Human Resources Development Canada
Développement des ressources humaines Canada

Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

Strategic Plan 2002–2007

Leadership
Engagement
Results

Canada
SDDP-043-11-02E

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Message from the Assistant Deputy Minister

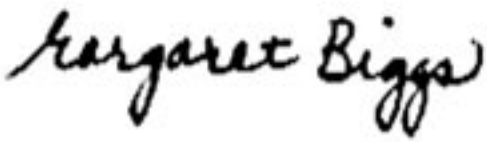
This strategic plan sets out future directions for the Office for Disability Issues (ODI). The plan is an ambitious one that will serve as ODI's guide to providing leadership on disability issues within Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Government of Canada.

HRDC invests significant resources in support of people with disabilities — part of our commitment to promoting the full participation of all Canadians in learning, work and community life. Through our policy and program initiatives we work with partners to help ensure that each citizen who has a disability can contribute to his or her full potential.

People with disabilities face barriers to full participation and we are committed to working with partners to eliminate these barriers. The Minister of HRDC has a unique role as lead federal Minister, putting our department at the forefront of the government's disability agenda.

Progress can be made if key partners work together across traditional boundaries, pooling talents and resources to modernize and refocus existing programs, ensure mainstream programs are fully accessible and identify future directions.

For this to happen, we need a focal point in government to facilitate concerted joint action — an organization that can harness the energy of partners around shared priorities. This is ODI's principal role. I have confidence that the ODI team will work to fulfil this essential role with excellence in the coming years.



Margaret Biggs
Assistant Deputy Minister
Human Investment Programs

Message from the Director General

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) was made a Directorate late in 2001. We identified a need to rebuild and revitalize the organization to provide more effective leadership on disability issues within Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and across the Government of Canada.

We put in place a process to develop future directions for ODI and a strategic plan to help us move from vision to action. We discussed our future as a team while engaging a broad spectrum of people working within government and in the voluntary sector. It was a valuable learning process that involved a return to first principles.

We are in the process of realigning the organization to achieve these directions. We have also rebuilt the leadership capacity within ODI and are taking steps to ensure that all team members have the knowledge and skills needed to ensure success.

ODI's first year as a Directorate has been an exciting and productive one. We now look forward to implementing our strategic plan in partnership with other HRDC branches and regions, other federal departments and agencies, provinces and territories, the voluntary sector, the research community, business, labour and Parliamentarians.

Deborah Tunis
Director General
Office for Disability Issues

1. Foundations

Purpose and scope of the strategic plan

Over the next five years, this strategic plan will serve as the Office for Disability Issues' (ODI) guide to working with partners[1] to promote the full participation of Canadians with disabilities in learning, work and community life.

This section defines a renewed vision, mission and core values for the Office, while Section 2 describes the wider economic and social context in which ODI is operating. Section 2 also sets out the roles played by the Government of Canada, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and other partners, including provinces and territories, the voluntary sector, the research community, business, labour and Parliamentarians.

Section 3 outlines four strategic directions, closely aligned with ODI's mission: improving coherence; investing in capacity; developing networks; and increasing the knowledge base. A fifth strategic direction — achieving excellence — underlies all ODI's policy and program activities in carrying out its mission.

Each strategic direction in Section 3 consists of a clearly stated strategic objective, planned activities and expected results. ODI's goal is to focus resources on key priorities and deliver on commitments in a timely and effective manner.

As a new Directorate, ODI recognizes there is a lot to do to achieve the objectives in this strategic plan, but there is an equally strong will to provide the leadership that is needed to produce measurable results.

Strategic planning process

The goal of the strategic plan was to build on the past, define the future and engage the ODI team and stakeholders in revitalization. The strategic planning process began with an assessment of ODI to create the knowledge base needed for effective strategic planning.

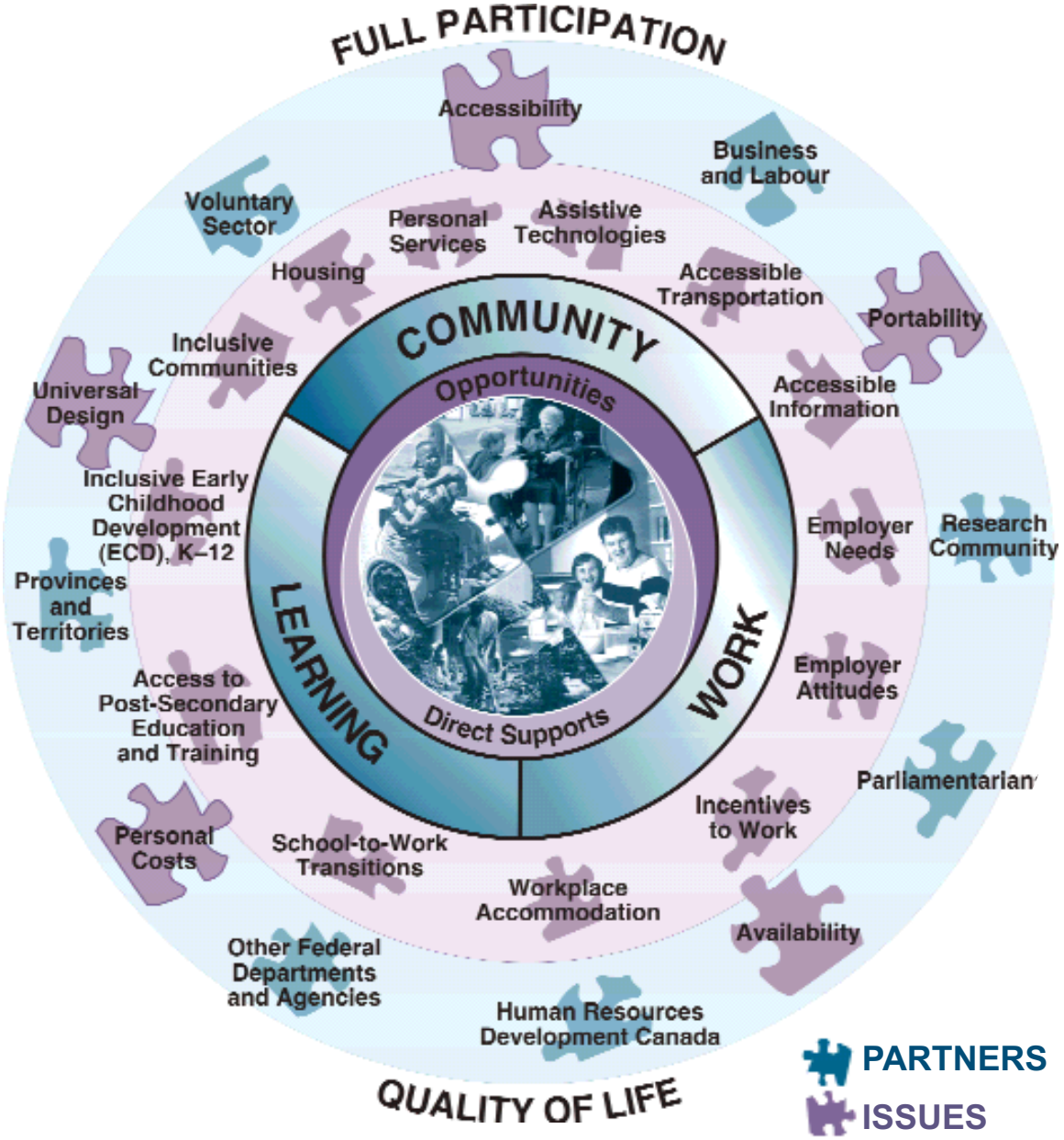
Interviews and focus groups engaged officials from HRDC and other federal departments and agencies, voluntary sector leaders and experts in the field of disability issues in the planning process. These individuals provided valuable feedback about ODI's history, strengths and achievements, challenges and barriers, and what they hoped to see the Office accomplish in the future.

