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Labour Market Study

A Community-Based Research Report for
Mamaweswen: the North Shore Tribal Council, Naadmaadwuiik, Saulteaux Enterprises,
and the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement

Christine Sy, Gayle Broad, Natalie Waboose, and Heather Schmidt

A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite

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Entreprises sociales
économies intelligentes
et communautés durables

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Miigwech to all the citizens of Garden River, Mississauga, Serpent River,
Sagamok Anishnawbek, and Atikameksheng Anishnawbek
who participated in the project.

Miigwech to the service providers in the First Nations communities in Sudbury,
and in Sault Ste. Marie who contributed their experience, insight,
and time to this project.

Miigwech also to NORDIK researchers Heather Schmidt, Christine Sy,
and Natalie Waboose, as well as community researchers Deanna Jones, Garden River;
Holly Niganobe, Mississauga; Marsha Trudeau, Sagamok Anishnawbek;
and Colleen King, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek.

Project Supervisors: Annie Austin, Naadmaadwiiuk co-ordinator;
Gayle Broad, director, NORDIK Institute

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Institute for Social Research at the University of Saskatchewan,
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the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg,
and the Community Economic and Social Development Unit
at Algoma University.

The project also includes more than fifty community-based organizations
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The opinions of the authors found herein do not necessarily reflect those
of the LLL project, the NORDIK Institute, the Social Sciences and Humanities
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Executive Summary

Mamaweswen, the North Shore Tribal Council (NSTC), has administered the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA) on behalf of Service Canada since 1999. The NSTC was created to meet the needs of First Nations people located between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury along the North Shore of Lake Huron in the Province of Ontario. While Mamaweswen is the AHRDA holder, employment and training services are provided by two subagreements with Naadmaadwiiuk and Saulteaux Enterprises. Naadmaadwiiuk is housed in the NSTC branch office in Blind River, while Saulteaux Enterprises is located on Sagamok Anishnawbek and serves the membership of that First Nation. Naadmaadwiiuk serves members of the remaining four First Nations — Serpent River, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek (formerly Whitefish Lake), Mississauga, and Garden River.

The NSTC Human Resources Development Agreement's Annual Capacity Building Plans, submitted from 2005 through to 2009, identified the need for a labour market survey and contracted the NORDIK Institute, a community-based research institute at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, to conduct the research. The goals were, first, to support the development of a new strategic plan and business plan for the NSTC with regard to employment and training, and second, to identify any current partnership agreements (e.g., with federal/provincial/territorial organizations and/or the public/private sector) that work towards creating local community jobs and/or enhancing training opportunities.

NORDIK commenced the project in early April 2009, training community-based researchers to administer a survey in four communities (Serpent River First Nation had conducted a survey in 2008, so did not participate in this stage of the research). The researchers

collected 424 surveys and analyzed the data using SPSS.[1] They augmented this quantitative data with qualitative information gathered through ten interviews with service providers, two focus groups, two interviews with minority populations (youth and persons with disabilities), and a consultation with Serpent River First Nation. They also carried out a literature review that explored issues pertinent to Aboriginal labour markets.

The research concluded that Anishinaabek peoples within the five participating First Nations face many challenges in finding suitable employment. Some of the most significant barriers include a lack of employment opportunities, a limited variety of types of work, and a lack of employment that fits well with Anishinaabek values. Some of the most promising strategies in overcoming these barriers include partnerships between and among service providers and other community organizations, supportive programs, and the continuity of Anishinaabe culture.

The research has generated recommendations under two categories.

Recommendations to Improve Service Provision

1. Build, strengthen, and where necessary, restore relationships between service providers and communities in order to maximize co-ordination and benefits. Restoring relationships may require addressing areas of tension that fractured relationships historically.
2. Develop partnerships with organizations providing support services such as crisis counseling to ensure clients have access to an array of services that meet the needs of the whole person.
3. Initiate a dialogue with youth, and between youth and youth service providers, regarding concerns related to employment and training (see full discussion in the section titled "Research Findings and Analysis," p. 17). This would include exploring the realities of students and employment opportunities and concerns related to developing dependency.
4. Identify areas of potential exclusions from programs, such as those that may have gender, age, or ability biases, and implement strategies to address these.
5. Support client advocacy at and between each site within the system: client to service provider or employer; service provider to First Nations community/LDM;[2] service provider to funder and potential partner.

1. Originally, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The acronym is now the actual name.
2. Local Delivery Mechanism.

6. Strengthen communication strategies to ensure community members are aware of how to access supports to training, education, and employment.

7. Provide training to increase awareness of Canadian labour market structures and functions (i.e., how the labour market is segmented at sites of race, gender, and ability) and the historical relationship(s) between this market and Anishinaabek people.

Recommendations to Address Structural Issues

1. Indigenize education, training, and employment services and the labour market. Develop curricula that reflect Anishinaabek knowledge and practical forms of labour such as artisan work, wilderness survival skills, and environmental expertise. Utilize Anishinaabek philosophy of gifts, responsibilities, and personal visions to shape Anishinaabek "labour forces."

2. Develop community vision(s) for socio-economic well-being, including member visions of how they see themselves contributing. NSTC's Human Resources Development Agreement programs can then work closely with communities to assist in creating these visions.

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Editor's note: Readers will observe some differentiation in the spelling of the word "Anishinaabek." This is due to different anglicizations of the word in particular contexts as well as customary usage among individual First Nations groups.

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BACKGROUND

Mamaweswen, the North Shore Tribal Council (NSTC), has administered the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA) since 1999. Established through the federal government via Service Canada, this agreement was created to meet the needs of First Nations people located between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury along the North Shore of Lake Huron in the Province of Ontario. While Mamaweswen is the AHRDA holder, employment and training services are provided by two subagreements, first with Naadmaadwiiuk, housed in the NSTC branch office in Blind River, and second with Saulteaux Enterprises, located on Sagamok Anishnawbek, which services the membership of that First Nation. Naadmaadwiiuk serves the membership of the remaining four First Nations — Serpent River, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek (formerly Whitefish Lake), Mississauga, and Garden River.

The NSTC Human Resources Development Agreement's Annual Capacity Building Plans, submitted from 2005 through to 2009, identified the need for a labour market survey. The survey would assess community needs regarding employment and training and support the development of a new strategic plan and business plan. A second objective was to identify current partnership agreements (e.g., with federal/provincial/territorial organizations and/or the public/private sector) that work towards creating local community jobs and/or enhancing training opportunities.

NORDIK is a research institute associated with the Community Economic and Social Development program of Algoma University. It conducts community-based research with a wide variety of community partners. Its holistic approach is based on collaborative, community-university partnerships wherein communities identify their research needs and questions and are supported by university-trained researchers, many of whom are drawn from the community itself. This type of approach builds on the strengths and assets of the community and enhances the community's capacity to conduct its own research. The *process* of the research is often of key importance and written up as part of the research outcomes.

This approach fit well with the goals of the NSTC employment and training unit for this project:

- to undertake a consultation process that would be effective in conducting the research
- to hire and train local community members to distribute labour market surveys
- to obtain community input regarding NSTC's provision of training and employment services

This document presents existing labour market literature and services, as well as a diverse range of voices from within the five participating First Nations communities. Researchers anticipate that the process of community consultation has enabled Naadmaadwiiuk and Saulteaux Enterprises to build a closer relationship with the communities whom they serve.

It is hoped that the inclusion of First Nations community members has created space for empowered participation for the current project and for future endeavours regarding Anishinaabek employment and training services. Their participation has helped to ensure that their ideas, experiences, and needs are more thoroughly understood, which should increase the NSTC's ability to develop a service system that is responsive to the communities and to their families.

METHODOLOGY: A COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH APPROACH

Researchers

The researchers for this project were from the communities serviced by Naadmaadwiiuk and Saulteaux Enterprises and from the NORDIK Institute. Naadmaadwiiuk, in partnership with the communities it serves, hired Deanna Jones from Garden River First Nation, Holly Niganobe from Mississauga First Nation, and Colleen King from Atikameksheng Anishnawbek First Nation. Saulteaux Enterprises, in partnership with Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, hired Marsha Trudeau. Researchers from NORDIK included Heather Schmidt, Natalie Waboose, and Christine Sy, who were guided and supported by NORDIK Director Dr. Gayle Broad.

Selection of Methods

AHRDA/Naadmaadwiiuk wished to determine community capacity and assess community needs regarding the following issues:

- labour market attachment of community members within the five First Nations
- current skills, certificates, diplomas, and memberships (i.e., unions)
- employment goals
- training needs in order to attain identified goals
- availability of transportation
- ability to relocate to accept work
- job readiness training
- ability to relocate to attend training/educational courses
- number of youth who will be entering the job market during the next five years
- challenges and concerns for youth
- challenges and concerns for people with (dis)abilities[1]
- federal/provincial/territorial partnership agreements within the five First Nations
- public/private sector partnerships agreements within the five First Nations

Researchers used four methodological approaches to address the requirements of the project goals and to ensure validity: a survey, focus groups, interviews, and a consultation with Serpent River First Nation.

Labour Market Survey Consisting largely of multiple-choice questions and a small number of open-ended questions, the survey was designed for all North Shore First Nation community members. Researchers set a goal of 125 surveys for each participating community (see Appendix A). In total, they collected 424 completed surveys: 132 from Sagamok Anishinawbek, 99 from Garden River, 124 from Mississauga, 68 from Atikameksheng, and 1 (urban-based member) from Serpent River.

Focus Groups The process was intended to conduct surveys with groups who often face extra challenges regarding employment — individuals with disabilities (mental, physical, learning, etc.), youth, women, and urban Aboriginal people (see Appendix B for focus group questions). Only two focus groups actually took place, one with youth and another with individuals with disabilities. Researchers conducted two additional interviews to augment their understanding of the issues facing persons with disabilities.

[1] Parentheses are utilized in (dis)abilities to emphasize the tension that exists on marking the abilities of human beings according to a hierarchy of value. In this case, denoting the full range of abilities of people as being either "abled" or "dis-abled" negates the utter significance of the context in which the person is living.

Interviews Researchers conducted ten interviews with Aboriginal employment and training service providers (i.e., employment officers) from both First Nations and urban service providers (see Appendix D for interview questions).

Consultation with Serpent River First Nation Because Serpent River had already conducted labour market research in 2008 (see Appendix B), researchers held a consultation with community members rather than applying another survey. In discussion with Chief Isadore Day, it was decided that Serpent River government employees would be the most useful sources of community data. The consultation explored community strengths and needs, with a particular eye to bringing urban-based members back to the community to fill gaps in the labour force (see Appendix C for consultation questions).

Participatory Development of Methods and Skills

In order to build local community capacity and to foster an effective community-university research partnership, the AHRDA/Naadmaadwiiuk co-ordinator specified that the survey was to be distributed by community-based researchers drawn from the participating First Nations. To begin this process, each community selected and hired for the position; NORDIK then organized and provided an initial two-day orientation session.

The orientation and training session was designed as an interactive, community-university collaboration. NORDIK personnel provided information about various aspects of the research process (research ethics, Indigenous research, participatory methods, tips for dealing with distrust, representative sampling, etc.). The AHRDA/Naadmaadwiiuk unit co-ordinator provided background information about her agency and its reasons for initiating this community consultation process. The community-based researchers provided feedback and suggestions regarding the language/accessibility/appropriateness of a draft survey tool, consent form, and poster provided by NORDIK. After making group-generated edits and additions to the materials, NORDIK researchers supplied revised copies to the community-based researchers for printing and distribution. NORDIK personnel supported and supervised the community-based researchers at weekly meetings throughout the data-collection phase. Meetings were held in-person every other week, with group meetings via teleconference on alternate weeks.

By creating this space for regular, on-going communication, the community researchers were also frequently able to support and assist each other by sharing their weekly challenges and frustrations, as well as particularly successful distribution strategies. These meetings helped to foster a sense of closeness among the NORDIK researchers, the community researchers, and the AHRDA unit co-ordinator, in addition to a sense of ownership for the project. Furthermore, the weekly meetings proved invaluable to the NORDIK researchers, who were able to solicit feedback from community members that assisted in the development of the qualitative (interview and focus group) methods, as well as in the development of the related participant recruitment strategies.

Community-based researchers were asked to submit a one-page note detailing their methodology in administering surveys. While it was agreed during the orientation session that surveys would be distributed door-to-door, researchers were prepared to utilize additional, more creative methods to obtain the desired 125 surveys per community. One researcher, for example, attended community events and encouraged participation in this way. In another case, a researcher solicited participants first from within her work area, and then broadened outward from the main band administration office. One researcher submitted a methods note describing a community event that she attended, the demographic she was able to engage, and some of the limitations of the survey as relayed to her by participants. She writes:

> I attended community events such as Treaty Day as well as a community forum. I was able to get a wide range of individuals that were happy to participate in the giving of their information. At the Treaty Day, more participants that live off reserve were captured.... The significant barriers of going door to door to get feedback and data from the labour market survey were the duration of the survey (most individuals felt it was too long), the questions regarding income were too personal for some and people would skip the question.

