



Summary: Evaluation of the Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Development Agreement



Program objectives

The Canada-Saskatchewan Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) is a bilateral agreement between Canada and Saskatchewan for the design and delivery of Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSMs). The objective of EBSMs is to assist individuals to obtain or keep employment.

The following benefits and measures are examined in the evaluation:

- **Skills Training** helps participants obtain employment skills by giving them financial assistance in order to attend classroom training.
- **Self-Employment** provides financial assistance and business planning advice to participants to help them start their own business.
- **Workforce Development** provides services such as counselling, job search skills, job placement services, provision of labour market information and case management.



The LMDA investment

In fiscal year 2020 to 2021, Canada transferred approximately \$54 million to Saskatchewan.



Evaluation objectives

Building on previous LMDA evaluation cycles, the aim of this evaluation is to fill in knowledge gaps about the effectiveness, efficiency, as well as design and delivery of EBSMs in Saskatchewan.



Evaluation methodology

The findings are drawn from 5 separate evaluation studies that use a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, including:

- Incremental impact analysis for participants who began an intervention between 2010 and 2012
- Outcome analysis
- Cost-benefit analysis (including savings to health care)
- Key informant interviews with 7 program managers and service providers
- Questionnaires completed by provincial officials
- A survey of 49 Self-Employment participants in Saskatchewan
- Document and literature reviews





Key findings

Participation in most EBSMs improved their labour market attachment and reduced dependence on government income supports compared to similar non-participants.

With some exceptions, Skills Training improved the labour market attachment and reduced use of income support for most subgroups of participants. Female, male, youth, older worker and Indigenous participants who only received Workforce Development improved their labour market attachment.

For most interventions, the benefits accrued by participants and the government exceeded the costs of investments over time.

The evaluation also found that:

- Based on a survey of 49 participants in the Self-Employment program, nearly 68% of respondents launched a business during program participation that was still in operation in winter 2020 (between 2 to 4 years after program completion). What is more, 70% of all respondents maintained or improved their level of income compared to the pre-program period.
- After participating in Skills Training, apprentices increased their employment earnings and decreased their use of government income supports.



Recommendations

The evaluation made 2 recommendations.

Recommendation # 1: ESDC and Saskatchewan are encouraged to share and discuss lessons learned, best practices and challenges associated with the design and delivery of EI-funded programming. Discussions are encouraged at the bilateral or multilateral levels as well as with service delivery network if necessary.

Recommendation # 2: ESDC and Saskatchewan are encouraged to pursue efforts to maintain and strengthen data collection provisions in support of reporting, performance measurement and data-driven evaluations at the national and provincial levels.