The ODI team then developed a renewed vision, mission, core values and strategic objectives and, with advice from knowledgeable federal practitioners, elaborated a detailed strategic plan.

[1] In this document partners refers to: Human Resources Development Canada, other federal departments and agencies, provinces and territories, the voluntary sector, the research community, business, labour and Parliamentarians.

Canadians with Disabilities

NEEDS • ISSUES • PARTNERS



People with disabilities need **direct supports** as well as increased **opportunities** to participate in **learning**, **work** and **community** life. **Partners** must work together to address **issues** facing Canadians with disabilities and their families, in order to promote **full participation** and improve **quality of life** in the long term. ODI's role is to provide a national **focal point** for collaboration among partners.

Vision

We are a focal point within the Government of Canada for key partners working to promote the full participation of Canadians with disabilities in learning, work and community life. We strive to provide leadership in this area of shared responsibility.

What does full participation mean?

Full participation means different things to different people depending on each individual's potential. It is safe to say, however, that Canadians with disabilities as a whole would be participating fully if each one were able to maximize his or her potential. In other words, if each Canadian with a disability was achieving his or her full potential for success in learning, work and community life, we would have achieved a state of full participation.

At present, we as a nation are unable to determine just how far away we are from a state of full participation — our end goal. However, we do know that many people with disabilities could be participating more actively in our schools, workplaces and communities.

What do people with disabilities need to participate fully?

Individuals with disabilities and their families may need **direct supports** such as income assistance and disability supports (goods and services) to learn, work and be a part of life in their communities. They also need **opportunities**, in the form of physical access and open attitudes; in other words, people with disabilities need access to schools, workplaces and communities, and they also need people in these settings to welcome them.

How can ODI make a difference?

As one of many partners working toward the goal of full participation, ODI can provide a **national focal point** for concerted action that crosses traditional boundaries. It can harness and focus the energy of governments, the voluntary sector, researchers, business, labour and Parliamentarians to achieve our common objective.

How will we know we are making progress in the long-term?

We will know we are making progress when ***more*** people with disabilities are:

√ Getting a good start in life through early childhood development
√ Going to school and achieving success there
√ Participating actively in family life
√ Participating in adult learning to upgrade their skills
√ Getting good jobs and earning higher wages
√ Participating in volunteer work and civil society
√ Engaging in sport, recreation, culture and politics
√ Experiencing improvements in physical and mental health

Mission

ODI's mission is to:

- *foster **coherence** through improved horizontal management of federal policies and programs;*
- *build the **capacity** of the voluntary sector through strategic investment;*
- *create cohesive, action-oriented **networks** of existing and new partners; and*
- *provide **knowledge** to inform policy and program development and build awareness.*

Underlying its mission, ODI strives for ***excellence*** in all of its activities, as well as in the workplace. The Office values learning, creativity and diversity; recognizes the contributions of individual staff members; and is focused on achieving results for Canadians.

Core values

Core values are the touchstones that guide how we work, and demonstrate what qualities we value in ourselves and our partners. The Office has chosen five core values that are needed to help achieve our mission.

Partnership

We work with key partners to build relationships based on trust, share knowledge and achieve common goals.

Accountability

We demonstrate accountability to our Minister and Canadians, through transparent decision making, setting of achievable objectives, reporting of results and continuous improvement of processes and programs.

Teamwork

Our staff members think and function as a team, and are recognized as the organization's most important resource. Team members are supported to maintain a healthy balance between work and quality of life.

Excellence

Our work and the work of our partners is valued, innovative and of the highest quality. To achieve this goal, we foster a culture of learning, recognition, creativity and empowerment.

Respect

Team members treat each other and our partners with dignity and civility, in keeping with our belief in the potential of all Canadians with disabilities to participate and contribute to society.

2. Operating environment: The economic and social context

Economic growth and quality of life

On average, Canadians' standard of living has grown over the past four decades. Following a weak performance in the first half of the 1990s, Canada's employment rate has also risen substantially in recent years. With the growth in employment, Canadians have experienced an increase in real disposable income and enjoy a quality of life that is among the highest in the world. Far too many Canadians with disabilities, however, are unable to share in the benefits of economic growth due to barriers that prevent successful participation in the work force.

> *"With one of the world's strongest economies, Canadians currently enjoy one of the highest standards of living."* [2]

Canada's economy, a growing work force and increases in real disposable income create opportunities to reduce poverty among people with disabilities by promoting their successful participation in the work force.

Toward a knowledge economy

By 2004, more than 70 percent of all new jobs created in Canada will require some form of post-secondary education; 25 percent will require a university degree. Only 6 percent of new jobs will be held by those who have not finished high school.

> *"… the knowledge-based economy means an ever-increasing demand for a well-educated and skilled workforce in all parts of the economy and in all parts of the country."* [3]

There is a strong correlation between success in learning and success in the work force. To meet the requirements of the knowledge economy and take advantage of rapid technological change, more must be done to help Canadians engage in lifelong learning. The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development placed Canada seventh in terms of participation in job-related education and training for those aged 25 to 64 — behind Finland, Austria, Sweden, Germany, the United States and Switzerland.[4]

> *"Our learning system must be strengthened if we are to meet the skills and labour force demands of the next decades."* [5]

[2] Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, *Canada's Performance 2001: Annual Report to Parliament*, 2001.
[3] Human Resources Development Canada, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*, 2002.
[4] Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, *Education at a Glance*, 2001.
[5] Human Resources Development Canada, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*, 2002.

The knowledge economy presents both an opportunity and a challenge for Canadians with disabilities. While advances in assistive technology have made it possible for more people with disabilities to participate, the challenge is to ensure that people with disabilities have access to these supports and are given the opportunities they need to put new skills to work.

Many Canadians continue to fall behind

Not all Canadians are sharing equally in our country's strong economy and enviable quality of life. Many Canadians experience poverty, which is increasingly concentrated in certain geographical areas and among specific groups. Those who live on the margins of society are often unable to get the education and skills they need, to gain meaningful and well-paid employment, to find safe and secure places to live, or to break the cycle of social isolation, poverty and hopelessness that have come to characterize their lives. These problems are most acute for those who face multiple barriers to meaningful participation in learning, work and community life, including single parents, Aboriginal people, recent immigrants and people with disabilities.

An ageing society

The 2001 census put the Canadian population at just over 30 million, increasingly made up of older individuals. From 1991 to 2001, the fastest-growing part of the population consisted of those 80 years of age and over, while there was a substantial decline in the number of children four years of age and under.

Similarly, the working-age population is increasingly made up of older workers. The older working-age population (those between age 45 and 64) soared from 5.4 million in 1991 to almost 7.3 million in 2001. Since disability rates increase steadily with age, employers will increasingly encounter disability issues in the workplace.