This researcher also expressed appreciation for all the people who responded to the survey.

NORDIK researchers conducted the interviews and focus groups, but also provided a brief "Introduction to Focus Groups" to the community-based researchers during an in-person group meeting. The researchers were invited to assist in co-facilitating the focus groups, but due to

constraints that limited the number of focus groups to two, only one of the four community researchers was able to co-facilitate a session.

Ethical Issues

During some of the face-to-face researcher meetings, ethical questions arose around strategies for recruiting individuals for the focus groups. Linking into an already existing youth group and a women's group (e.g., a mom and tot group) facilitated recruitment of some target audiences, but it proved more challenging to reach individuals with disabilities and urban Aboriginal community members. None of the communities had an existing group for individuals with disabilities; concerns about being stigmatized or marginalized sometimes make identification difficult. Furthermore, the term "disability" can often be an ambiguous label imposed by non-Native society based upon its own culturally subjective norms. There was also a major challenge accessing urban Aboriginal people. Although each of the First Nations has a list of its membership residing outside of the community, the federal government has imposed privacy legislation that effectively prevents anyone from accessing this list for research or information-sharing purposes.

In the end, researchers concluded that it would be best to rely upon personal contacts when organizing focus groups and used a "snowball sampling" process, a technique for accessing difficult-to-reach populations; researchers contact one or two people in the target group and rely on them to recruit others. In this case, the community-based researchers engaged youth group leaders and women's group organizers in their own First Nations, while also encouraging their friends, family, and other acquaintances to participate in the focus groups. In the end, some flexibility was also extended to individuals with disabilities, who were given the option of participating either in a focus group or individual interview.

Scope and Limitations of the Research

The project experienced several challenges, including time constraints and the ongoing difficulty of recruiting a representative sample of respondents.

> **Survey Data Collection** Although community researchers attempted to obtain a representative sample of community members, this was not always possible. Using the

snowball sampling technique resulted in a higher than average response from employed individuals, so the results do not consistently reflect the high unemployment rates of on-reserve residents. This inconsistency in the data collection was counter-balanced by the qualitative data obtained through focus groups and interviews. Both data sets have thus been analyzed in the same section to assure greater validity of findings and recommendations.

Time Constraints Because an initial report was required by mid-August 2009 and the two-day research orientation session was held in the last week of April 2009, researchers had only two months for data collection and less than two months to complete the data analyses and write the report. The final version of the survey was therefore rushed, and two errors were not discovered until over a week into the initial survey distribution period. One oversight was relatively easy to correct (converting participant ages into age categories), but the second oversight resulted in a significant loss of data with regard to one question (regarding salary), which could not be recovered.

Community researchers voiced an interest in seeing individual reports and analyses produced for each community. Although a potentially useful and interesting idea, lack of time and resources to disaggregate the collected quantitative and qualitative data made this impossible. The time constraints also hindered the researchers' ability to organize focus groups, as described above.

Confidentiality/Anonymity/Privacy in Small Communities Due to the size of the participating communities, certain individuals may be easily identifiable simply by virtue of listing their occupation (e.g., employment officer, chief, nurse) and community. In response to this challenge, NORDIK created a confidentiality agreement for all researchers to review, sign, and submit at the beginning of the data collection stage. Nevertheless, community members still needed to perceive a certain amount of personal accountability and trustworthiness in the researchers in order to feel safe enough to agree to participate in the study in the first place and secondly, to respond honestly.

Accessing Urban Community Participation Knowing that at least 50% of the local First Nations membership lives in urban settings (often because of access to jobs, education, and housing), researchers arranged three focus groups with urban Aboriginal employment ser-

vices located in Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. Unfortunately, only one participant from a North Shore First Nation participated. Although researchers discussed alternative strategies, time constraints combined with the necessity of resubmitting an ethics application because of a change in methodology for accessing urban members limited our options. As a last resort, a NORDIK researcher spent several hours stationed in one of the urban Aboriginal employment agencies (which normally has a high rate of drop-in traffic) ready to distribute surveys. Attendance was unusually low, however, and this attempt yielded only two or three completed surveys.

Communication Limits Imposed by Distances In spite of the weekly meetings (via teleconference or in person), it was sometimes difficult for the NORDIK researchers to understand what was happening at the community level as contact wasn't always possible. Occasionally, misunderstandings and errors went unchecked for a week until the subsequent group meeting occurred (e.g., reporting typos or errors on the survey to NORDIK personnel). Individuals missed meetings because of problems with the teleconference system, confusion about meeting time, or other commitments. When this occurred, however, the AHRDA unit co-ordinator took responsibility for contacting the community researcher(s) and providing updates from the meeting in question.

Other Research Initiatives Underway Halfway into the data collection process, it was discovered that people involved in two other research initiatives were distributing surveys concurrently with ours in one of the smaller First Nations. In a community with only about two hundred adults, individuals may simply have been getting tired of completing surveys. In response, the researchers from the three projects initially attempted to divide the community among them so as not to overburden anyone. This slowed the progress and may have contributed to a less representative sample.

Federal Aboriginal Identity Legislation The NSTC is restrained from serving non-members because the government provides the organization with funding to assist in the employment and training needs of only *registered* members of the five First Nations. This applies even to members of other First Nations who are long-time residents within the North Shore First Nations, whether through employment in the community, marriage to a community member, involvement in a long-term relationship, or some other reason. Even

though these individuals may have been actively involved in the community for years and may have expressed interest in participating in the current study, researchers decided reluctantly, after much discussion, that it did not make sense to include them. They could not resolve the concerns around whether feedback from these individuals would pertain to the First Nation in which they were registered or the one in which they resided, and how they would be able to evaluate services for which they were not eligible. Surveys such as that under discussion have the potential for further entrenching divisions among community members who "fit" and "don't fit" government-imposed criteria. It may be beneficial for future projects to develop a strategy to address issues that exclude members/neighbours from research that motivates and interests them and for which they could provide valuable insights.

Data Analysis Methods

Qualitative Interview and Focus Group Data

NORDIK researchers analyzed the interview and focus group data across all First Nations and urban communities using grounded theory methodology.[2] Grounded theory is a well-known process of discerning the underlying patterns in large amounts of text-based data by placing similar quotes from interviews and focus groups in common categories to find key themes that emerge directly from the data (the "theory" that derives is thus firmly "grounded" in the data). Higher-order categories may then be created that encompass similarities among the initially observed themes.

Quantitative Survey Results

Researchers entered the survey data into an SPSS dataset and conducted basic descriptive analyses to examine central tendencies, frequencies, and variable patterns of response among the four participating First Nations communities. For the most part, only aggregated statistical findings (across the four communities) will be shared in this report, due to time constraints and potential community privacy issues.

[2] B.G. Glaser and A.L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1967.)

Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Data and Portraying the Results

The data from interviews, focus groups, and surveys have been combined for presentation in this report according to the four major areas of inquiry indicated on the survey, and those areas that emerged on their own:

- demographics
- education, training, and skills inventory
- employment history, status, needs, and goals
- community assessment and labour market vision
- additional themes that emerged from the qualitative data, including relationships and partnerships, funding, gender, ability, age, and employment sector

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite recent efforts, accurate data on employment, education, and training for Aboriginal peoples in Canada is seriously lacking,[3] but assessments such as the United Nations Human Development Index indicate that this population group's income levels and participation in the labour force lag far behind the Canadian population as a whole. Some of the reasons for this include the disturbance of traditional economies by colonization, the residential school system's serious disruption of family and community life, the exclusion of Aboriginal people from Canadian society,[4] and the poverty arising from all of these.

While statistical data are helpful for providing some insight, there are limitations to its use. Assuming, however, that there is some validity to the reported educational and income differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians, it is important to identify the reasons for this variance. A literature review indicates several possibilities, including colonization, the reserve system, residential schools, and enfranchisement.

The Impact of Colonization on Aboriginal Levels of Educational Achievement

The literature shows that colonial and Euro-Canadian impositions influenced First Nations education and training as well as labour market participation. For instance, the intergenerational impact of residential school trauma (forced assimilation and abuse of Aboriginal children)

[3] J.S. Frideres, *Native Peoples in Conflict: Contemporary Conflicts,* 4th ed. (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1993).
[4] R.L. Barsh, "Canada's Aboriginal Peoples: Social Integration or Disintegration?" *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 14, no. 1 (1994).

created great distrust among many First Nations peoples for the Euro-Canadian educational system. These schools were different from those attended by non-Native children in the Canadian public school system. By 1950, only thirteen in one hundred Aboriginal students graduated past grade six due to the pace of residential school teaching.[5] Native children spent more than half of the day on "practical training": the domestic tasks necessary to keep the school and priesthood operating such as preparing meals, cleaning, washing linens, farming, tending orchards, and chopping wood. The schools' role was to teach proficiency in English, Christianity, and basic skills so the students could eventually become a subservient lower class (of maids, cleaning women, labourers, etc.) for Euro-Americans and Canadians. After enduring years of residential school as children and adolescents, the survivors were reluctant to place much faith or trust in the Canadian education system, or to encourage their own children to place much value in it.

In addition, Canada's Indian Act for many years required Indigenous people to give up their Indian status and treaty rights if they wished to attend university. Under this assimilationist policy, enfranchisement negated the possibility of bicultural identities. People were cut off from their home communities if they chose to pursue postsecondary academic education. Understandably, few people were willing to make such a sacrifice.[6] Robin Jarvis Brownlie, in her examination of Anishinaabek and Mohawk women's paid labour in southern Ontario between 1920 and 1940, examines Indian Affairs files on Anishinaabek women's participation in the enfranchisement program. She describes their involvement as arising from having to leave their First Nations community for urban centres in order to obtain economic security, and from then, needing the lump-sum benefit paid out by the enfranchisement program once settled in the urban centre.[7]

Today, many First Nations students continue to attend underfunded schools in poor neighbourhoods that prioritize the teaching of a non-Aboriginal curriculum. This can result in children

[5] Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1992).

[6] J.R. Ponting, *First Nations in Canada: Perspectives on Opportunity, Empowerment, and Self-Determination* (Whitby, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1997).

[7] Robin Jarvis Brownlie, "'Living the Same as the White People': Mohawk and Anishinaabe Women's Labour in Southern Ontario, 1920–1940," *Labour* 61 (2008): 41–68.

who have trouble relating to the material presented and who may feel misunderstood, ignored, out of place, or disconnected. They may also not receive the educational opportunities, resources, and supports that more economically privileged Canadian children are granted. All this can result in underachievement, low self-esteem, and lack of direction. Some communities are working to address these issues. In the Sault Ste. Marie area, for example, the Algoma District School Board and Huron Superior Catholic District School Board are improving their educational and professional standards by including Anishinaabek knowledge, history, culture, and learning practices. One First Nations community also operates its own secondary school and offers college and university courses as well.

Where historical and contemporary educational practices significantly influence the labour market participation of First Nations people, the implications of colonialism are consistently a part of the problem. According to Sally Gaikesheyongai's re-telling and teaching of the Seven Fires Prophecy, the alienation of Aboriginal people from their land and exploitation of their labour, sometimes forced, was an intentional outcome of the Euro-Canadian colonial project.[8] Several authors who examine Aboriginal wage labour identify this theme of colonization and its impact on the economies of Indigenous people in both Canada and the United States.

The reservation period began around 1850, when the Canadian government began to relocate entire First Nations communities onto small reserve territories. The social order of many First Nations was disrupted so that European settlers could gain control over the best farming land and other valuable natural resources. Particularly disturbing were the obstacles to traditional First Nations economies based on hunting, fishing, and gathering, which was supported by seasonal migration to available food sources. With their access to the surrounding land severely restricted, not to mention the reserves being in some cases unfamiliar territory, many families struggled to maintain their traditional economies and cultures. Families grew increasingly desperate, impoverished, and dependent on federal handouts. Infighting began over the meagre provisions the government provided, straining once-close community ties. For some families, the "easy money" of wage labour replaced the difficult and time-consuming nature of living off the land. Today, many reserve communities are isolated geographically from the closest non-Native towns

[8] S. Gaikesheyongai, *The Story of the Seven Fires* (Southampton, ON: Ningwakwe Learning Press, 2002).

where wage labour may be obtained. If there is no public transportation available, as is often the case, individuals who succeed in obtaining employment off-reserve often risk losing their jobs if they lack the financial resources needed to purchase a vehicle, insurance, and gas.

