and private sector corporations.

#### **Report Summary: *Professional Training Needs Assessment for Metropolitan Toronto Francophone Youth (age 16–24), Women, Visible Minorities and People with Disabilities***

prepared for HRDC  
by Centre francophone du Toronto metropolitan  
March 1997

#### ***Community Profile***

##### ONTARIO

Statistics Canada reported a Francophone population of 547,280 in Ontario in 1991, or 5.43% of the total provincial population. Central Ontario Region had 128,245 Francophones or 1.98%.

##### GREATER TORONTO AREA

The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, including its six boroughs, had 40,570 Francophones or 1.78%. Additional Francophone people, from the surrounding area, however, commute to the city to use its services.

In a 1994 study prepared by Rene Guindon, of the Societe d'etudes et de conseil ACORD incorporee, a thorough and up-to-date sociodemographic profile of Francophones living in the GTA was completed. Guindon found that Francophones, coming from a variety of sociocultural backgrounds, do not necessarily share the same values, beliefs, and behaviours. Nearly one out of three Francophones was born outside Canada. Europe accounted for

47.5% of the immigrants, with Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Australia and Mauritius accounting for the rest. The visible minority Francophones represented 20.2% or one in five of all Francophones. Of the French population in GTA, Guindon reported that 5.3% were unable to function in English at all.

The 1991 Statistics Canada survey showed that Francophones are a geographically mobile group, with 57.3% of them having relocated in the past five years. With regard to age, 16.1% of the Francophone community constituted either school age children or older adults over 60 years of age.

### ***Study of the Needs for Professional Training Services***

#### GOALS OF THE STUDY

The study looks at the professional training needs for four groups of Francophones, women, persons of visible minority, youth (16–24 years old), and persons with disabilities. It identifies existing French professional training programs and services, and gaps, and makes recommendations.

#### METHODOLOGY

*Community Questionnaire:* Personal interviews were conducted with 67 people. Just under half of the group were considering a career change, for a better salary or more interesting work. Twenty seven questionnaires were distributed to Francophone organizations.

Very few professional training programs are offered in French. But most students, enrolled in high school, college, and university courses, had the opportunity to take courses in French or submit papers in French.

Mostly women and persons of visible minority have a negative feeling towards training while young people consider training as an asset to career choice.

The four groups recommended four specific actions for any Francophones seeking employment. These included taking English classes, registering for training courses, enrolling in computer classes, and receiving career counselling. As the people who seek training suffer financial constraints, the importance of programs near public transit, and the provision of transit expenses, as a related service to students, prevailed.

French professional training programs tend to be unknown, as illustrated by 83.6% of respondents having no knowledge of them. The information may not exist or is difficult to find, and may be in English only. Employment office personnel usually speak only English. Also, there is no information in the media.

*Focus Groups:* In this study, users of existing programs formed focus groups. In deciding on a program, these individuals had obtained information from friends and the Francophone network in Toronto. Although they benefited

from counselling services, upgrading and job search training, individually or in small groups, it was not offered regularly. No permanent Francophone counselling structure was in place.

The greatest obstacle in job search, determined by the focus groups, was insufficient spending money. In addition, lack of Canadian experience, requirements for Canadian certification, knowledge of the English language, and the need for references, were barriers. Newcomers experienced additional difficulty with settlement issues and systemic discrimination.

*Francophone Organizations:* Twenty seven questionnaires were distributed to Francophone organizations. They submitted an outline of their training programs and a forecast of occupations with good employment prospects.

### ***Recommendations***

1. That HRDC in Metro Toronto (hereafter called HRDC) formulate an action plan to ensure a continuum of professional training programs and services for Francophones.
2. That HRDC offer French service in areas of employment insurance, job hunting and professional training.
3. That HRDC ensure access to French service across Toronto through visibility of service, a public marketing campaign, and technological access to the various resource centres.
4. That HRDC consider creating a Resource Centre offering specialized French services for youth, disabled persons, women and visible minorities, and for launching business ventures.
5. That HRDC foster collaboration to establish a continuum of programs, including resource centres, career counselling, job search services, and networking opportunities.
6. That HRDC create linkages with educational institutions and employers to match their needs. Organizations will be given responsibility to develop projects and French programs for their particular clientele, and will work in partnership with educational institutions to establish them.
7. That HRDC facilitate the creation and ongoing training in basic and advanced language classes, and programs in refresher and specialized vocabulary courses.
8. That HRDC facilitate establishment of programs for Francophones starting up small businesses.
9. That the professional training committee, composed of agencies, organizations and government representatives, continue to meet with the goal of creating a network and informing HRDC of the needs of the Francophone community.

## **Report Summary: *Metro Toronto Immigrant Employment Services Review***

prepared for HRDC  
by Annamaria Menozzi & Associates  
& Quail Community Consulting  
January 1997

### ***Summary of discussions***

#### 1. TRAINEES AND GRADUATES

Six focus groups were held with 145 trainees and graduates of six sponsoring agencies. Of the 145 participants, about 80% were racial minorities and 70% had post secondary education, mainly from country of origin.

The groups evaluated the programs, specifically designed for immigrants, very positively.

They expressed concern about budget reductions resulting in very intensive, shorter courses with longer wait lists, and lower prospects of job placement upon graduation.

Both hard and soft skills in these courses were highly valued.

Racism in employment was deeply distressing to the immigrants, especially the prevalence of the "Canadian experience" requirement.

The option of self-employment training was thought to be most useful for the immigrants who came under the entrepreneurial category.

The groups expressed concern about professional and trade associations not providing fair access to licensing and accreditation. They feel the government must take responsibility to ensure that they have a fair chance to succeed and integrate, thus saving tax dollars and becoming productive.