Given the ageing of the population, Canada's future labour supply will be insufficient to meet the demands of the economy. In 2001, the population of baby boomers (those between 36 and 55 years of age in 2001) was estimated at 9.4 million, or nearly one-third of the total population. When the baby boomers reach retirement age, Canada will face a labour shortfall. The Conference Board of Canada forecasts a labour shortfall of nearly one million workers within the next 20 years. By 2011, immigration will account for all net labour force growth in Canada.[6] The shortage of labour and demand for workers represent increased opportunities for Canadians with disabilities to participate in the work force.

In addition to the impacts on our labour supply, an ageing society and increased disability rates will increase demands on family caregivers and public programs providing support to people with disabilities at home and in the community.

A focus on communities

The profile of Canadian municipalities has been increasing in recent years, in part due to ongoing urbanization and the amalgamation of several major urban centres such as Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax-Dartmouth.

[6] Human Resources Development Canada, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians,* 2002.

Almost 80 percent of Canadians live in cities, with 51 percent of Canada's population concentrated in four areas: southern Ontario; Montreal and the surrounding area; the Lower Mainland and southern Vancouver Island in British Columbia; and the Calgary-to-Edmonton corridor.[7]

Both urban and rural municipalities want to work with federal and provincial/territorial governments to strengthen their economic, environmental and social sustainability. Key issues that have been raised include municipal infrastructure, the environment, public transportation, affordable housing and homelessness. We also know that the poor in Canada are increasingly concentrated in certain geographic areas, particularly in major urban centres.[8]

[7] Royal Canadian Mounted Police, *Environmental Scan*, 2002.

[8] Human Resources Development Canada, Applied Research Branch Presentation, *Concentrations of Poverty and Distressed Neighbourhoods in Canada*: *Updated Using 1996 Census Data*, 2001.

Canadians with disabilities[9]

Changing attitudes

In the latter part of the 20th century, Canadians and their governments have come to understand that people with disabilities are limited as much by environmental barriers as by their disabilities and that, with the right supports and opportunities, people with disabilities can participate in all aspects of Canadian society.

Prior to the 1960s, people with disabilities were often considered to have little potential for independent living. Regardless of good intentions, public and private programs tended to focus on care and treatment in segregated settings. People with disabilities came to feel that public and private programs were "warehousing" them and reinforcing dependence, stigmatization, disempowerment and isolation.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, disability organizations worked to convince governments that those with disabilities could participate in mainstream society as full and equal citizens with some help and support. The message got through, as evidenced by the release in 1981 of *Obstacles*, the landmark report of the Special Parliamentary Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped. On the international front, 1981 was declared the International Year of Disabled Persons.

Following *Obstacles*, all major federal and federal/provincial/territorial reports reflected a paradigm shift toward full participation by Canadians with disabilities in mainstream society, from *Pathway to Integration* (1993), to *The Will To Act* (1996), to *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* (1998), to *Future Directions* (1999), to *Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities* (2002).

Profile of people with disabilities in Canada

In 2001, 12.4 percent of Canadians, or 3.6 million people living in households, were considered to have a disability. Among Aboriginal people 15 years of age and over, the disability rate was over 30 percent, more than twice the national average.

In the same year, the distribution of all people with disabilities by disability type was as follows: mobility, 72 percent; pain, 70 percent; agility, 67 percent; hearing, 30 percent; seeing, 17 percent; psychological, 15 percent; learning, 13 percent; memory, 12 percent; speech, 11 percent; developmental, 4 percent; unknown, 3 percent.

The likelihood of having a disability increased significantly as a person got older. The prevalence of disability within different age groups was as follows: children 0–14, 3.3 percent had a disability; working-age adults 15–64, 9.9 percent had a disability; and seniors 65 plus, 40.5 percent had a disability.

The level of severity of disabilities also varied. The distribution of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 to 64, by severity of disability was as

[9] Unless otherwise indicated, all data in this section are from Government of Canda, *Advancing the Inclusion of Persons with disabilities* (2002), Federal, Provincial, Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services, *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues* (1998) and *In Unison 2000: Persons with Disabilities in Canada* (2000).

follows: mild, 34 percent; moderate, 25 percent; severe, 27 percent; and very severe, 14 percent. Without question, those with the most severe disabilities face the most significant barriers to participation in learning, work and community life. They have the lowest work force participation rates and the highest poverty rates.

Furthermore, there are numerous points at which people can become disabled. While some people are born with a disability, many more become disabled later in life as a result of disabling health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, osteoarthritis and other diseases or as a result of accidents such as falls, road accidents and work-related accidents. Consequently, some people become disabled after having completed their formal education and are most of the way through their careers, while those who experience disability from birth face barriers throughout their school years and during the transition from school into the work force.

Finally, disabilities are not always static or permanent. Many Canadians experience disabilities that are dynamic in nature, that is they are cyclical, episodic or progressive. Examples include individuals living with multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Alzheimer's and Parkisons disease, to name a few. Such individuals can face the challenge of adapting to a different level of disability every day.

Levels of participation

LEARNING

The vast majority of children with disabilities attend school (91 percent); of these, most (62 percent) attend regular classes. A recent study by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) concluded that the experience of children and youths with special needs at school is consistently less positive than it is for their peers without special needs.[10]

In 2000, CCSD interviewed experts in every province to get an up-close and personal view of the special education system in Canada. A small minority of the experts interviewed (19 percent) felt that the education system in their province was meeting the needs of students with special needs. A key issue was the lack of special education teachers, teachers' aides and assistants, and non-teaching professionals.[11]

In a related study, CCSD interviewed individuals working in community-based agencies, including boards of education, regarding services for children and youths with special needs. Almost 80 percent of respondents believed that children and youths with special needs in their communities had unmet needs. The most common unmet needs were lack of services for children and youths with emotional or mental health problems, followed by lack of recreation services and inadequate services in the school system.[12]

Adults with disabilities continue to have lower levels of educational attainment than their counterparts who are not disabled. In 1998, 36 percent of

[10] Canadian Council on Social Development, *Children and Youth with Special Needs*, 2001.
[11] Canadian Council on Social Development, *Special Education in Canada*, 2001.
[12] Canadian Council on Social Development, *Children and Youth with Special Needs*, 2001.

working-age adults with disabilities had less than a high school education compared to 18 percent for people without disabilities. In the same year, 36 percent of people with disabilities had graduated from a post-secondary institution (college or university) compared to 51 percent of those without disabilities.[13]

WORK

In 1995, 43 percent of Canadians with disabilities were participating in the work force — about half the rate of participation for people without disabilities. Only 14 percent of women with disabilities worked full-time for the full year, while 62 percent did not work at any point during the year.

The unemployment rate for Canadians with disabilities was 16 percent, compared with 9 percent for those without disabilities. The unemployment rate was highest for young Aboriginal men with disabilities (age 15 to 34), at 34 percent. In addition, on average, people with disabilities earn 15 percent less than those without disabilities.

> "Persons with disabilities face barriers to full participation in the labour market… They face a number of barriers to labour market success, including lower levels of education, employer attitudes and behaviour, and a lack of workplace accommodations." [14]

As is true for all Canadians, there is a strong correlation between level of education and participation in the work force among persons with disabilities. For example, 66 percent of women with disabilities who had a university degree were in the work force — this is three times the rate for women with disabilities who had less than a high school education.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Community life refers to the extent to which people with disabilities are able to take part in their local communities — doing volunteer work, making use of public libraries and other facilities, attending cultural events, participating in sports and recreation, joining community and political organizations, and so on. Limited information is available on the degree to which people with disabilities are participating in community life. However, disability organizations report that, while progress has been made, many Canadians with disabilities are unable to become actively involved in community activities due to ongoing challenges accessing an adequate level of supports and opportunities.