Changing Demographics

The Aboriginal population is growing at a rate far greater than that of the rest of Canada, and today, 40% of the registered Aboriginal population is under nineteen years of age, compared to 25% of the remainder of Canadians. Aboriginal people comprise a young and growing population that could address the expected labour-force shortages of the coming years, yet only 32% are graduating from high school.[9]

Also of note is the fact that fewer First Nations people live on reserve (40%) than off reserve (60%), and most of the latter are likely to live in a metropolitan area. Those who live on-reserve are likely to have more children, and First Nations children in general are more likely than the rest of the population to live with a lone parent. While crowded living conditions on reserve have decreased over the past decade, First Nations people were four times more likely than their non-Aboriginal counterparts to live in a home in need of major repairs.[10]

Specific to Sault Ste. Marie, 2006 Census[11] labour market activity for North American Indian [*sic*] responses indicate that the unemployment rate for Aboriginal people is almost twice that of the population as a whole (13.6% compared to 7.1%)[12] The data also indicates a much lower participation in the labour market for Aboriginal people, indicating that many may feel that seeking work is a waste of energy. On-reserve data is not readily available for the communities participating in this study, though estimates of on-reserve unemployment range as high as 90% in some First Nations communities.

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[9] Assembly of First Nations. On-line at http://www.afn.ca/cmslib/general/Education-Action%20Plan.pdf

[10] Statistics Canada, "Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis, and First Nations, 2006 Census," 2008, Online at http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/pdf/97-558-XIE2006001.pdf

[11] There are many limitations to Statistics Canada data (Census data) on Aboriginal peoples. For details on these, please see the StatsCan website above.

[12] Online at http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/topics/RetrieveProductTable.cfm?Temporal=2006&PID=97690&GID=838028&METH=1&APATH=3&PTYPE=88971%2C97154&THEME=73&AID=&FREE=0&FOCUS=&VID=0&GC=99&GK=NA&RL=0&TPL=RETR&SUB=737&d1=0&d2=2&d3=0&d4=0

Gender Differences

Aboriginal women, like women in the labour market generally, are at an even greater disadvantage, yet many manage to rise above the impediments they face:

> [T]he somewhat paradoxical situation […] exists whereby Aboriginal women, who face greater levels of gendered racism, who hold greater responsibility for child rearing, who earn lower incomes and who have a greater exposure to violence and other social ills, still achieve slightly better outcomes in terms of secondary and postsecondary enrollment and graduation rates than Aboriginal men. This achievement attests to the strength and determination of Aboriginal women to overcome multiple barriers.[13]

Labour Force Participation and Indigenous Identity and Values

Given the migration of Aboriginal people between urban and First Nations communities, it is also important to acknowledge the impacts of predominantly settler-Canadian workplaces. In their documentation and examination of community strengths within First Nations communities, Broad, Boyer, and Chattaway highlight some of the tensions that First Nations members navigate in a contemporary workplace.[14] These include the stress of feeling pressure to conform to un-written rules, pressure that can create feelings of exclusion and isolation. One participant in this research outlines significant tensions resulting from the intersection of Anishinaabek identity and ways of being and settler-Canadian workplace expectations:

> I … have this frame of mind as soon as I get my clothes on for work and I get in my car. I know that by the time I get to work I've already switched my mindset.… I know that this is what I've got to do. And then I switch it back again on my way home.… There needs to be Aboriginal people in where I am and I think that non-Aboriginals need a lot of help in understanding why Native people do the things that we do.[15]

According to Alicja Muszynski's research into the fishing industry in British Columbia, capitalism has created a labour market of cheap wage labour segregated at sites of gender and heritage amongst white, Japanese, Chinese, and Pacific Coast Aboriginal men and women.[16] In

[13] Native Women's Association of Canada, "Strengthening Aboriginal Girls and Women's Success," 2009, on-line at: http://www.nwac-hq.org/en/documents/StrengtheningAboriginalGirlsandWomensSuccess-EducationSummitDocument.pdf

[14] Broad, G., S. Boyer, and C. Chattaway, "We Are Still the Aniishnaabe Nation: Embracing Culture and Identity in Batchewana First Nation," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 31 (2006): 35–58.

[15] Ibid., 54–55.

[16] Alicja Muszynski, *Cheap Wage Labour: Race and Gender in the Fisheries of British Columbia* (Montreal, Quebec & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996).

his reflection upon the relationship of Aboriginal people to capitalism, David Newhouse shares his observations that few Aboriginal people today are opposed to it. He observes that few want to return to a subsistence lifestyle, preferring the benefits of a consumer culture, but Newhouse himself is "not so sure we can play without paying."[17] In his view, there is a need to develop cultural and social institutions that "remind us of our values,"[18] though said values are not identified or explained. In *Reclaiming Our History*, Jackie Fletcher makes some suggestions about what these values might be. In interviews with forty female Elders of various Aboriginal identities and places of residence in northern Ontario, northern Quebec, and Saskatchewan, she found a commonality in values, albeit from women's perspectives:

> We made our shelters wherever we were. We lived in the bush and traveled on the river systems. We hunted, fished, and traveled wherever there was sustenance. Women and men shared the jobs that needed to be done. We took care of our own people through the use and knowledge of natural plants and herbs, hands-on education, spirituality, healthy eating of animals and plants ... humour through games, storytelling, and gatherings, feasting with many families, and child rearing was done by the community with many children raised by grandmothers or aunties. Women were respected and valued.[19]

Specific to the present project, the values were practiced through women and men sharing work and women being active and vital participants in their families' livelihoods. The significance of the values of respect, sharing, and balance is supported by Shirley Williams's research indicating that work has to be balanced with other aspects of life, including sleeping, playing, and praying.[20]

Efforts to Address the Needs of Historically Disadvantaged Groups in the Labour Market

Both the federal and provincial governments have attempted to address historically disadvantaged groups within the labour market, and Aboriginal persons have been an identified group within affirmative action programs, along with women, visible minorities, and persons with disabilities. In recent years, however, the Canadian government has repealed and reformed many of its programs and services related to education, training, and employment. Downloading many

[17] David Newhouse, "Resistance Is Futile: Aboriginal Peoples Meet the Borg of Capitalism," in *Ethics and Capitalism*, ed. John Douglas Bishop (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 153.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Jackie Fletcher, *Reclaiming Our History: Otisiabi Matriarchal Society Project* (Timmins, ON: Ojibway Cree Cultural Centre, 2006), 1.
[20] Shirley Williams, personal communication, October 2006.

federal support programs to the provincial level obscured reductions to levels of funding being provided for employment and training services. In the interest of cost-savings, many programs have become increasingly inaccessible as a result of raised eligibility criteria and the decreasing number of public service employees whose job it is to help individuals navigate the system. The focus is now on finding the fastest route to employment for individuals, rather than considering what path would be best and most sustaining for people in the long run.[21] The Ontario Works legislation is a good example.

Federal programs such as Employment Insurance (EI) (called Unemployment Insurance (UI) until 1996) tightened access by "raising the [qualification] threshold by more than double" for those new to the workforce or returning after an absence. Eligibility criteria hit some of the most vulnerable groups hard: 70% of unemployed women received UI in 1989 while only 32% of them qualified for EI in 1999 (400,000 fewer). Benefit rates (e.g., regular, maternity, sickness, parental) increased for men but not for women. Individuals were actively discouraged from applying for EI (p. 19-20.

The neo-liberal ideology of recent governments at both the federal and provincial levels has placed an increasing focus on individual responsibility for searching for jobs, selecting training programs, and paying tuition and related education or training costs. This ideology also emphasizes "accountability," which is defined as cost-savings and rapid return to work (not criteria based on need or long-term consequences). Examples include:

- allocating loans rather than grants
- determining eligibility based on the ability to repay quickly
- forcing women's support organizations to apply for piecemeal grants on a continual basis and compete for grants with for-profit third-party agencies
- encouraging women to take short-duration training programs and lower paying "pink collar" work

> Under a system that rewards serving the easy-to-serve, the most disadvantaged … may be considered simply too costly and too risky to serve. (p. 24)

[21] There is substantial literature documenting the impact of neo-liberal policies on the poor. See, for example, H. Beatty, "Possible Improvements to the Ontario Disability Support Program: A Scoping Exercise," 2005, online at http://www.torontoalliance.ca/tcsa_initiatives/income_security/pdf/MISWAAHarryBeattyPossibleImprovements.pdf and Income Security Advocacy Centre, "Denial by Design…The Ontario Disability Support Program" (Toronto: Income Security Advocacy Centre, 2003).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF FIRST NATIONS AND URBAN COMMUNITIES

This section includes quantitative and qualitative data gathered in the communities under study on the relationship of First Nations peoples with the Canadian labour market. The first section outlines key demographic information. The second addresses education, training, and skills development. The third presents employment history, status, needs, and goals. The fourth highlights the community assessment and labour market visions. And the fifth includes additional significant themes and trends that emerged from the research.

Demographics of Survey Respondents[22]

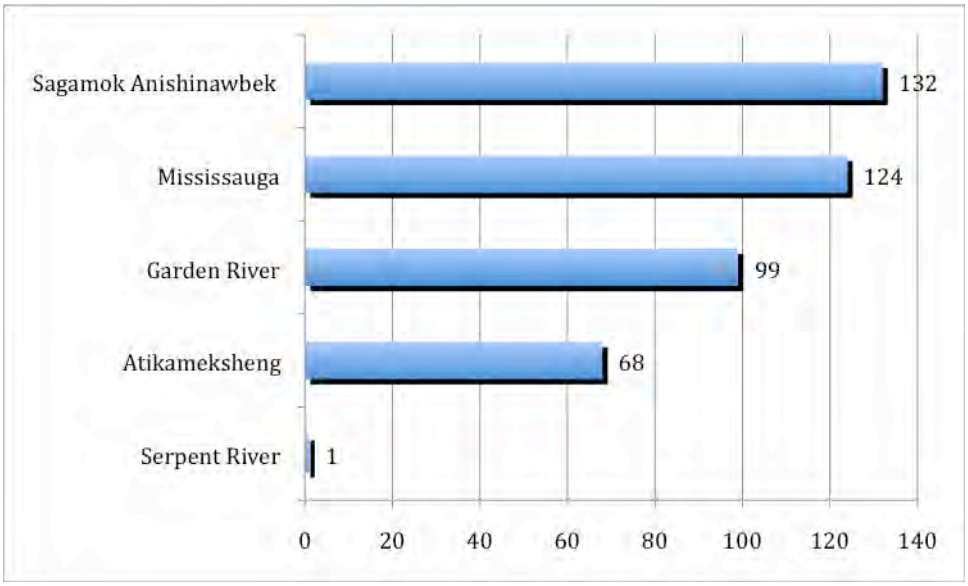
The survey included four First Nations: Atikameksheng (formerly known as Whitefish Lake), Mississauga, Garden River, and Sagamok. The 2006 Canadian Census lists the total population of Sagamok Anishnawbek as 884, Garden River First Nation as 985, Mississauga as 414, and Atikameksheng as 349. These communities are located on the North Shore of Lake Huron and comprise all but two of the members of the North Shore Tribal Council.

Northern Ontario itself is unique in terms of its large number of Anishinaabek communities, which comprise more than 12% of the population of the region as compared to approximately 3% of the province as a whole.

Researchers distributed surveys to the four First Nations participating in this aspect of the research — 125 surveys per community. There were 424 respondents, 16% of them from Atikameksheng, 31% from Sagamok, 29% from Mississauga, and 23% from Garden River.

[22] Where appropriate, the data collected in this study is compared to Statistics Canada information as collected in the 2006 Census. Please refer to the StatsCan website at http://www.statcan.gc.ca for limitations to its data.

Figure 1: First Nation Participation — Response Rate



NB: 11% indicated they lived outside of their First Nation.

