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Discussion Guide

Looking Into the Future of Indigenous Labour Market Programming

Engagement 2016



Looking Into the Future of Indigenous Labour Market Programming — Discussion Guide

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Framing the Conversation

The Government of Canada has a long history of developing and delivering employment and skills training programs with Indigenous communities and organizations. Over time, these labour market programs have moved consistently in the direction of a design and delivery model that is flexible, inclusive, and participatory, in which communities have extensive input in the design, delivery and outcomes of the programs.

Over the last 30 years, there have been significant changes in social, political, economic and legal environments for Indigenous peoples. The federal government is committed to a renewed relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition, rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership.

The current environment presents an opportunity for an examination of our approach to ensure Indigenous labour market programming is responsive to communities, reflects current priorities and is adaptive to future visions.

In your opinion, what is a renewed relationship for ESDC Indigenous Labour Market programming?

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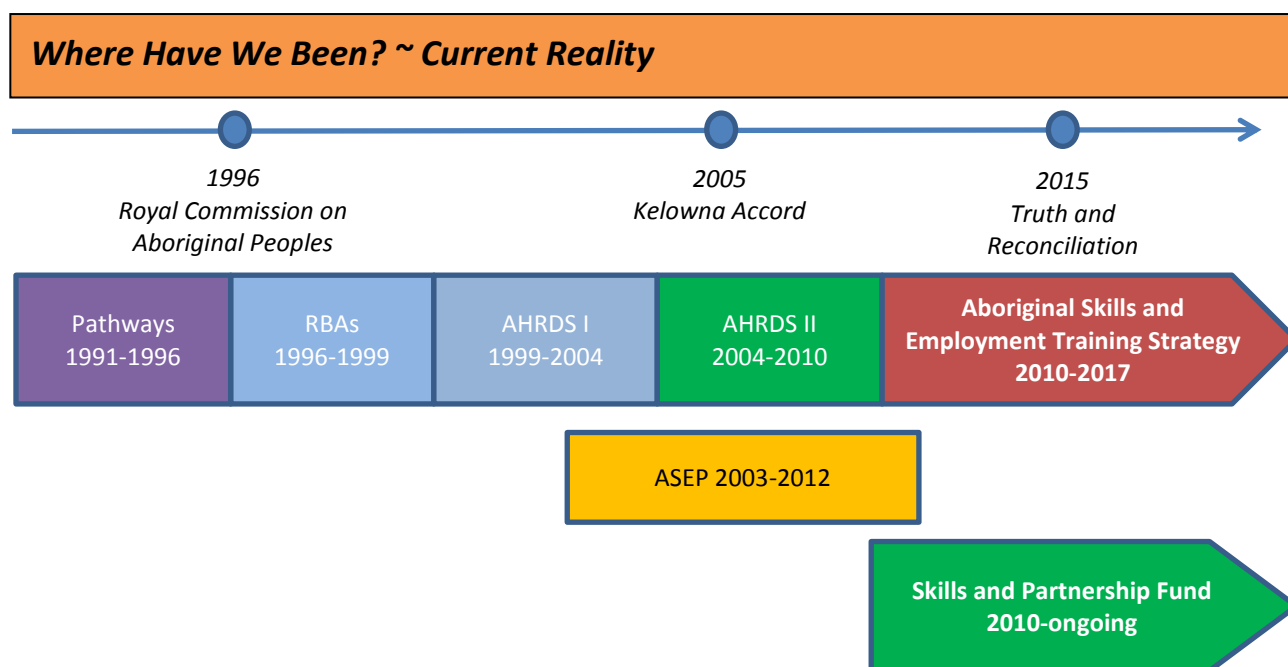
LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE OF INDIGENOUS LABOUR MARKET PROGRAMMING

How does this relationship impact how we work together?

[illegible]

What is your vision of Indigenous Labour Market Programming?

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Pathways to Success, introduced in 1990, focused on local Aboriginal control and responsibility for employment training. Following Pathways, ESDC signed National Framework Agreements (NFAs) with the Metis National Council, the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, and the Assembly of First Nations to enable the development and delivery of labour market programming that was flexible and sensitive to the needs of Aboriginal communities. The guiding principle of the NFAs was equality of access to programs for all Aboriginal people, including sub-groups such as women and persons with disabilities.

The NFA established a framework to guide the development of the Regional Bilateral Agreements (RBAs) with Indigenous communities across Canada, which provided funding to 54 Indigenous organizations for the design and delivery of employment and skills development programs.

As part of the federal government's response to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples report *Gathering Strength*, the RBAs were replaced with the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS) in 1999. The AHRDS laid the foundation for the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) by establishing a network of over 80 Indigenous organizations responsible for the design and delivery of supply-oriented skills development programming.

The current program has been in place since 2010. Engagement sessions took place across Canada in 2013 and 2014 to gather views and recommendations on ASETS to prepare for future programming. Some of the points raised were funding, child care, capacity, reporting burden, labour market information, multi-barriered clients, K-12 education, program duration, definition of demand-driven, and temporary foreign workers. Many areas related to partnerships were also explored such as reporting, government partnerships, partner contributions, incentives, informal partnership, and availability of partners.