Human and social costs

INDIVIDUALS

Canadians with disabilities are much more likely to experience poverty than their counterparts without disabilities. In 1997, working-age adults with disabilities were more than twice as likely to be living on low incomes as adults without disabilities (26 percent of adults with disabilities were living below the low-income cut-off point, compared with 11 percent for those without disabilities).

[13] Canadian Council on Social Development, *Disability Information Sheet Number 2*, 2001.
[14] Human Resources Development Canada, *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*, 2002.

The depth of poverty (the amount below the low-income cut-off point) was also greater for people with disabilities: 17 percent of adults with disabilities were more than 25 percent below the low-income cut-off, compared with 6 percent for those without disabilities. At the same time, people with disabilities face higher costs associated with their disabilities. These costs can be a significant drain on already limited incomes and add yet another dimension to the twin hardships of poverty and disability.

People with disabilities are also much more likely to need government income assistance than those without disabilities. Working-age men with disabilities were over six times more likely to need income support than men without disabilities, while women with disabilities were almost three times more likely to need government support than women without disabilities.

Poverty further limits participation in community activities by people with disabilities, restricting their ability to get involved in cultural activities, recreation and sports. This not only negatively affects their health status, it can increase their social isolation and make it very difficult for them to build social networks.

FAMILIES

Close to 2.3 million adult Canadians (15 years or older) provide some support to a family member because of a disability. Of these, almost one million consider themselves to be the primary caregiver. Family caregivers are the largest single source of support for Canadians with disabilities.[15]

There is an economic burden associated with voluntary caregiving. Parents, spouses and other caregivers may experience a reduced capacity to earn income as a result of their responsibilities; at the same time, they may face considerable expenses related to the family member's disabilities. They may have to work reduced hours, give up opportunities for advancement or drop out of the work force entirely. Those who provide care, particularly full-time care, can experience heightened stress and social isolation, which can affect their physical and mental health over the long term. In many cases, the whole family suffers.

WORKPLACES AND COMMUNITIES

Helping people with disabilities to reach their full potential benefits all Canadians. Investments made now will result in long-term benefits in terms of both improved labour productivity and savings to our health care system and social programs.

In 1993, Health Canada estimated the total value of productivity lost due to disability was $55.8 billion. Of this amount, $38.3 billion was lost due to long-term disability and $17.5 billion due to short-term disability.[16] Alan Puttee estimated the annual cost of disability

[15] L'Institut Roeher Institute, *Moving In Unison into Action: Towards a Policy Strategy for Improving Access to Disability Supports*, 2002.

[16] Health Canada, *Economic Burden of Illness in Canada*, 1993.

income programs at around $18 billion in the late 1990s. This figure included major public and private disability income programs, such as Workers' Compensation, Canada/Quebec Pension Plan Disability Benefit, public automobile insurance, Employment Insurance Sickness Benefit, provincial social assistance and private disability insurance plans.[17]

Providing people with disabilities with support to build work skills and to live independently in the community will require less long-term income support and high-cost, hospital-based care. In an ageing society, efforts to ensure the universal design of public infrastructure will also make participation easier for senior citizens.

[17] Queen's University, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, *Federalism, Democracy and Disability Policy in Canada*, 2002.

The Government of Canada

The Government of Canada has set out an agenda to improve quality of life for all Canadians through a dual commitment to innovation and inclusion. The goal is to integrate our economic and social priorities for the benefit of all Canadians and their families.

> *"The Government of Canada is making meaningful progress to meet the needs of children, persons with disabilities and their families. There is a widespread, concerted effort to build consensus and move forward on these issues that are important to so many Canadians."* [18]

The Government of Canada plays a pivotal role in providing support to Canadians with disabilities. Over 30 federal departments, agencies and commissions are involved in helping people with disabilities gain access to the supports and opportunities they need.

> *"The Government of Canada makes substantial investments in initiatives that enhance the full participation of persons with disabilities, both directly, and in partnership with provinces, territories, and the private and voluntary sectors."* [19]

Supporting individuals and families

A range of federally funded programs provide individuals and families with support. Generally, these programs fall within four categories: skills and learning; employment; disability supports; and income support. Examples of programs include Canada Study Grants for Students with Disabilities, Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities, the Residential Rehabilitation and Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities, the Disability Tax Credit and Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefits.

The Government of Canada also has a unique role in providing direct support to people with disabilities in First Nations communities. Health Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada provide people with disabilities who live on reserve with supports in the areas of health, education, housing and social services.

Ensuring access and awareness

The Government of Canada has put in place various legislative and other initiatives that ensure workplaces and communities are accessible to people with disabilities. Existing legislation is geared at preventing discrimination against people with disabilities and ensuring access in areas of federal jurisdiction.

Canada became known as an international leader in 1982 when it included physical and mental disabilities under Section 15 of the *Canadian*

[18] Government of Canada, *Response to A Common Vision: Interim Report,* 2001.
[19] Government of Canada, *Response to A Common Vision: Interim Report,* 2001.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms, marking the first time that any national constitution in the world referred specifically to people with disabilities. Examples of federal legislation and initiatives include the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; the *Canadian Human Rights Act*; the *Employment Equity Act*; and provisions in the *Criminal Code* and the *Canada Evidence Act* to ensure access to the justice system. Features to improve physical access within national parks and the National Library of Canada's efforts to ensure access for print-disabled Canadians are other examples.

Building knowledge and supporting innovation

The Government of Canada supports research and development that generates knowledge and innovation in the provision of supports and opportunities to Canadians with disabilities. For example, the 2001 Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS), funded in Budget 2000, will help to inform policy decisions and to evaluate programs. PALS provides information on various disability supports, employment patterns, sources and levels of income and barriers to participation for persons with disabilities. Another example is Industry Canada's Assistive Devices Industry Office.

Supporting the voluntary sector

Programs such as the Social Development Partnership Program and the Voluntary Sector Initiative provide support to help voluntary organizations partner with government to achieve shared goals in priority areas.

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC)

HRDC's role in disability issues

HRDC's mission is "to enable Canadians to participate fully in the workplace and the community." Several branches within the department deliver programs both nationally and regionally to fulfil this mission, often in partnership with provinces and territories: Income Security Programs, Employment Insurance, Human Investment Programs (HIP), Employment Programs, Labour and the National Secretariat on Homelessness.

The program branches administer a number of targeted programs for Canadians with disabilities, such as the Opportunities Fund and Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities, as well as mainstream programs like Employment Insurance. Mainstream programs are those that are highly relevant to people with disabilities but are not targeted specifically at them. The Strategic Policy Branch engages in policy development related to Canadians with disabilities.

HRDC also has a unique role within the Government of Canada as the lead federal department on disability issues. Prior to 1993, when the department was created, the Secretary of State provided the lead on disability issues.

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has been established to support this government-wide disability agenda by drawing on the cooperation of various federal officials and ministers. ODI is a Directorate within HIP, along with Canada Student Loans, Human Resources

Partnerships, Learning and Literacy, and Social Development. HIP's mission is "to enable Canadians to learn, acquire skills, and participate more fully in civic, social and economic life." HIP has played an important role in helping HRDC advance cross-cutting or horizontal federal priorities through, for example, its leadership role on the Voluntary Sector Initiative.