There was a greater response from females (58.3%) than from males (40.4%), and a small number (1.3%) indicated "other."[23]

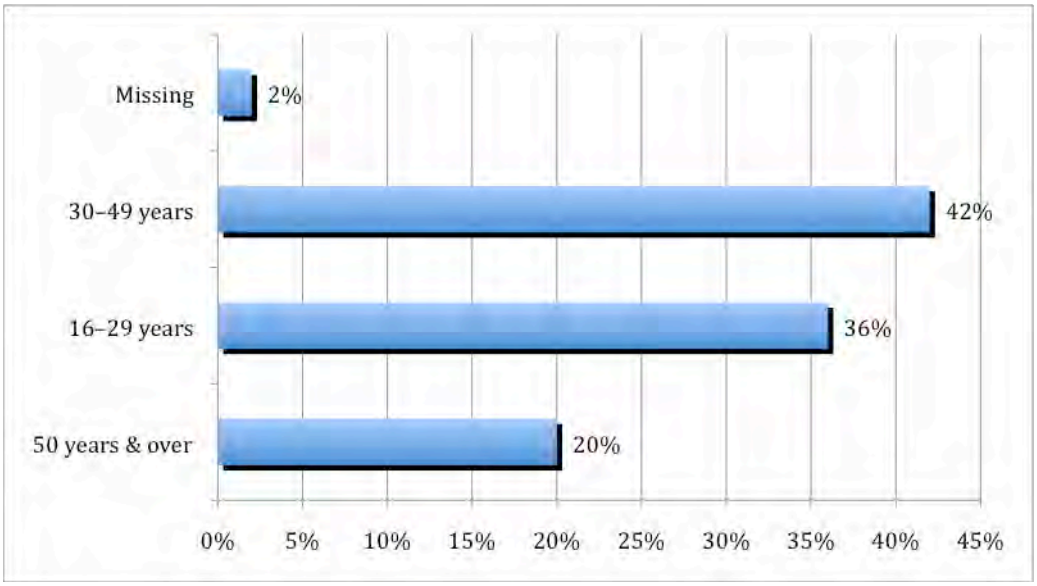
The participants' ages ranged from sixteen to fifty-plus. Median ages for each community ranged from thirty-three years (for Mississauga, Sagamok, and Atikameksheng) to thirty years of age (Garden River).

Fifty-five percent (236 respondents) indicated no dependents, reflecting a nonrepresentative sample, given that approximately 30% of the population under study is younger than fifteen. Of the respondents with dependents, there was an average of two dependents per household and 419 dependents total.

[23] There are several sources and authors who document the gender fluidity characteristics of Indigenous groups in the Americas. In research on Indigenous labour, Alicja Muszynski and Elizabeth Vibert both discuss "gender" as a category of analysis in their monographs, stating that the rigid dichotomy of "male" and "female" is a Euro-Western worldview of gender. Prior to colonial processes, gender and gender roles relative to labour in Indigenous societies represented more fluidity in areas of dress, relationship, and kinds of labour carried out. Accordingly, the survey for this project included a third category for participants who do not identify as either man or woman. Alicja Muszynski, *Cheap Wage Labour: Race and Gender in the Fisheries of British Columbia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 37–38; and Elizabeth Vibert, *Trader's Tales: Narrative of Cultural Encounters in the Columbia Plateau, 1807–1846* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 239–43.

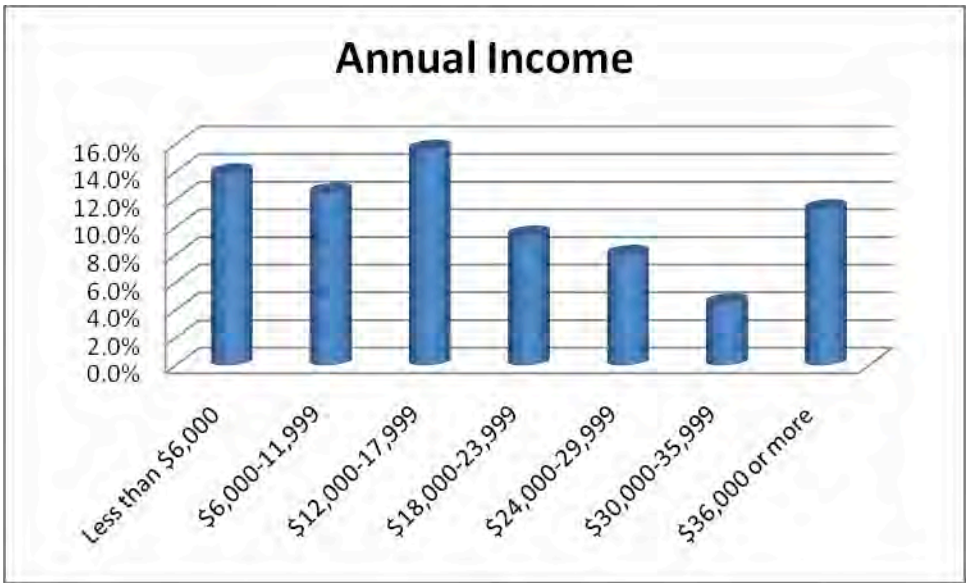
Of those 419 dependents, 201 will be entering the workforce in the next five years. Ninety-six respondents, 25% of those surveyed, are retiring within the next five years, or are already retired.

Figure 2: Ages of Respondents



The survey responses showed 11% of annual incomes greater than $36,000, significantly higher than the Statistics Canada data, which showed a median income for all on-reserve private households on the four reserves of $15,000 per annum. Forty-three percent of the participants live below the poverty line, which is income less than $21,000 for a family of three and $17,000 for a family of two.

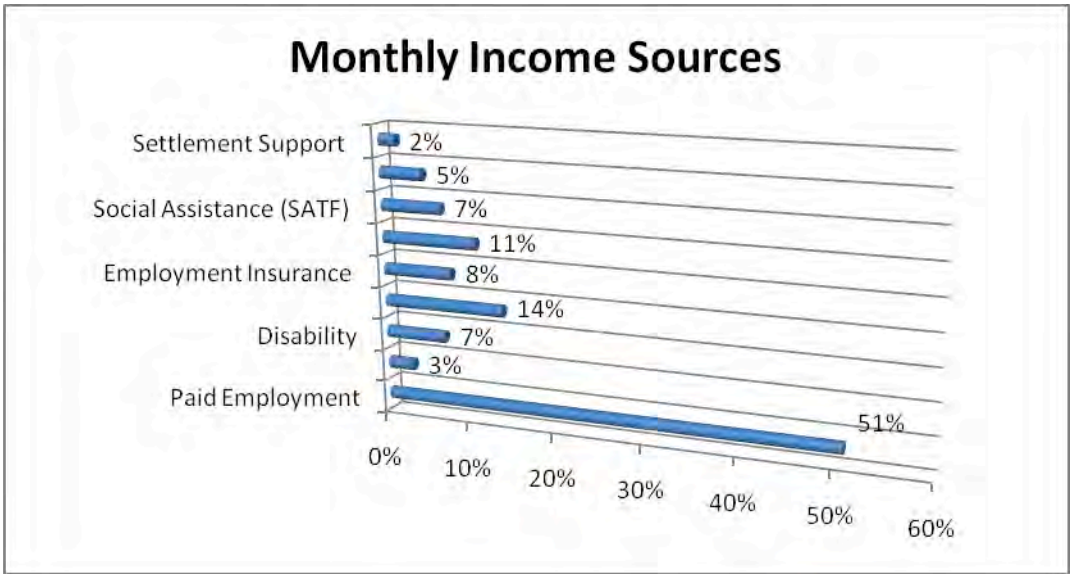
Figure 3: Annual Income of Respondents



Missing data represented 11% of the surveys distributed and 14% were invalid.

Fifty-one percent of respondents reported having paid employment (including from their own businesses). Family benefits, at 14%, was the second most common income category. Other income sources included parents, private pension, rental income, spousal income, alimony, and child support.

Figure 4: Sources of Monthly Income



When asked if they made enough to meet their needs, only 23% reported that their needs were met, while 34% indicated that they were not, and 32% somewhat agreed with the question.

Location of Residence and Proximity to Work

The great majority of respondents — 82% — lived on-reserve, while 11% indicated that they lived off-reserve. One percent indicated that they lived both on- and off-reserve. The majority — 64% — preferred to stay within their First Nations community for the next ten years. This could be due to the fact that 76% of participants reported that they were already long-term residents (i.e., more than ten years) in their communities.

The main reasons reported for living on-reserve were family, work, home, born and raised there, and lived there all their life. Other responses included having to, affordability, convenience, community, enjoyment, friends, and financial reasons.

Most of the off-reserve members who participated in the survey live within twenty kilometres of their reserve in communities such as Blind River, Sault Ste. Marie, Massey, Lively, Espanola, Sudbury, and Naughton. Some of the main reasons for living off-reserve were assets (i.e., homes), a housing shortage on-reserve, school, work, convenience to shopping, friends, "not able to get housing because of non-native spouse," close to work, and "grew up here."

Most participants — 66% — preferred to work in their First Nations community, but almost half — 46% — were willing to work off-reserve. Nine percent indicated that they were not willing to work in their First Nations community.

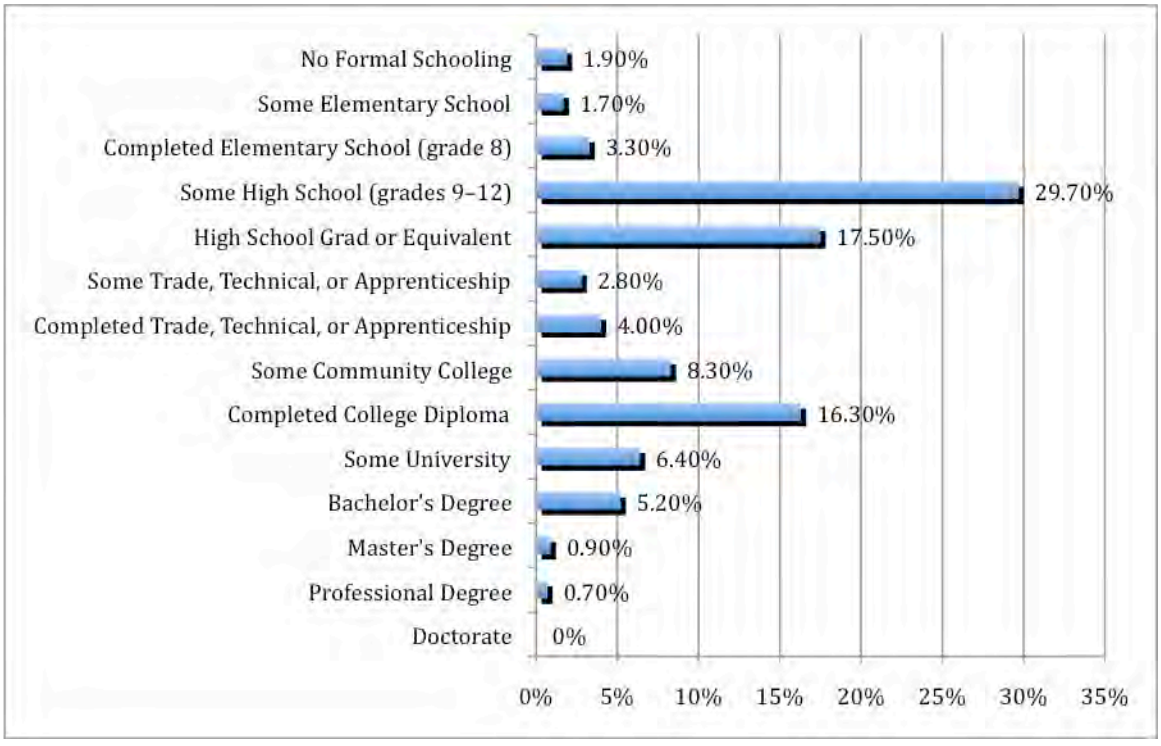
Education, Training, and Skills Inventory

People living in Northern Ontario have lower levels of education than the provincial average. In Ontario as a whole, 22% of the population does not have a high school degree or diploma, while in Northern Ontario this rate in 29%. It is also 29% for people of Anishinaabek identity living in Northern Ontario. The survey found that 37% of people had not graduated from high school, which is higher than the Northern Ontario–Anishinaabek population, but lower than the total Anishinaabek population, which is at 45%. According to Statistics Canada, 58% of reserve-based Anishinaabek have less than a high school diploma.

Sixteen percent of survey respondents had completed college, which is comparable to the provincial average of 18% and the Anishinaabek provincial average of 17%, but slightly below the Northern Ontario average of 20%. In addition, 5% had completed university, which is greater than Ontario's on-reserve average of 3%, but far less than Ontario's average of 20%.

Although 8% of Ontario's population holds trade, technical, or apprenticeship certificates, and Anishinaabek across the province report 5%, the survey respondents reported only 4%. With the growing number of skilled workers needed in the trades sector, only 8%, or twenty-five respondents, belong to a trade union or association, the majority of them from Atikamek-sheng and Garden River and most working in steelmaking or mining. Some have completed apprenticeship programs at the postsecondary institutions Sault College or Cambrian College. Others have job-training programs with employers in Sault Ste. Marie, Sudbury, and Toronto.

Figure 5: Educational Achievement



Respondents identified membership in the following unions and/or professional associations: Labourers' Union, United Steel Workers, Operators' Union, Ontario College of Teachers, Personal Support Workers' Network of Ontario, and Early Childhood Educator Association.