The groups made some suggestions for improvements, including collective information sessions, standardized basic assessment form, standardized resume format, centralized job posting and collaborative job search activities, and the development of an employment agency for graduating immigrants.

#### 2. STAFF

Client issues and internal organizational matters affecting service delivery were discussed.

The groups summarized client concerns including the barrier of "lack of Canadian experience", unsophisticated computer and technical skills, the technical language weakness, and lack of knowledge of the Canadian labour market.

The organizations serving immigrants were most challenged by the decrease in time available for employment preparation activity. Clients most in need are increasingly being left behind. Although there is some duplication, many complementary and partnership activities exist.

The participants from organizations suggested an inventory of the strengths of each agency be developed for easier identification of services. Joint workshops, in a more modular approach to training, would be practical. The development of an umbrella organization to tackle collaboration and advocacy issues, was also supported.

### 3. PROJECT SPONSORS

In the face of major government restructuring, the principal anxiety everyone is facing is how the needs of immigrants and refugees can be best serviced. Professional and trades people can be readily assisted, but racial minority women, on the other hand, suffer most. The burden is left on the individual and local social services. The "jobless recovery" is contributing to the problem.

There already exists a lot of collaboration and very little duplication in agency programs and services.

The group recognized the importance of establishing good working relations with the provincial officials. They saw the value of creating a centralized data base of available programs. Staff training could be done jointly and placement activity could be co-ordinated. They all agreed that the federal government policy must support the settlement needs of immigrants.

#### ***Summary of Discussions with HRDC & CIC Officials***

The need for training services to become more self-reliant was clear. The trend towards centralized approaches to job development and resource centres was emphasized. Because the collaborative approach with the community is emphasized, it is essential that the immigrant training sector keep in close contact with both the government bodies.

#### ***Summary of Key Informant Discussions and Interviews***

This group consisted of community and equity group representatives, and government officials. A few new points brought up included the belief that agencies are stretched to the limit, and the gap created by government withdrawal from employment preparation and training will remain a void. Government indifference is feared.

#### ***Identification of Needs of Immigrants***

Although many ordinary citizens believe immigrants take away jobs from Canadians, research supports the fact that immigrants are needed, importing skills, and contributing to the economy.

Education and training level are directly related to income levels but many immigrants are caught in low-skilled, low-paid jobs, regardless of their education level.

For these reasons, it is imperative that government and community work together to resolve this issue. Immigrants face so many barriers relating to trade and professional certification, availability of training, racism, English language problems, and cultural shock.

### ***Service Gaps, Duplications, Overlaps and Complementarities***

The major gaps can be described as the lack of services for those who possess the least amount of skills, language capacity and ability to adapt to their changing circumstances, many of whom are dependent on welfare for income support.

The only consistent duplications are that everyone is doing assessments, and that people who take a program at more than one site must continually be reassessed.

There is a considerable degree of collaboration and partnership within the sector.

### ***Impact of Federal and Provincial Government Policies and Funding Cuts***

Cutbacks and threats of program cuts have made the sector very vulnerable and distrustful of others, even those in the same sector. The need for close collaboration, and collective action is very apparent.

#### ***Federal Government***

The federal funding cuts and changes in eligibility criteria will have a devastating effect on the life of immigrants in Toronto. There is a greater emphasis on client "self reliance", on people making more choices on their own, and on quick re-employment, with the least possible government intervention.

As a result, immigrants who have some labour market attachment but have held jobs in areas of the economy that are shifting or shrinking, will have little or no opportunity for appropriate retraining programs.

Recent immigrants, will not be able to access any of the federal training or benefits provided by HRIF, since they do not have any employment history to qualify for these services.

#### ***Provincial Government***

People who do not qualify under HRIF, will need to rely on provincial social assistance. Like the federal government, the Ontario government is favour-

ing short and low cost training programs and employment preparation services.

### ***Municipal Government***

Metro has had incentives in their system for a number of years to assist those interested in training. Training in agencies, responsive to the needs of immigrants, have been part of that strategy. If the new Toronto government retains responsibility for social assistance, it is likely that this attempt to train and retrain those on welfare roles will continue.

### ***Recommendations***

1. The immigrant employment preparation and training sector should collaborate to make sure that external assessment instruments are unbiased and culturally sensitive.

Specialized assessment and/or intake tools should be developed collaboratively and implemented consistently within the sector.

2. The sector should establish a formal partnership with support of HRDC to develop marketing campaigns to advertise the superior nature of its programs and services, to highlight the significant contributions immigrants make to our economy and society, and to dispel prejudice and stereotypes of racist attitudes and behaviours.
3. The sector should collaborate to share best practices, develop an electronic employment preparation and training calendar, and orientation sessions. The inventory would help identify any training gaps. A system for joint staff training, and programming, and flexible hours, would improve client access to workshops. The possibility of an income generating employment agency should be studied. The sector needs to develop good working relations with the local HRDC and municipal officials.
4. The sector needs to develop a strategy to get positioned with provincial officials, describing its benefits to the client population.
5. The sector should develop strategies to use HRIF to design a continuum of services to serve its clients.
6. It is recommended that the sector call for the federal government to designate immigrants and refugees as a special target group with special program focus. It should call for inclusion of employment preparation and training for immigrants and the funding programs designed specifically for the immigrant population in the Federal-Provincial training agreement currently being negotiated.
7. The sector should demand legislative measures to stop systemic discrimination and ensure trades and professional associations are required to adopt fair and equitable accreditation systems. It should promote the establishment of Labour Market Language training, and bridging pro-

grams, to complete the continuum of services required for successful immigrant settlement. The sector needs to promote training quality and the necessary length of time required to build upon skill proficiency of immigrants.

8. Lastly, a working group be established to address above recommendations and seek two year funding with HRDC for support.