Skills and learning

On February 12, 2002, the Government of Canada released *Knowledge Matters: Skills and Learning for Canadians*, one of two documents outlining Canada's Innovation Strategy. HRDC is at the heart of policy development in support of the priorities outlined in the document, as well as any subsequent program implementation. As a result, the department has identified skills and learning as one of two key elements of its change agenda, as stated in the *HRDC Corporate Plan 2002–2003*. *Knowledge Matters* includes several references to challenges and opportunities facing Canadians with disabilities.

Modernizing services

The other key element of HRDC's change agenda is modernizing service for Canadians. As outlined in the corporate plan, modernizing service is a five-year plan to ensure HRDC policies and programs are developed and provided to Canadians in a better, more responsive and more efficient manner. The overall objectives are to shift the department's focus to citizens' needs and ensure a social face of the federal government and overall federal visibility, optimizing the use of technology to offer easy-to-use and accessible programs and services.[20]

HRDC Support for Canadians with Disabilities (2001–2002)

Income support for individuals and families	→	• Canadian Pension Plan Disability Benefits ($2.8B) • Employment Insurance Sickness Benefit ($523M)
Removing barriers to learning and employment	→	• Canada Study Grants for Students with Disabilities ($14M) • Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities ($193M) • Opportunities Fund ($30M) • Disability Component of Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy • Canada Pension Plan — Disability Vocational Rehabilitation Program ($4.6M) • Workplace Equity Programs • Office of Learning Technologies ($0.5M)
Building capacity within the voluntary sector	→	• Disability Component of Social Development Partnerships Program ($12.5M)
Providing knowledge and information	→	• Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) ($11.5M over 3 years)

[20] Human Resources Development Canada, *HRDC Corporate plan 2002–2003.*

Other partners

Fulfilling the priorities set out by the Government of Canada to address the challenges people with disabilities face will involve greater collaboration with existing and new partners. The current system through which governments provide supports and opportunities to people with disabilities has been described as a confusing patchwork or maze of programs and policies. To address this systemic barrier and bring about greater cohesiveness in policies and programs, key partners must work together to achieve common objectives.

Provinces and territories

In 1998, federal, provincial and territorial (FPT) governments endorsed a shared policy framework called *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues*. This common vision demonstrates that FPT governments share the same objectives for Canadians with disabilities and are committed to collaboration.

The provinces and territories provide direct supports and opportunities to Canadians with disabilities and their families, through provision of social assistance and an array of disability-related programs (goods and services). Provincial/territorial departments of social services, human resources development, education, health, transportation and housing, in addition to municipalities, are all involved in providing supports. As a result, provinces and territories are one of the Government of Canada's most important partners in ensuring that people with disabilities participate fully in learning, work and community life.

Voluntary sector

The voluntary sector is comprised of two main types of groups: registered charities and other not-for-profit organizations (see Appendix A for an operational definition of the voluntary sector). This sector, made up of 180 000 organizations at the local, regional and national levels, works to deliver services, advocate for marginalized and disempowered individuals, increase awareness of issues, and influence public policies and programs. The sector employs more than 1.3 million people, or approximately 9 percent of working Canadians. Disability organizations are a significant segment of the voluntary sector, and have had a major impact on advancing the rights of Canadians with disabilities and increasing awareness of disability issues.

Research community

The Canadian disability research community is made up of a broad spectrum of individuals working in universities and colleges, research institutes, service organizations and advocacy groups. Within the academic world, disability research is carried out in a number of disciplines, including social work, law, economics, political science, psychology, rehabilitation engineering, medicine and nursing.

Business and labour

Businesses and labour unions can play a crucial role in employing people with disabilities and in ensuring workplaces that are accessible and supportive. The active participation of employers and labour leaders in public policy and program development is needed to make the vision of meaningful participation for people with disabilities in the workplace a reality.

Parliamentarians

From the *Obstacles* report in 1981 to *A Common Vision* in 2001, Parliamentarians have played a critical role in raising the profile of disability issues within government and society and have galvanized key partners into action through ongoing consultations with experts and representatives of the voluntary sector. The ongoing efforts of members of the Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities is an excellent example. Members of Parliament also provide direct political representation to citizens whose concerns they hear at the grassroots level in communities across the country.

3. Strategic directions: moving from vision to action

Direction #1: Coherence

COHERENCE • CAPACITY • NETWORKS • KNOWLEDGE • EXCELLENCE

Strategic objective

To facilitate improved coherence and integration through effective horizontal management of disability policies and programs within Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Government of Canada.

Coherence of policies and programs means ensuring that federal policies and programs in support of people with disabilities make sense as a whole — they work well together and take advantage of opportunities to maximize resources and impacts. The goal of **integration** is ensuring that mainstream federal policies and programs take into account the needs of Canadians with disabilities. Mainstream policies and programs are those that are highly relevant to persons with disabilities but not targeted exclusively at them.

> *"Horizontal management is the process of managing work across organizational boundaries in a coordinated and collaborative manner in order to achieve mutually agreed-upon objectives."* [21]

Horizontal management involves priorities that do not fall exclusively within the mandate of any single

Key Ingredients of Successful Horizontal Management

PLAN: Team knows what they aim to achieve, how they plan to work together to achieve it, and how they will measure and report on outcomes.

PEOPLE: Strong working team of officials is in place, linked to a broader support network.

LEADERSHIP: Initiative has both political and senior public service champions that maintain momentum and motivate team members.

SUPPORTIVE STRUCTURE: An effective process and committee structure are in place, supported by a well-resourced secretariat with representation from key member departments.

[21] Consulting and Audit Canada, *Horizontal Management Study*, 2002.

Minister, but require departments to work together across traditional, often artificial, organizational boundaries to achieve shared objectives.

ODI is in a unique position to serve as a focal point for managing the government-wide disability agenda. Since its inception, ODI has been mandated to support the lead federal Minister on disability issues. In the coming years, ODI will manage the federal disability agenda in a more effective and efficient manner, in accordance with the four key ingredients described above and the activities described below.

Activities

IMPROVING HORIZONTAL MANAGEMENT

ODI will strive to provide leadership to advance horizontal initiatives within HRDC and the Government of Canada.

A principal challenge involved in managing a horizontal file involves engaging ministers and senior public servants in the process and maintaining their involvement over the long term. ODI will endeavour to meet this challenge. ODI also recognizes that good horizontal management begins at home. In a large department like HRDC, it is necessary for key groups — at National Headquarters and in the Regions — to work together to address the needs of people with disabilities in a coherent, integrated manner. ODI will work to achieve this goal within HRDC.

ODI will establish improved supportive structures for intra- and interdepartmental collaboration on disability issues.

In this context, the term "supportive structure" refers to formal processes and committee structures that facilitate the work of the intra- or interdepartmental team, as well as secretariat support within ODI. ODI will assess existing supportive structures within HRDC and the Government of Canada and make the improvements needed to create an optimum environment for building and sustaining momentum. To achieve this goal, ODI needs to streamline its processes, and consolidate existing committee membership into a core group representing key departments.

> *"Too much formality may impede an initiative's ability to adapt to changing circumstances. There is also a risk that erecting elaborate and formal structures may overshadow continued personal contact and commitment among players. Structures can displace the spirit of volunteerism."* [22]

ODI will work to establish two core teams of officials working on disability issues, one within HRDC and one within the Government of Canada.