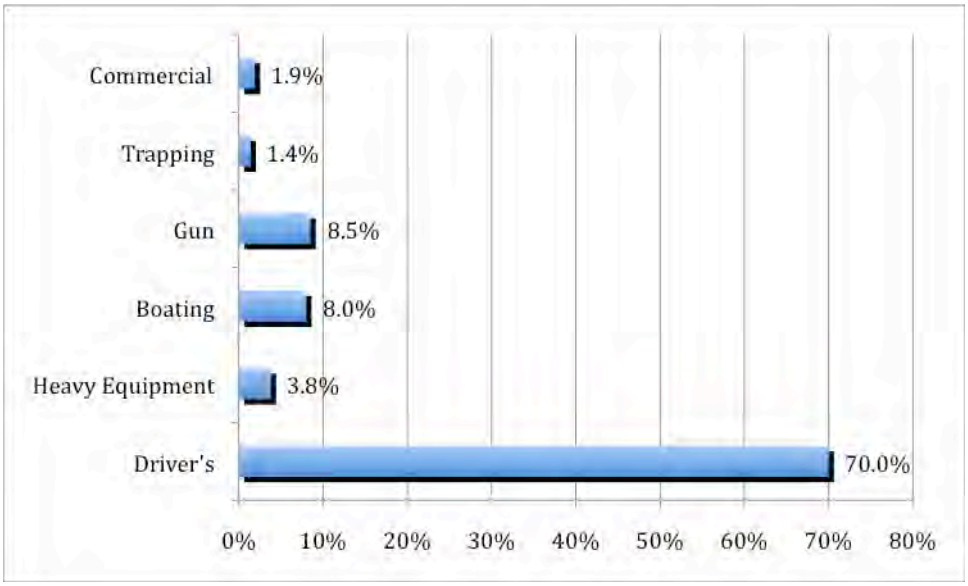
Licenses, Courses, and Training

This section illustrates the various licenses held by community members as well as courses and training they have taken. It also identifies what respondents need or want to obtain the job they wish to have, in addition to what service providers and focus group participants had to say about licenses, courses, and training.

Seventy percent of participants indicated that they had a driver's license, with 50% having their full G license. A surprisingly large number (76%) indicated that they had regular access to a vehicle and 70% said they had access to transportation to get to work.[24] Several service providers indicated that transportation was an issue for clients because of distance and/or lack of a vehicle, but also because of not having a driver's license. This makes for a discrepancy between the quantitative data and the responses of service providers and youth in the area of drivers' licenses.

Other licenses are shown in the chart below.

Figure 6. Licenses Obtained



[24] This large number is likely a reflection of a higher number of respondents being employed than is reflected in the target population as a whole. See the section titled "Scope and Limitations of the Research" for further elaboration.

Other Training

Sixty-seven percent of respondents have taken job training or work-related courses such as WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System), CPR, or first aid. Other training includes a babysitting course, food handlers' course, Smart Serve, a life skills coach, and a chainsaw certificate.

The training services offered across First Nations, by the tribal council, and in urban settings appear to be similar:

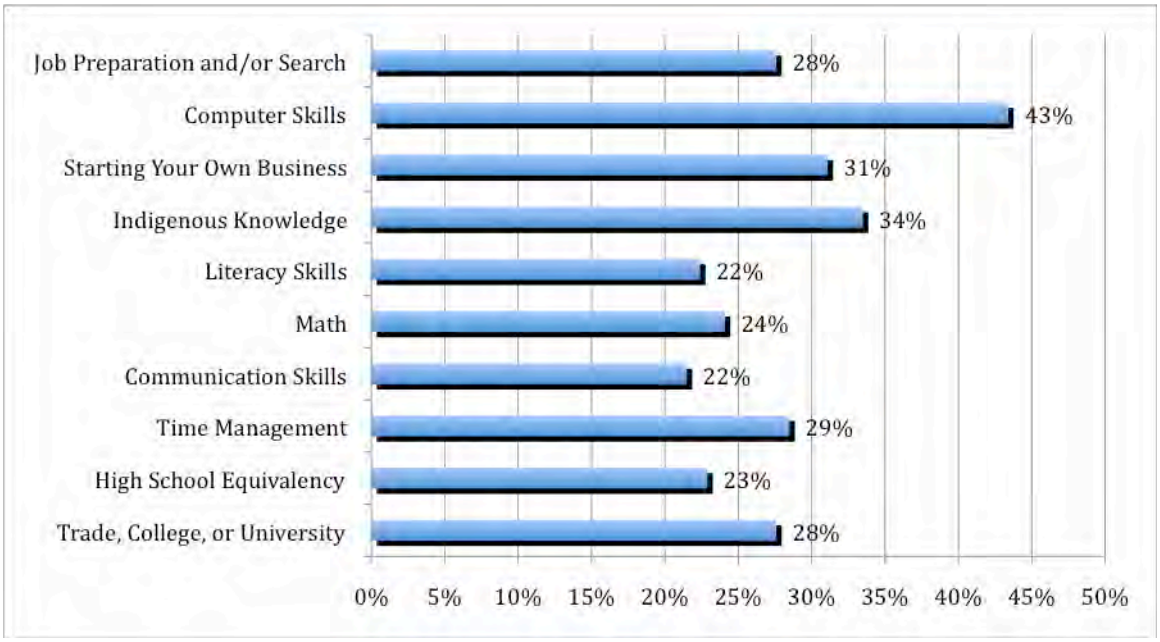
> Training services, we have Contact North, computer training, online training through them and anything you want to access there, of course. And we also have courses offered in Elliot Lake from Algoma University. Sault College has courses there. So we have access to resources. We have Cambrian College right now in Sagamok offering E.C.E. [Early Childhood Educator] that will be done in fall and that is just a one-time thing. But I think there will be something else when they are done. I know that Sault College is putting one on in the fall, P.S.W. [Personal Support Worker]
>
> — Focus Group Service Provider Participant

Participants were asked if they would like training and/or skill building. Researchers created a list for them to choose from that included:

- job preparation and/or search
- computer skills
- starting your own business
- Indigenous knowledge
- literacy
- math
- communication skills
- time management
- high school equivalency
- postsecondary education

Computer skills earned the highest response while literacy, math, communication skills, and high school equivalency ranked the lowest. Job preparation, starting your own business, Indigenous knowledge, and postsecondary education were all in the range of 27% to 33%. Other areas indicated by respondents included arts studio, budgeting, counselling skills, culinary arts, history, landscaping, and marketing.

Figure 7: Courses and Training Interests



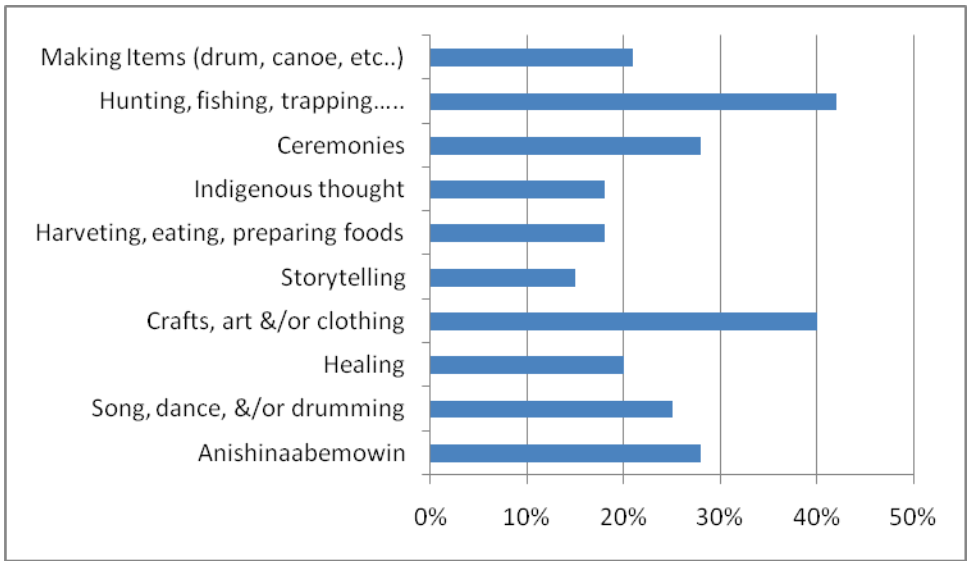
Anishinaabek Knowledge

There is an increasing recognition of the value of traditional, or Anishinaabek, knowledge, not only as an expression of an individual's culture, but as a key asset to the health and well-being of both individuals and communities as the knowledge economy gains momentum. It has also been recognized as a financial asset that may accrue benefits for both individuals and communities. As a result, this research explored participants' Anishinaabek knowledge as well as skills associated with their cultural heritage.

Participants were asked about their knowledge in particular areas of Anishinaabek specialization, including language, trades, health, philosophy, and culture. Given that they are easily understood in Canadian terms, these areas of knowledge and practice could be integrated into existing Canadian education curriculum for the future development of a labour market that includes Anishinaabek or Indigenous forms of labour.[25]

[25] Katherine O'Neill, "Traditional Skills to be Taught at Nunavut's New Cultural School," *The Globe and Mail,* 7 August 2009. Online at http://license.icopyright.net/3.8425?icx_id=/icopyright/?artid=1245494

Figure 8: Anishinaabek Knowledge



When asked in the survey about sites of Anishinaabek-specific knowledge, there was a high response to crafts, art, and/or clothing, and hunting, fishing, and/or trapping. Surprisingly, only 28% reported knowledge of the Anishinaabemowin language and ceremonies. Other knowledge expressed in the survey include Anishinaabek history, athletics, Bible study, carpentry, leather crafts and beading, teachings, Western healing, and pow-wow.

Interestingly, the youth in the focus group discussed the importance of their particular area of Anishinaabek knowledge, their passion for it, and its practical and potential contribution to the community. One youth stated,

> I love picking medicine.… I think I can take them [adults] out in the bush.… Survival skills. I spend a lot of time in the bush. Cooking on a fire and cutting down bush. I can chop down a tree with a sand wick. [A sand wick] is like a hatchet, but you chop sideways and I can clear a whole day's worth of brush with that. Where they are building the daycare, I can clear that all in one day.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Youth also talked about indigenizing educational space. One youth, who reported that drumming was a source of strength for him in the face of challenges, indicated that he hopes there will be a drum group at university. If there is no drum group, then he would start one.

Anishinaabemowin[26] Education

This section focusses on Anishinaabemowin language used in the community. The data are drawn from two sources in the survey. The first section inquired into the proficiency and use of Anishinaabemowin language and compares it to the same rates for English and French. The second section asks respondents to rate their community in terms of Anishinaabemowin education.

Only 10% of community members are fluent in Anishinaabemowin. The majority (56%) indicated that they can speak only a few words, with effort, while 24% reported that they do not speak the language at all. English, at 96%, is the dominant language.

Employment, Family Care, and Volunteer Work

The survey respondents showed varying rates of unemployment,[27] markedly better than the rates established by Statistics Canada, and thus cannot be considered an accurate reflection of employment in the communities. According to Statistics Canada, the employment rates[28] of the four communities are: Atikameksheng, 50%; Garden River, 57.3%; Mississauga, 55.7%; and Sagamok, 40%. These contrast with a province-wide employment rate of 62.8%, a Northern Ontario rate of 56.1%, and a province-wide Aboriginal rate of 50.2%. The province-wide reserve-based rate is 46%.

Eleven percent of respondents indicated that they had not had a paid job in the past five years. Twenty-two percent had been unemployed and looking for work for a total of twelve to twenty-four months, and 16% had been unemployed and looking for work for two years or more.