Currently, the overall objective of the ASETS is to *“Increase Aboriginal participation in the Canadian labour market, ensuring that First Nations, Métis and Inuit people are engaged in sustainable, meaningful employment.”*

Program outcomes are:

Direct Outcomes

- Agreement holders have the capacity to design and deliver labour market programs, services and childcare supports;
- Partners and employers are aware of and engaged in developing labour market programs, services and childcare supports;
- Aboriginal labour market programming is coordinated and responsive to labour market supply and demand;
- Agreement holders deliver labour market programs, services and childcare supports; and
- Aboriginal people are aware of and have access to labour market programs, services and childcare supports

Intermediate Outcomes

- Aboriginal people have the appropriate skills and supports;
- Employers are increasingly aware of active participants in labour market development;
- Partnerships are leveraged to support workplace and skills development for Aboriginal people.

Ultimate Outcomes

- Aboriginal people are increasingly employable and integrated into the labour market.

Are the program outcomes still relevant to your communities and the population you serve?

[illegible]

What are some of the challenges you face?

Do the current outcomes reflect enough of what you do? What other services do you offer that aren't captured under these outcomes?

Where Do We Need to go? ~ Building blocks of the ideal program

The Indigenous population is young and the fastest growing in Canada. Over the next decade, about 400,000 young Indigenous people are expected to join the Indigenous working age population. For the same time period, the Indigenous labour force aged 25-64 will grow four times more than the non-Aboriginal labour force of the same age.

Funding for Aboriginal labour market programs has helped establish a network of high functioning and highly successful employment centres that serve Indigenous clients.

Despite this progress, there continues to be a number of barriers to employment for Indigenous people and our programs are not significantly impacting the overall economic status of Indigenous peoples.

Going forward, Indigenous labour market programming should be poised to help eliminate the employment rate gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations and also address the particular needs of each community.

Within this context, where can we go next with Indigenous labour market programming? How can we ensure Indigenous people are able to access supports to enter into employment and remain employed?

**In your opinion, what should be the main focus of Indigenous labour market programming?
From a service-delivery perspective, which key elements should be included to provide a continuum of supports? (See Annex A for definitions)**

- Needs-based vs. demand driven
- Case Management
- Wrap-around services
- Place-based approaches
- Minimum levels of service
- Post-secondary education
- Child care

(Continued):

How can renewed and expanded Indigenous Labour Market Programming better support different communities and vulnerable groups?

- Youth
- Women
- Northern Communities
- Multi-barriered clients
- Out-of-territory clients
- Urban Clients
- Income Assistance Clients

(Continued):

Operational changes and arrangements

The operational relationship between ESDC/Service Canada and service delivery providers has shifted over time. As we move towards renewed Indigenous labour market programming, there is an opportunity to take stock of current operational strengths and identify challenges to enabling a program that remains flexible, and adapts to community needs. Meaningful indicators at the community level, coupled with reliable Indigenous labour market information can inform effective decisions regarding program design and delivery.

In the context of renewal, how do you see the role of Governance going forward?

What tools or supports does ESDC need to put in place to enable changes?

- **Facilitation of partnerships**
 - **Training of employment counsellors**
 - **With Employers and Industry**
- **New reporting and Results / Data needs and availability**
- **Labour market information**
- **Accountability and Governance**

(Continued):

How long would it take you to implement these potential changes?

Please send us your comments or additional views by emailing NC-ASETS-ENGAGEMENT-SFCEA-HR-RH-GD@hrsdcc.gc.ca until **September 2, 2016**.

Other comments:

[illegible]

[illegible]

Glossary

- **Needs-based vs demand driven:** needs-based approaches focus on addressing the needs of individual clients while demand driven approaches place a greater emphasis on providing clients with training and skills that will help to meet the demands of the labour market. Labour market programming can encompass both approaches but may prioritize one over the other.
- **Case management:** although not a minimum level of service, case management is a process that can be used to support an individual as he/she works through an employment action plan; it is recommended that a similar process be used for each client participating in an intervention under ASETS.
- **Wrap-around services:** the term wrap-around services refers to a holistic approach that encompasses client supports through all the stages of labour market participation (i.e. from needs assessment to training plan development, implementation, transition to employment, ongoing monitoring and support for long-term success) and that also takes into consideration the needs of clients across a range of life areas (e.g. health, housing, childcare).
- **Place-based approaches:** this type of approach may target supports to certain “places”, often geographic areas or communities. The needs of these “places” may be prioritized ahead of the specific needs of individual clients.
- **Minimum levels of service:** ASETS organizations offer a minimum level of service to all Aboriginal clients, regardless of culture, status or residency, including First Nation, on or off reserve, non-status Indians, Métis and Inuit.
- **Post-secondary education:** post-secondary education (PSE) refers to the pursuit of an apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma including college, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma; university certificate or diploma below bachelor level; or a university degree. Currently ASETS focusses on providing labour market programming support of two years or less which allows for some types of PSE but not others.
- **Child care:** support for the care and nurturing of children while primary care providers pursue labour market training and/or employment.
- **Youth:** activities in support of youth (age 15-30 years).
- **Northern communities:** clients in many Northern communities may face unique challenges to labour market success related to remoteness, increased costs of living, transportation, housing, and access to employment opportunities.
- **Multi-barriered clients:** some clients face multiple barriers to labour market success. Assisting these clients may necessitate more comprehensive and longer-term supports at increased cost.
- **Out-of-territory clients:** this refers to clients who may fall outside the service areas of the current ASETS network.