These teams will be linked to a broader network of officials and receive secretariat support from ODI. At the heart of any successful horizontal initiative is a core group or team of individuals with the appropriate combination of skills and connections to achieve common goals. ODI will begin building teams of officials from within HRDC branches and federal

[22] Canadian Centre for Management Development, *Moving From the Heroic to the Everyday: Lessons Learned from Leading Horizontal Projects*, 2001.

departments and agencies that already have significant involvement in supporting people with disabilities. Such organizations have the most to gain from involvement in improved horizontal management of disabilities issues, and are most likely to sustain interest and be committed to joint action.

> *"Without a spirit of teamwork, horizontal initiatives will not succeed. This makes the capacity to mobilize teams and networks indispensable. In turn, it means dialogue, open channels of communication, building a shared vocabulary, and recognizing and respecting differences."* [23]

Building on existing progress, ODI will facilitate the development of two disability action plans, one for HRDC and one for the Government of Canada.

Action plans are the tools through which teams transform their commitment into sustained action to produce results.

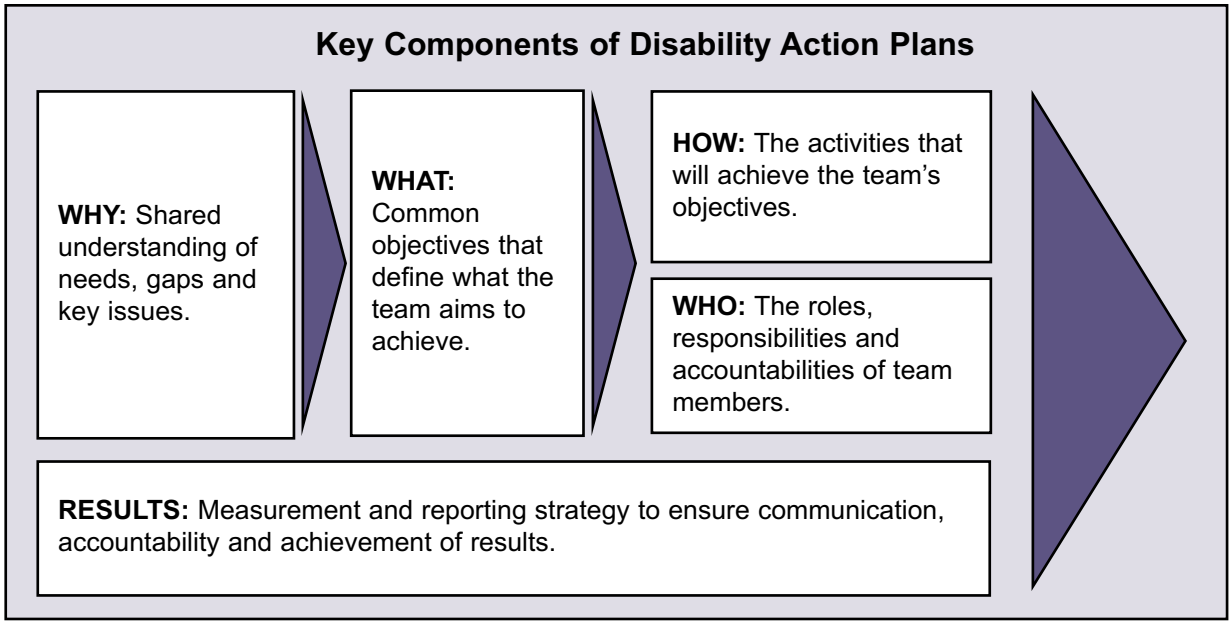
ODI will facilitate engagement of the voluntary sector in horizontal government initiatives.

ODI believes that disability organizations can make a significant contribution to public policy and program development. These organizations bring to the table an in-depth understanding of the needs of their constituencies and detailed knowledge of what is happening at the community level.

COMPLETING WORK IN PROGRESS

Working with other federal departments and agencies, ODI will develop and release the first Government of Canada disability report.

In a recent response to the Sub-Committee on the Status of Persons with Disabilities, the Government of Canada committed to improve public reporting and accountability to Canadians on disability issues. ODI will deliver on this commitment to strengthen the foundation for interdepartmental collaboration.



[23] Canadian Centre for Management Development, *Moving From the Heroic to the Everyday: Lessons Learned in Leading Horizontal Projects*, 2001.

Working with other federal departments and agencies, ODI will lead a review of definitions of the term disability used by the Government of Canada.

This activity responds to concerns raised by voluntary organizations, individuals with disabilities and Parliamentarians regarding perceived inconsistencies in definitions of the term disability used by various government departments to determine eligibility for programs.

ODI will assess current federal instruments designed to integrate ways of meeting the needs of Canadians with disabilities into mainstream policies, programs and legislation.

A range of instruments designed to ensure access and inclusion are currently in place. ODI will develop a framework to increase awareness and understanding of the availability of these instruments and their purposes.

EMPLOYABILITY ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (EAPD)

ODI will continue to work with HRDC Regions and provinces to ensure successful implementation of EAPD, and to develop new directions for a successor program.

The Government of Canada has committed $193 million annually to EAPD, a joint federal-provincial initiative to help working-age adults with disabilities prepare for, obtain and retain employment. In 1997, the Government of Canada and all provinces, except Quebec, agreed on a Multilateral Framework for EAPD, which formed the basis of subsequent bilateral agreements with each province. These bilateral agreements are set to expire on March 31, 2003 (while Quebec did not endorse the Multilateral Framework the province did sign a bilateral agreement).

Results

- Stronger teams and improved structures to support horizontal management within HRDC and the Government of Canada.
- Better understanding among federal officials as to what they jointly aim to achieve on disability issues, how they plan to work together to achieve it, and how they will measure and report on outcomes.
- Enhanced communication and stronger working relationships among federal officials working collaboratively on disability issues and more engagement of partners outside the Government of Canada.
- More coherent and integrated federal policies and programs for Canadians with disabilities.
- More focus on meeting the needs of Canadians with disabilities in mainstream policies, programs and legislation.
- More effective and efficient federal programs providing support to people with disabilities.

Direction #2: Capacity

COHERENCE • **CAPACITY** • NETWORKS • KNOWLEDGE • EXCELLENCE

Strategic objective

Through strategic investment, to improve the capacity of national disability organizations (NDOs) to partner with government to achieve shared policy and program goals.

On December 5, 2001, the Prime Minister of Canada announced *An Accord Between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector*. The purpose was to strengthen the relationship between the voluntary sector and the federal government and enhance the capacity of the voluntary sector, to better serve Canadians. As part of the accord, the government and the voluntary sector have developed a *Code of Good Practice on Funding*, released in October 2002.

> *"The Government of Canada and the voluntary sector have long worked side-by-side. Now, the* Accord between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector *marks the launch of a new era of co-operation and respect."* [24]

The *Code of Good Practice on Funding* recognizes the need to strengthen sustainable capacity within the voluntary sector. Sustainable capacity means having sufficient resources, expertise and infrastructure to allow organizations to carry out their mandate over time.

NDOs make up a significant part of the voluntary sector. ODI has been supporting NDOs to promote the full participation of Canadians with disabilities through the Disability Component of the Social Development Partnerships Program. ODI's main concern is to strengthen NDOs' capacity to make a meaningful contribution to public policy and program development, as opposed to providing organizational support for NDOs that primarily deliver services.

The Government of Canada has recognized the need to engage the voluntary sector in open, informed and sustained dialogue so that the sector can contribute its experience and knowledge to develop better public policies and programs. ODI wants to ensure that NDOs have the capacity to participate effectively in this dialogue, through all stages of the process: identification of issues, setting agendas, policy and program design, implementation, monitoring and impact assessment.