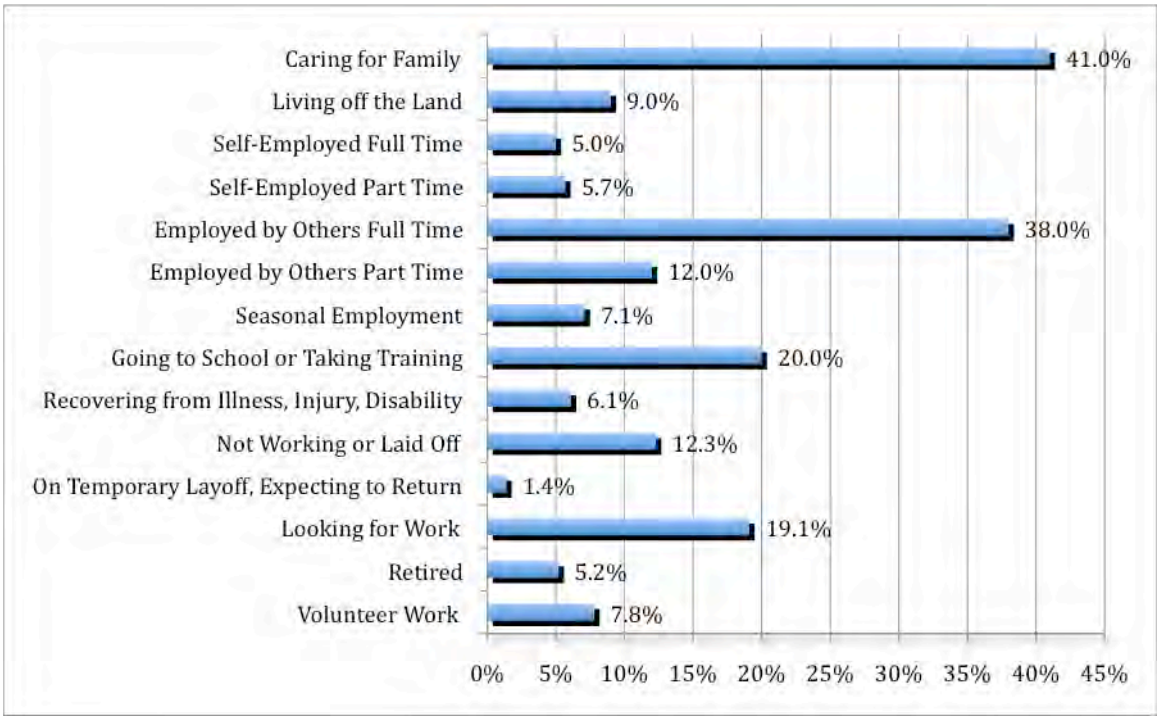
On average, 48% work between thirty-one and forty-four hours per week, 7% work more than forty-four hours per week, and 36% work less than thirty hours per week.

Forty-three percent of respondents work on-reserve, 12% off-reserve, and 3% work both on- and off-reserve. On-reserve employment includes band administration, daycare centres, variety shops

[26] Anishinaabemowin means Ojibway language.
[27] The unemployment rate refers to the unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force during the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (16 May 2006).
[28] The employment rate refers to the number of persons employed during the week (Sunday to Saturday) prior to Census Day (16 May 2006), expressed as a percentage of the total population fifteen years and over, excluding institutional residents.

(gas bars, chip stands, etc.), bingo halls, health centres, business services, and other small business enterprises. Off-reserve employment includes coffee shops, Indian Friendship Centres, tractor sales and service, lumber mills, daycare centres, Canadian forces, legal services, education facilities, and construction companies.

Figure 9: Current Occupations and Volunteer Work



On average, 80% of participants volunteer and/or do community-building work less than twenty hours per week, while 9% volunteer more than twenty-one hours per week. On average, 57% perform less than twenty hours of unpaid work per week (i.e., domestic labour, childcare, paying bills).

Respondents were also asked to assess a number of factors related to their current employment in order to determine job satisfaction. The table below details their responses.

Table 1: Satisfaction with Current Employment

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Pay is good	7.3%	14.9%	10.6%	32.3%	16.5%
Work is interesting	3.3%	6.8%	13.4%	28.1%	30.2%
Job security is good	9.4%	10.8%	17.7%	25.2%	18.2%
Satisfied with my job	4.0%	8.5%	14.4%	27.6%	25.5%
Influence important decisions	4.7%	6.4%	17.9%	29.5%	21.0%
Opportunity to develop my abilities	5.2%	8.0%	13.9%	25.2%	26.7%
Opportunities to utilize my personal abilities	5.0%	6.8%	15.1%	26.2%	26.4%
Chances for promotion	14.4%	11.6%	27.8%	16.3%	9.4%
Benefits are good	13.9%	9.7%	22.9%	18.4%	14.4%

Challenges and Strengths

Service providers, youth, people with (dis)abilities, and a broader First Nations population indicated various challenges, strengths, and improvements necessary to address education and training.

The first section below outlines responses from participants in interviews and focus groups on the topic of education. It also includes data on Anishinaabek-specific knowledge across various fields, including trades, health, philosophy, and culture.

The second section shows training courses and licenses obtained and also identifies training needed/wanted by First Nations citizens. Additional qualitative data relevant to this subject reveals a wide range of perspectives on the subject of licenses.

Challenges

Interview respondents agreed that Anishinaabek persons face numerous challenges in successfully accessing and completing education and training programs. While many of the challenges were discussed as isolated factors, some of the responses revealed multiple

intersecting challenges that must be navigated simultaneously, including financial, emotional, social, and family responsibilities.

Participants rated their experiences with barriers to employment, job training, and/or education. Only 6% reported lack of childcare as an impediment. This number is low compared to Statistics Canada data, which shows a high number of children, but is consistent with the low number of respondents who indicated dependents. Other barriers included:

- lack of available jobs (30%)
- lack of information (19%)
- other family obligations (6%)
- insufficient education and lack of funds (14%)
- lack of computer or Internet access (11%)
- lack of transportation (10%)
- lack of accommodation for indigenous culture or practices (7%)
- a criminal record and being overqualified (both 6%)

Family and Emotional Support The qualitative data revealed evidence of the centrality of family life and the need for emotional support as a member of a minority group within the larger Canadian society. Speaking about the context of his family life, one youth said:

> Well, I have to work around the house too, so I have to stay home and do a lot of the work because my mom had a cyst removed.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

While it is not known if this respondent is from a single-parent home, the centrality of the family's needs, an Anishinaabek value identified in the literature review, is clear from his comments. One of the service providers also identified the fact that single-income families have significant difficulties:

> There is a high rate of single-parent families. I guess that could be really stressful, too, for a young child to leave their only parent that they feel really attached to, providing some kind of support. Maybe providing some kind of support before they leave and sending care packages.
>
> — Service Provider Interview

Another point emerged regarding transitions in education and the experience of Anishinaabek peoples as a minority in educational institutions. One youth spoke about his concerns with attending high school:

> I am really scared to go to high school, get shoved in a locker or something.
>
> — Youth Focus Group Participant

His older peers provided an excellent source of encouragement within the focus group, sharing their own experiences, identifying themselves as supports within the high school, and reassuring him that initiation weeks were no longer practiced at the school.

Participants also discussed the impact of a physical space on a person's ability to feel comfortable enough to become involved, pointing out the difficulty one participant had talking in the focus group compared to talking while sitting outside at a picnic table. The youth observed that being in the focus group room was like being in school, which suggests some difficulties with the physical spaces of schools, possibly related to the residential school trauma or a lack of success in the traditional school setting. A service provider, discussing youth transitioning to urban centres, remarked:

> A lot of time these young kids it is the first time they've been out of their communities. So there is that culture shock — walk and don't walk signs — those are barriers. I think there has to be an easier transition. I know that a lot of colleges are looking at on-site training in the communities now.
>
> — Individual Interview

Lack of Accommodation for Persons with (Dis)abilities A woman with mental health (dis)abilities who is attending an adult education program with the goal of becoming a personal support worker revealed the emotional difficulties of navigating both familial and formal systems. She explains that particular challenges extend beyond the classroom and the structures required of a labour market system.

> It's because nobody understands. Like I try, I try not to show it when I'm depressed or why. Like I missed the, what was it? I wanted to go to that … the banquet. But lately I've been sleeping lots, like depressed I guess.… Or they'd, I don't know how to say it. (pause) Like could I just say it right out loud?… They'd think that I'm [expletive] up or whatever. Like they don't know what or why.… Even my family doesn't understand it. It's hard.… My

> kids don't understand — "Mom, why are you sleeping so much?" Sometimes I don't even know. Then I get frustrated because I'm not able to attend to them.[29]
>
> — Individual Interview

Another woman with a physical (dis)ability revealed the significance of physical space and its impact on access to education and mobility through the various sites of the labour market.

> There are a lot of barriers, especially being paraplegic, and it halted my process of education. I couldn't get in anywhere, especially in Sault Ste. Marie, and I had to leave [my community] because of the [lack of] accessibility.… Going back to school was hard because the guys would have to haul me up and down the stairs. It was really hard and difficult. Even asking them, they wouldn't say no, but asking them all the time.… It has always been accessibility, transportation, frustration.… It was just too hard. There was no way; the big word is the big "F," the big frustration.
>
> — Individual Interview

Literacy Issues Literacy is another challenge that emerged from the research. One service provider emphasized the barriers to passing literacy tests at the college level.

> We just had this problem happen last fall when we started up a carpenter craft program. There were some individuals that didn't make it into the course. We were trying to get a couple in from each First Nation to take the training, but that didn't happen because of the barriers with the CAT [college administration test, which requires a grade ten literacy level]. That was something we talked about … if they have something in place so they can pass that test.
>
> — Service Provider Interview

Another participant remarked that the young people in his community were graduating from a local municipal high school with low literacy levels.

The Canadian education system has only recently begun to acknowledge the need for improvement in including and recognizing First Nations students. The group facilitator encouraged further discussion on the issue, asking "Is there a community member — employee or otherwise — inquiring into this pattern of low literacy upon graduation from high school? Or working

[29] For more information on the difficulties facing persons with (dis)abilities and the labour market, see G. Broad and M. Saunders, *Social Enterprises and the Ontario Disability Support Program: A Policy Perspective on Employing People with Disabilities,* 2007, available online at http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/files/ccednet/Social_Enterprises_and_the_ODSP_program.pdf

closely with the local high school to ensure that the school is being responsive to the needs of Anishinaabek students?" The respondent indicated that there had been a strong link between the community and the school via a designated counsellor, but that the position was no longer funded.

Culturally Appropriate Supports There was strong agreement on one topic among youth, service providers, people with (dis)abilities, and retired persons. It is the tension between the individual and the labour market, whereby the impositions of the market prevent the individual from fulfilling his/her desires to live a "good life." One youth, for example, indicated that she would like to be a veterinarian, but is working at an academic level that will not allow her to take the appropriate programs; the school work would be too much and too long for her to complete. Another example is a retired man who indicated that the community needs to develop something for retired people who "are bored" and "spending all their money because there is nothing to do" (Focus Group Participant). In the same group, another retired person with an entrepreneurial spirit commented:

> Well, you know what I'd like to see is getting young kids involved. If you have — a lot of young kids are running the roads. So if someone shows interest in how you can get this funding — if you can get funding to start a business, then you must be able to get funding to help train someone or put someone in that particular whatever they like doing. That would be something that I'd like to see, would be helpful to everyone, not just someone.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

A service provider identified the tension that arises for clients who are "unable" to achieve grade twelve education:

> Some people have grade twelve and some don't. Some can get grade twelve and some can't. I don't want to say "can't" but let's be realistic. There are some individuals at that level and they may be experiencing some interruption or disability that is prohibiting them from participating or preventing them from getting that grade twelve.
>
> — Individual Interview

This respondent identified the reality that the income people are capable of earning is connected to their level of education. It would be interesting to explore whether this is an accepted reality, or one that requires transformation to better reflect realities desired by Anishinaabek people.

Additional challenges to education and training include social and psychological factors such as racism, poverty, addictions, impacts of residential school, inadequate nourishment for children, parents burdened by heavy stress, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

> Well, there is still racism, just cut to the chase. You know it doesn't have to be there, it still does exist a little bit, part of fear, learned, racism is complex, right? We have a polite racism in Canada, generally right?
>
> — Individual Interview

> We can't be everything to everybody and that is the main thing. That is the hard part. One problem is abuse, spousal, and alcohol. Unfortunately I'm not qualified to deal with that. The problem being is that when somebody comes in to see you, they pour their heart to you basically. This is one of the challenges we face. We try to do everything here but this is one of the areas we can't deal with.
>
> — Individual Interview

Navigating Funding Systems and Legislation Navigating government funders and legislation is another challenge within the systems of labour market services.

> There is a variety of challenges; I will put in three categories: working with the funder, Employment Ontario, legislation.
>
> — Individual Interview

Interestingly, this participant identifies sites within the system where a client's application might be denied, recognizing potential challenges for both the client and the service provider who is trying to offer assistance:

- the employment counsellor does not support the applicant
- there is not enough funding in the local delivery mechanism
- the application does not meet a prescribed approval process
- the job being applied for is not consistent with the person's educational background

Strengths

The interviews and focus groups also examined the strengths in the various sites of the labour market. One urban-based service provider discussed two particular programs that reinforce the educational system. Inherent in the discussion is the reality that some youth are dealing with poverty issues while attending school.

> We have a program called the "Stay in School" initiative. It helps urban Aboriginals to stay in school.… The other is the "Student Career" initiative, which helps an employer to hire a student who is going to school full time. We will give a wage subsidy to hire that student fifteen hours a week. That gives them a little bit of pocket money, puts their self-esteem up, and it helps them stay in school. And the other one is for people, students who are in danger of dropping out for whatever reasons. We might [provide a] little bit of an allowance to keep them going — a bus pass, school supplies — to give them those kinds of support.
>
> — Individual Interview

Youth identified several strong points in the system, including the presence of counsellors at both the elementary and high school level to advise them about education and work possibilities, and to help them with planning their future. Youth noted that it is important to be able to speak with a counsellor of the same gender. Finally, physical space is important. At the high school level, a resource room specifically for Aboriginal students called the "Physical Space" is a significant strength for them. In the elementary school setting, however, one youth reported that there were racial tensions, with white youth claiming the cultural resource room for themselves.