Through its program funding, ODI will work to invest more strategically in the capacity of NDOs to participate in policy and program development. A particular emphasis will be encouraging NDOs to reach out across sectors to build new working partnerships with the provinces and territories, universities and research institutes, employers, labour unions and other voluntary organizations.

[24] Government of Canada, *An Accord Between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector*, Message from the Prime Minister, 2001.

Activities

ODI will re-orient its program funding to more equitably and strategically invest in the capacity of NDOs to participate in policy and program development.

ODI's goal is to advance the national disability policy and program agenda, a goal shared with partner NDOs. ODI currently provides grants to promote NDOs' capacity to represent people with disabilities as full and equal citizens in Canadian society. ODI will engage in a program renewal exercise with the following objectives:

- improving the sustainability of NDOs by helping them to diversify their funding sources and develop new partnerships;
- improving the capacity of NDOs to have a meaningful impact through all stages of the public policy and program development process;
- ensuring achievement of results through improved effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and reporting of outcomes, both within ODI and the NDOs receiving program funding; and
- reviewing and re-focusing ODI's current program objectives, priorities, eligibility criteria and processes to ensure that funding has the most beneficial impact possible on the national disability policy and program agenda.

Building on existing work, ODI's next step will be to engage with current recipients of its program funding and other experts to answer several key questions:

- What is most needed to advance the policy and program agenda on disability issues in Canada?
- What do NDOs bring to the public policy and program development table, individually and as a sector? What results have they been able to achieve?
- What do NDOs need to contribute but have been unable to, either individually or as a sector? What results have not been achieved? Where is there overlap and duplication?
- What are the key gaps in the capacity of NDOs to make a meaningful contribution to policy and program development? What are the attributes of a successful and thriving model voluntary organization that is having an impact on public policy and program development?
- How could existing funding be used more effectively to fill these gaps? How could eligibility criteria be improved to fit with the attributes of a model organization?
- What would a multi-year strategic plan to fill these gaps look like, including objectives, activities, expected results, performance indicators and public reporting? What type of business planning process would be required?
- How could this type of planning process be incorporated into ODI's current program funding?

As ODI re-orients its program funding, it will engage with clients to strengthen current partnerships; build an environment of trust and transparency; and allow adequate time for transition.

ODI recognizes that as it modernizes its program funding, those now receiving support will have concerns about what the changes will mean for them. ODI will work as openly as possible with clients, taking an evolutionary approach that builds on proven effective practices.

ODI will also provide organizations with sufficient time to plan for and make transitions that are required.

ODI will focus on building the capacity of NDOs as a sector — encouraging collaboration, integration, priority setting and specialization — to reduce existing overlap and duplication.
ODI will work with NDOs to assess the extent to which there is overlap and duplication of work within the sector, with a view to maximizing the value of program funding.

Results

- Improved systems and processes within ODI to strategically invest in the capacity of NDOs to partner with government on shared priorities.
- More capacity within NDOs to contribute effectively to public policy and program development.
- Improved collaboration among NDOs and partnerships with other sectors.
- More involvement of NDOs and other sectors in public policy and program development.
- NDOs funded by ODI are better able to measure and report on the results of their efforts through effective evaluation.
- An effective working relationship between ODI and NDOs.

Direction #3: Networks

COHERENCE • CAPACITY
• **NETWORKS** • KNOWLEDGE
• EXCELLENCE

Strategic objective

To develop and maintain a cohesive action-oriented network of current and new partners.

Numerous government and non-governmental organizations work in support of Canadians with disabilities, representing a large **community of practice**. While some efforts are made to collaborate, many organizations simply do not talk to each other nor work in concert. Networks have tended to develop around specific individuals or projects and to disintegrate when individuals move on or projects end.

In the field of disability issues, where responsibility is shared, progress depends on key partners being able to contact each other in a timely manner, share information and plan for joint action. This capacity does not currently exist, making it very difficult for government and non-governmental organizations to engage with each other effectively.

To improve this situation, ODI will provide the focal point for creating a national disability network. In doing so, it will be easier for partners to connect with each other; share lessons learned and effective practices; foster strong relationships; build trust; and get the best advice possible.

Activities

ODI will identify, engage and develop a profile of possible members of a national disability network.
The network will include: federal/provincial/territorial officials, national voluntary sector leaders, business and labour leaders, and researchers. In effect, these partners constitute ODI's community of practice. ODI will keep the networks to a manageable size, by focusing efforts on individuals who express a keen interest in membership. The idea is to build the network out from a small core of committed and knowledgeable individuals who are well positioned to contribute to the network.

ODI will build an accessible communication infrastructure through interactive Web-based technology for the use of all network members.
ODI will use the Web site to: provide information on where network members work and what they do; allow network members and others to communicate with each other electronically; post information (advertise upcoming events, announce new initiatives, disseminate research studies and evaluations, etc.); and engage in dialogue on key topics. The Web site will also facilitate the dissemination of results of initiatives funded through the Disability Component of the Social Development Partnerships Program.

ODI will explore opportunities for network members to meet and share information.
One possibility is for ODI to co-host an annual conference, in partnership with another federal department or agency, a provincial or territorial ODI, and an NDO. The purpose of the event would be to enhance the cohesiveness of the network and allow members to share information on effective practices, policy and program trends, and emerging issues. A publication could result, reporting on the "state of the nation" regarding disability issues, and information could be updated on an ongoing basis.

ODI will assess the feasibility of building an international information-sharing network of other organizations, in Canada and abroad, that have a government-wide mandate to coordinate and lead disability issues.
At present there is no national or international network of government disability organizations. We need to find better ways to share effective practices and information on policy and program trends.

Working with other federal departments and agencies, ODI will monitor and analyse key developments on disability issues at the international level and support the development of the Government of Canada position as required.
Disability issues have a high profile within the international social policy and development community. The United Nations has taken a leadership role, supported by nations like Canada, in promoting full participation and equal opportunity for people with disabilities.

Results

- Improved infrastructure and opportunities for intra- and intersectoral communication, information sharing and coordination.

- More intra- and intersectoral communication, information sharing and coordination.
- Better working relationships and understanding within and across sectors.
- More intra- and intersectoral collaboration leading to concerted joint actions promoting the full participation of people with disabilities, in Canada and abroad.

Direction #4: Knowledge

COHERENCE • CAPACITY • NETWORKS • **KNOWLEDGE** • EXCELLENCE

Strategic objective

To develop and provide sound knowledge on disability issues, to inform policy and program development and build awareness. [25]

Research activities in the field of disability issues are carried out by a wide range of organizations, including universities, research institutes, government departments, service delivery organizations, professional associations and advocacy groups. The work conducted reflects the diversity of disability issues, from research on learning needs of Aboriginal children with visual impairments to accessibility of local transportation systems in central Canada.

While all of this research is useful in particular circumstances, there is still a need for research that can meaningfully advance policy and program development at a national level — research that is linked to government priorities and that is relevant to the whole population of Canadians with disabilities. To help meet this need, ODI will support research activities that have a clear link to specific government priorities. The goal will be to help advance the policy agenda with knowledge that is useful and readily accessible. There is consensus on the need for focused research that will fill key gaps in knowledge that are preventing progress in policy development. ODI will engage disability organizations in setting research priorities.

ODI will also share knowledge with others working in government, and make an effort to translate the results of research activities into information that can be used in the design of policies, programs and legislation related to disability issues.

Activities

ODI will engage in targeted research activities as required in support of collaborative action on disability issues within HRDC and the Government of Canada.

These activities will be designed to fill key gaps in the knowledge base that are a barrier to progress in policy development. The research will provide baseline data on the unmet needs of people with disabilities, gaps in the support system, effective practices and innovative policy solutions.

[25] See Appendix B for a description of key elements of the knowledge base.

ODI will continue to support Government of Canada communications with the public on disability issues by answering specific enquiries and building awareness.
ODI currently participates in a number of activities in this area by supporting the work of Communication Canada, answering e-enquiries and participating in the Government-on-Line initiative.

ODI will re-orient its funding program to more strategically fill gaps in the knowledge base so as to advance disability policy and program development.
This activity will include implementing new administrative processes and working with partners in and outside government to set priorities for multi-year research initiatives. The priority-setting exercise will be grounded in existing government priorities as set out in the Speech from the Throne. In the immediate future, ODI will focus on ensuring that the new national data from the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2001 is analysed and disseminated.

ODI will take action to support research activities with new partners in the research community.
As well as improving the knowledge base, the goal of this activity is to foster new partnerships across sectors, particularly between the voluntary sector and the research community (e.g., universities and policy research institutes) and to leverage financial or in-kind support from other sources, including other federal departments and agencies, provinces and territories, private foundations and universities.

ODI will support better dissemination of the results of the research projects that it funds.
ODI will work with those who receive funding to ensure that the results of their work is made available to the wider community of practice.

Based on the availability of resources, ODI will sponsor fora that allow partners to present and discuss research findings and priorities.
Fora will provide opportunities for key partners to report on the outcomes of their research efforts, identify ongoing challenges and gaps in the knowledge base, and plan for the future.

Results

- Improved capacity and processes to support and conduct research activities within ODI and among partners.
- Increased participation by researchers in universities and policy research institutes in initiatives funded by ODI.
- Available data is systematically analysed and shaped into needed tools and products recognized to be credible and of high quality.
- More consensus among key partners on key gaps in the knowledge base and priorities for new research initiatives.
- More focused and accessible research products that are being used in disability policy and program development.

Direction #5: Excellence

COHERENCE • CAPACITY
• NETWORKS • KNOWLEDGE
• **EXCELLENCE**

Strategic objective

To achieve excellence in all ODI's policy and program activities.

To build an organization founded on excellence means fostering a workplace that recognizes the individual contributions of staff and encourages learning, creativity and diversity. Without a skilled and motivated team of individuals who take pride in their work, ODI will not be able to achieve its vision of providing a national focal point and demonstrating leadership. ODI must also improve the way it communicates and manages knowledge. Finally, it must improve capacity for effective strategic planning, performance measurement and public reporting.

Activities

ODI will develop and implement a human resources development plan for the Directorate.

The purpose of this plan will be threefold:

- To recruit and retain qualified staff members;
- To provide learning opportunities to ensure that the ODI team has the ability to deliver on commitments through innovation and creativity; and
- To model employment of people with disabilities by ensuring effective workplace accommodations and a high degree of awareness of disability issues among all team members.

> *"The performance of public servants and their self-esteem depend not only on how they are perceived by the public but on the quality of the human resources management system under which they work."* [26]

ODI will improve its existing systems for internal communication and knowledge management.

Consultations with ODI staff conveyed a very consistent message: as an organization, ODI needs to do a much better job of communicating, sharing and storing information. To achieve this goal, ODI will develop a directorate-wide approach that will ensure all ODI staff know what other groups within the organization are doing and have ready access to available information.

ODI will implement a business planning and reporting strategy to maximize effectiveness and accountability to Canadians.

This strategic plan sets out directions for ODI until the end of fiscal year 2006–07. It will form the basis of ODI's annual business plan, to be completed prior to the start of the fiscal year (April 1). The business plan will state how and when ODI will fulfil its commitments through the fiscal year. Each fall, ODI will issue a report on progress in fulfilling its commitments based on information in the Departmental Performance Report. At the end of fiscal year 2006–07, ODI will provide a comprehensive accounting of the extent to which the Office has achieved the expected results set out in this strategic plan. At the beginning of fiscal year 2006–07, the Office will begin development of a new multi-year strategic plan.

[26] Institute of Public Administration of Canada, *Rediscovering Public Service: Recognizing the Value of an Essential Institution*, 2000.

"Difficult dilemmas arise from the tension between accountability and such new emphases as empowerment and innovation that require a greater measure of autonomy and risk-taking among officials… The challenge for public servants is, as far as possible, to let citizens have it both ways." [27]

Results

- More capacity to achieve strategic objectives within the ODI team.
- Improved systems to facilitate communication, knowledge management and results-based management and accountability.
- More effective and efficient implementation of key policy and program activities within ODI.
- Increased understanding of and satisfaction with ODI's policy and program activities among partners within and outside government.

[27] Kenneth Kernaghan, *Rediscovering Public Service: Recognizing the Value of an Essential Institution*, 2000.

Appendix A
Definition of the voluntary sector

An Accord Between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector **describes the voluntary sector as follows:**

- This sector consists of organizations that exist to serve a public benefit, are self-governing, do not distribute any profits to members, and depend to a meaningful degree on volunteers. Membership or involvement in these organizations is not compulsory, and they are independent of, and institutionally distinct from the formal structures of government and the private sector. Although many voluntary sector organizations rely on paid staff to carry out their work, all depend on volunteers, at least on their boards of directors.
- The voluntary sector is large, consisting of an estimated 180 000 non-profit organizations (of which 80 000 are registered as charities) and hundreds of thousands more volunteer groups that are not incorporated. In 2000, 6.5 million people volunteered their time to a voluntary sector organization and the sector employed a further 1.3 million people. This diverse multitude of organizations ranges from small community-based groups to large, national umbrella organizations and includes such organizations as neighbourhood associations, service clubs, advocacy coalitions, food banks, shelters, transition houses, symphonies and local sports clubs.

Appendix B
The knowledge base needed for policy and program development

What we need to know to develop good policies and programs:

To develop good policies and programs in support of people with disabilities and their families, certain types of information are always required. This knowledge is essential regardless of the **population** (e.g., all people with disabilities, children with disabilities, or adults with disabilities in the work force) or the **purpose** of policies or programs (e.g., to promote employment, facilitate access to learning and skills development, or provide community-based housing).

- What is the **population** we are dealing with? How do we define this population?
- What are the basic **demographic characteristics** of the population (e.g., age, severity of disability, gender and ethnicity)?
- What are the **needs and aspirations** of this population for participation in society?
- What is the **participation status** of the population? How well is the population participating in certain learning, work and/or community activities? What are the benefits of participation and the costs of non-participation for individuals, families and society?
- What **programs** are being provided to meet these needs by governments, the voluntary/non-profit sector, the private/for-profit sector? What are the results or outcomes of these interventions?
- What are the key **unmet needs** of individuals and gaps in the current system? What evidence is there that these unmet needs and gaps contribute to the current status of people with disabilities?
- What **effective practices** are being employed in Canada and abroad? What is the evidence that success is being achieved?
- What specific **policy solutions** could the public and private sectors consider? How will these solutions address needs and gaps and build on proven effective practices? What will be the benefits and costs to individuals, families and society? How will outcomes be measured?

NOTES