Each service provider shared a success story, detailed below.

> We have a lot them [success stories]. We have a lot of people that are on Ontario Works (OW), and we put one individual who was a harvester and he cut trees all his life and he ended [up] going on Ontario Works for the winter, and we put him on a common core program which is mining, and at the end of that training he actually got a job with Vale Inc. in Sudbury. We have another guy that ended up taking a driving course and he is out there driving transports now as well as heavy equipment. We have an individual who was on OW, he was on [the] social assistance transfer fund (SATF), they now work full-time for the Niigaanin program once their SATF was completed. We have another one who was a cook who took chef training and went on to be a cook at the daycare in the community.
>
> — Individual Interview

> There was this lady, we didn't fund her but we got her funding through the Ontario Women's Association to take a course at Sault College and now she is running her own business. She is completing her second year, so she is doing very well. Her expertise is expanding so she is one of our success stories as well.
>
> — Individual Interview

> We used to run a youth suite every Thursday night and all the youth would come and we would meet with them from six to eight pm. We learned acceptable behaviour at work, job

> skills, and resumé writing projects. And there was a young man that was extremely shy and I asked him and the other boy what they wanted to be and he said, "An electrician because my mother was an electrician." I turned around to the shy one and this is how shy he was — his friend goes, "He wants to be an architect." He didn't even speak. So he went through the whole thing and he never missed a day. He got a job at the gas bar and I was just shocked and he had this big smile and this was the boy that never said anything. I was just so proud of him. He just picked up so many skills from that. He was a totally different kid.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Improvements

Participants consistently identified areas for improvement as well as strategies for achieving them.

Support for Youth

Youth face a great deal of stress and tension when they leave their families to go to school, particularly if their family unit depends on their presence and contribution in some way.

> Providing that support, I know that we have postsecondary counsellors that regularly keep touch with students that are off-reserve. The family that they leave behind; sometimes maybe some students don't leave because of family; want to help their family.
>
> — Individual Interview

Literacy

Literacy is a second area of concern. Another service provider states:

> Literacy. Probably some work needs to be done at the community level like collaboration between education, social services, and employment and training unit. I'm not sure how many communities; most of those five communities do have adult education programs and services. Maybe if the literacy essential skills could be offered as part of their ongoing programming. It would help people in the community who are seeking higher education through college to ensure that they are passing their CAT [college administration test].
>
> — Individual Interview

The ongoing changes and transitions are clear. While changes are needed, however, one cannot overlook the fact that changes *are happening and have been happening,* as another service provider observes. Adult literacy in the community where she works has improved significantly.

> We have our school now, too, and things are moving along. [Since] I first started, there has been a big improvement and some people could not read or write and now they can.
>
> — Individual Interview

Transportation

Transportation poses a barrier for many residents, although several service providers identified ways to improve the situation.

> The other main challenge that we face here in [the community] — we're technically ten kilometres from the highway — is transportation. We have clients that don't have driver's licenses, cars, you know, to find employment in other areas outside of [the community].
>
> — Individual Interview

When asked why people do not have drivers' licenses, the respondent said:

> Usually because, well, we have probably two hundred and some families on social assistance, so it is actually the payment, the $125 fee and the book that limits what they can do.… There is definitely no allowable expense towards a driver's license.… You would think they would do anything. Service Canada would like to see, help you to get to employment.
>
> — Individual Interview

Another service provider suggested greater flexibility in helping clients obtain drivers' licenses:

> As for barriers, we have even helped them get drivers' licenses.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Transportation was such a challenge in one community that a committee emerged to attend to the matter, but disbanded after a few years of dealing with the issues and achieving little success.

> We're trying to find a way around that. We have just been told that we can look at paying through AHRDA [Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement]. We are looking at different areas, funding agencies, and avenues. Even different departments try to get some way around that; even having transportation to drive everybody. We had a transportation committee to deal with those issues for about two years now, but it has fallen. That is because the committee is volunteers on their own time. It is just hard to get the momentum going. It has been over a year since the core has met.
>
> — Individual Interview

The co-facilitator of the focus group of people with (dis)abilities inquired about the transportation issue. One respondent indicated that if there was a job to go to, the person would find some way to get there.

> Well, you don't have to worry about that. You'll find your way in town, you will do it.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Financial Constraints

Youth were highly motivated to obtain a driver's licenses, but financial constraints sometimes interfered. They were also prevented from taking other courses due to the cost.

> Getting training for WHMIS [Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System] and the first aid course and I don't have money to pay for that stuff.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

One youth indicated a wish to take two courses outside of those typically identified in the data (i.e., driver's license, first aid, WHMIS, and CPR):

> Like even a chainsaw course; I would like to get that. And a small motors course.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Awareness of Programs and Financial Support

Fifty-six percent of respondents were aware of programs providing information on resources available for job training and/or apprenticeships, although only 46% believed that such programs were easily accessible.

While 51% of respondents believed they could access financial support from their First Nations government, an Anishinaabek organization, or from off-serve sources for education or job training, almost one-third (31%) did not. Forty-seven percent said they could access financial support from their First Nations band for apprenticeship programs.

Thirty-four percent of participants were aware that they could borrow funds from their First Nations band and other Anishinaabek organizations to start their own business, indicating that this information is reaching a fair portion of community members. Thirty percent of respondents did not know about bank loans for business ventures.

Training for Service Providers

The research shows clearly that labour market strengths and challenges are experienced not only by clients but also by providers within the system. The health of the system as well as its ability to increase participation in the labour market depends upon its clients' abilities and also upon meeting the needs of service providers. Two of these people, with perspectives from both a First Nations and an urban community, indicated a need for ongoing training. When asked what improvements could be made in service provision, one simply replied "Labour market training" (Individual Interview).

Community Assessment and Labour Market Vision

This section shows what participants have to say generally about the labour market and the need for community development. It inquires into the following areas:

- employment opportunities
- Anishinaabemowin (language) education
- economic, cultural, political, and social development
- relationships with the land
- consistency between the labour market and Anishinaabek values of work and providing for self, family, and community
- general improvement for the labour market

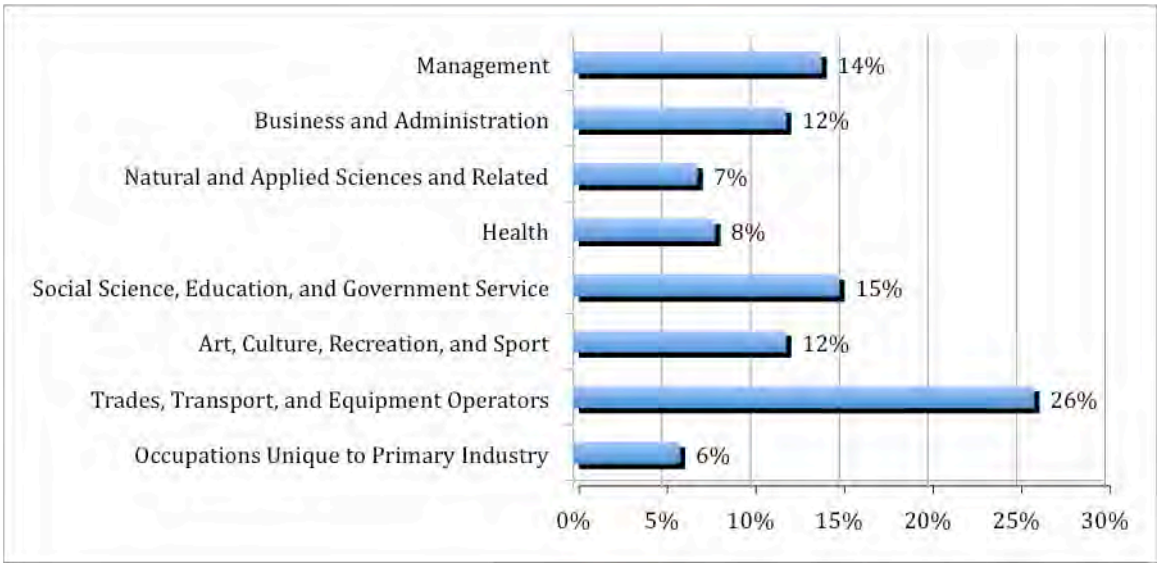
Employment Opportunities

This theme emerged across all perspectives in several areas of inquiry and is referred to in a number of ways. A primary challenge was a lack of employment opportunities in First Nations communities as well as in urban settings. The major employer in First Nations communities is the band administration, or First Nations government. As one service provider observed, there are few openings for new jobs at the band level:

> The main challenge that our community faces is that our main employer is our First Nations government. There are not a lot of openings.
>
> — Individual Interview

The research explored the aspirations of survey respondents by asking them for their preferred employment options. This resulted in a vast number of responses, which have been grouped in the following chart by major industry.

Figure 10: Desired Employment by Industry



The variety of responses demonstrates that First Nations residents, like the general population, have a wide array of interests and employment aspirations.

One service provider pointed out that the lack of employment opportunities impacts the client's commitment to following through on action plans identified through employment and training agreements. This suggests the existence of a negative cycle whereby service mandates require that certain goals be met by the client in order to receive support, but these mandates may not consider the unique economic conditions of First Nations communities.

One youth shared her insights into opportunities for employment within her community:

> There are too [many] students in the pot right now, like there are thirty-three students applied for nine jobs — big competition. We all applied.… It is really hard when thirty-three apply for nine jobs, and that is the most I have ever seen apply for jobs. Now they are looking at your report cards and your attendance; you have to be in school every day and your marks have to be really high … to get a job. The expectations are really high. Well, this year it was about points, like your experiences, but they are going with the attendance, but that will be next year; they have a different one every year.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

Interestingly, a service provider from the same community, in a separate interview, revealed a significant chasm between youths' actual realities and decision makers' opinions about the issues youth need to navigate in terms of the labour market.

> I am working right now with Service Canada for summer jobs and they only have money for eight summer positions and twenty people applied, and they want more money to hire the youth. Well, we said, "No, this is a perfect opportunity for the youth to learn about the real world, that it is competitive out there." They can't expect the First Nations to take care of them and they need to get out of that mentality, I think. We have to teach our youth to be self-sufficient and to fight for what they want because they are going to have to go out there anyways.
>
> — Individual Interview

Given these contrasting views about youth employment, it may be beneficial for youth and those in decision-making positions to discuss their relative perspectives. This could be a starting point for addressing decision makers' beliefs and fears about enabling dependency and decreasing survival skills for the labour market. It may also provide a space to identify solutions so the needs and desires of decision makers and youth can both be met. Finally, it may be worthwhile to explore the idea of dependency — particularly its historical origins in First Nations communities — who it benefits and how it can be dealt with in a manner that empowers and unifies First Nations members.

Economic Development Rooted in Anishinaabek Values

Research participants made many suggestions regarding the need to expand economic development in First Nations. Some believed that development needed to be rooted in Anishinaabek values, such as long-term protection for the environment. One suggestion was to utilize natural resources to revitalize Anishinaabek forms of work that were historically a part of everyday life (i.e., harvesting maple sap for syrup) and linking this into an ethical tourist economy.

> I see that question as, take advantage of that highway and our community resources and our culture to get into the tourism business. Go green. We do have our own values and practices. One example, I was telling them about our sugar bush. I went to a sugar bush down in Waterloo and it was very commercial and brought you to the farm and you have pancakes and buy syrups. We should take advantage that we have a sugar bush. Take advantage of people that want to come out and learn our culture. Any skills that we had in the past are just as important in our future. — Focus Group Participant

The following idea strongly suggests mobilizing Anishinaabek values when considering projects that utilize local natural resources:

> We need people who are going to look at alternative methods utilizing the land without damaging the environment, like green energy. People need to know about that stuff. How do we work with it? As Aboriginal people, our main focus is, we are the caretakers of the land. We can't keep raping the land. We need to keep it so that we can use it for our grandchildrens' future.
>
> — Individual Interview

Partnership Development

Participants identified several additional ways to meet the challenge of poor employment opportunities. One suggested partnerships as a means to create employment in both First Nations and urban centres. Other respondents suggested further development of existing partnerships by encouraging businesses to locate within a First Nations community, or by strengthening connections among local municipalities, local industries, and First Nations. Participants acknowledged that government has been enforcing partnerships between companies and First Nations, which has increased inclusions in business ventures and industrial development. Participants felt this shift in economic development could be leveraged further.

This section shows community perceptions of economic, political, social, and cultural development.[30] Almost one half (45%) of the survey participants believed that the economy in their community was poorly developed, while another 30% believed it to be "fair." Only 14% considered the economy to be well developed.

The economic context of Serpent River First Nation differs from the other participating communities, which are struggling to find employment opportunities for their members. Serpent River, on the other hand, indicated that it had more employment opportunities than skilled community members to fill them:

[30] The contribution of Serpent River First Nation (SRFN) is reflected mainly in this section as the community identified its wish to engage in an assessment of community needs aimed at infusing the local labour market with members presently residing in urban centres. Other interviewees and focus group participants were also interested in enhancing First Nations labour markets, so this section is not solely devoted to input from SRFN. Its contribution is unique, however, as the community has documented its local labour market assets and strengths and, as a result of increased economic development, has identified a need to bring members home to work.

> Our client [case load] is going down and I am ready to close about thirteen files. They are employed. We are booming here. When I get a new client now, the first question I ask them is, "Did you drop off your resumé at the band office?" We have nobody to fill the positions.
>
> — Focus Group Participant

This being said, the need for economic development was a predominant theme in both the quantitative and qualitative data, defined specifically as:

- increasing new partnerships and business development
- enhancing the skills of members to work in particular areas
- utilizing local natural resources
- restoring or revitalizing previously operated job sites (e.g., the sawmill)
- creating new innovative programs that build on the Anishinaabek philosophy of community, inclusivity, and productivity (e.g., starting a program where retired members transfer their skills to local youth in a kind of training or apprenticeship program)

One survey respondent stated:

> It would be a great idea to get our sawmill running the way it was a long time ago. It employed many and it would assist in the building of our new buildings and homes.
>
> — Survey Respondent

In contrast, responses from an urban setting recognized that difficult economic contexts did not warrant an economic development strategy but rather a client strategy of using "slumps" in the labour market as an opportunity to enhance education or increase skills.

Relationship with the Land

This is a particularly important category of analysis when considering the contemporary labour market for Aboriginal people. Several authors writing about Aboriginal labour in both the United States and Canada discuss Aboriginal people's relationship with the land when they describe shifts in social and economic well-being.[31] They illustrate how the various stages of colonialism

[31] Martha C. Knack and Alice Littlefield, "Native American Labor: Retrieving History, Rethinking Theory," in *Native Americans and Wage Labor: Ethnohistorical Perspectives,* ed. Alice Littlefield and Martha C. Knack (Norman: U of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 3–44; Colleen O'Neill, *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Lawrence: U Press of Kansas, 2005); Tressa Berman, *Circle of Goods: Women, Work, and Welfare in a Reservation Community* (Albany: State U of New York Press, 2003); Diane Newell, *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries* (Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1993); Sarah H. Hill, "Made by the Hands of Indians: Cherokee Women and Trade," in *Neither Lady nor Slave: Working Women of the Old South*, ed. Susanna Delfino and Michele Gillespie (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina Press, 2002), 36–37;

displaced Aboriginal people from their homelands, impacting their social structures and economic security. Tracing the history of Aboriginal wage labour in the United States to a contemporary twentieth century context, Martha C. Knack and Alice Littlefield state that Aboriginal people "were driven off the land and forced into the wage labor market in order to survive. Wage employment then, is a historical measure of the degree of resource loss and dependency."[32]

Participants were asked to rate their First Nations community with regard to its relationship to the land on a scale of one to five, where one indicated a poor relationship with the land and five indicated a good one. Forty percent of respondents felt that their community had a poor relationship with the land, while only 16% felt that their relationship with the land was good.

Indigenizing the Labour Market

Given the distinct historical and contemporary relationship that First Nations people have with the Canadian government, its institutions, and funding bodies, we felt it necessary to include questions in the study that acknowledged the historically autonomous nature of Anishinaabek economies and labour practices, which continue to operate as fundamental components of the participants' life and living. The following section portrays both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from respondents.

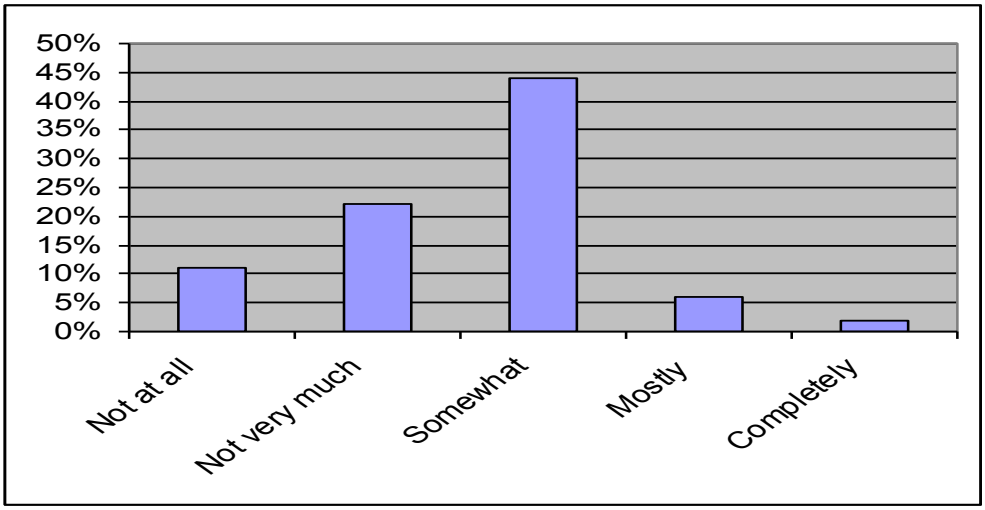
> **The Perspective of Survey Participants** Forty-four percent of the respondents considered the labour market to be consistent with Anishinaabek values and practices with regard to work and providing for self, family, and community. Eleven percent indicated that the labour market is not at all consistent with their Anishinaabek values and practices. Only 2% indicated that the labour market is completely consistent with their values and practices.

James Carson Taylor, "Dollars Never Fail to Melt Their Hearts: Native Women and the Market Revolution," in *Neither Lady nor Slave* (see reference above), 15–33; Paige Raibmon, "The Practice of Everyday Colonialism: Indigenous Women at Work in the Hop Fields and Tourist Industry of Puget Sound," *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 3 (2006): 23–56; Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, "To Live Among Us: Accommodation, Gender, and Conflict in the Western Great Lakes Region, 1760–1832," in *Native Women's History in Eastern North America before 1900,* ed. Rebecca Kugel and Lucy Eldersveld Murphy (Lincoln: U of Nebraska Press, 2007), 385–86; Jean M. O'Brien, "Divorced from the Land: Resistance and Survival of Indian Women in Eighteenth-Century New England," in *Native Women's History* (see reference above), 332–67; Muszynski, *Cheap Wage Labour;* and Allison M. Dussias, "Squaw Drudges, Farm Wives, and the Dann Sisters' Last Stand: American Indian Women's Resistance to Domestication and the Denial of Their Property Rights," *North Carolina Review* 77 (1998): 637–729.

[32] Knack and Littlefield, "Native American Labor," 42.

This is a surprising result, given that most surveys were from the on-reserve population and labour force.

Figure 11: Consistency between Labour Market and Anishinaabek Values



An open-ended question on the survey asked "In what ways could the labour market be improved to better reflect and support Anishinaabek values and practices?" A key theme among the 132 people who responded to the question was the importance of education for both Anishinaabek and non-Anishinaabek people.

For Anishinaabek people, the primary emphasis was on education to support their culture and put cultural beliefs into practice:

> First Nations communities have to improve their beliefs before they can address the labour market. How can they improve the labour market if they can't improve the community? Divisions and separations within the community due to culture and tradition.
>
> — Survey Respondent

> Have a school that only talks and teaches Ojibway language and practices.
>
> — Survey Respondent

> I think that the labour market could be improved by making it mandatory to speak our language at an on-reserve job, just so that our language is not lost. We always talk about how we should implement this in our First Nation communities.
>
> — Survey Respondent

> Remember that we are Anishinaabe, not white people, and that family always comes before work. Remember the jobs the Creator gave us — mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, cousin, friend, warrior, teacher.
>
> — Survey Respondent

Connected to this theme of cultural continuity and practice was an expressed need to be allowed time off for cultural activities relating to spiritual health. Employees within First Nations and in urban centres were both included in this suggestion.

For non-Anishinaabek people, respondents identified a need for education about Anishinaabek culture and the elimination of discriminatory racial attitudes:

> The general public should be more aware of Anishinaabek people.
>
> — Survey Respondent

Further to this was the need for awareness of the contemporary realities, self-esteem, and expectations that Anishinaabek people bring to the labour market:

> Need to realize that many Anishinaabek people in 2009 can't be stereotyped when we suffered oppression and were labeled. Today the labour market has become much more open and [we] realize that we the people are intelligent, trustworthy in workplaces, and have much pride in our academic accomplishments and will go beyond to provide excellent workplace values and hope that those same morals and ethical values will be an asset in our diverse society.
>
> — Survey Respondent

Two respondents suggested an alternative perspective: there is no need to consider the compatibility between the labour market and Anishinaabek values and practice. While these are minority responses, their observations are interesting:

> Holidays are holidays. It does not matter what culture it is in.
>
> — Survey Respondent

> I believe individuals who are employed can do this on their own time (i.e., weekends, holidays, etc.).
>
> — Survey Respondent

The responses indicate a broad range of attitudes regarding indigenizing the labour market. As one participant suggested, these may be as varied as each individual: "It depends on each individual. Not all Anishinaabek are at the same level of 'culture.'"

A similar statement could likely be made about the level of education and awareness that non-Anishinaabek people have about Anishinaabek people and communities.

Finally, although the majority of respondents left this question blank (as they did with other open-ended questions), 12 of the 132 participants indicated that they "didn't know," were "unsure," or had "no comment," which suggests some confusion around the question and raises the possibility of more dialogue to give members time for reflection and consideration.

The qualitative data obtained through the interviews and focus groups is more nuanced than the survey results and offers more insight into the subject of indigenizing the labour market. It is organized according to three perspectives within the employment and training service provider system — the tribal council, the First Nations community, and the urban community.

The Perspective of the Tribal Council

> I would have to say, what I am finding right now is that the support needs to be there in regards to language and knowing who they are as an Anishinaabe person.
>
> — Individual Interview

- knowing who you are as an Anishinaabe helps in the transition to non-Anishinaabek workplaces
- the tribal council has policies around language, ceremony, and family, for employees
- there should be cultural training for businesses; extend invitation to municipalities
- there is a need to balance Western standards (e.g., ISO, following Employment Standards Act for maternity leave) and Indigenous standards for carrying out responsibilities (e.g., building time for ceremonial leave into existing policies, etc.)
- there are benefits to creating policies that allow for ceremonial time away (e.g., helps with maintaining health holistically); it is "very good for a person's overall spirit" (Individual Interview)
- there should be differences in these policies and a recognition of these needs and benefits in First Nations communities and places of work in urban centres
- need to work with unions to help them understand Anishinaabe culture

That [taking leave for a family member's death] was something we were working on with unions and they were starting to understand our culture, but I don't know where that is now.

— Individual Interview

The cultural training, this is what's going to be happening anyways with Val Inco. Extending that invitation to the neighbouring businesses even in [town], they need to have kind of sensitivity course or program. I am thinking that [the reason] nobody else is hiring [First Nations] people is that maybe [they] have that awful assumption that Aboriginal people are lazy and don't want to work. Being able to offer that type of service to them would maybe open up their eyes. Being able to really feel about what that Anishinaabe person goes through when a family member dies. I think some of that really needs to be, they might see it as, "Oh, he didn't show up for four days, he is fired." Letting them know there are certain traditions we have that we don't want to stray from. It would be nice to present it for two years. I know they have talked about it a couple of years ago but it never happened.… If you have that training with other businesses they will realize the importance for taking a day off for a cultural event, ceremony. I never seen other than the Cree having the hunting; we had our first one last year, it was held in our territory, it was held north of [the community], we had a three-day hunting trip. Just allowing for those types of things for [the community], employees, [community] members that are employed elsewhere.

— Individual Interview

The Perspective of First Nations Communities

Our communities can actually look at what is feasible for our community members.… If there was something built in for people who want to take that time off for self for healing, taking care of themselves in a good way, they should look at those policies, too. Also, mostly in our area — I'm thinking North Shore — we don't have a lot of that in our policies. I know the funeral thing is okay, but the ceremonies you know, we don't really have anything built in and a lot of times it's at the discretion of the manager to decide whether or not he is going to let the individual take the time off. But, if it was already built into the policies, then I think the person would feel a whole lot better about themselves. And they don't take advantage of it; you do fasting twice a year, it's not like they are going to be gone all the time.

— Individual Interview

- communities have some provisions around family, ceremony, and language, in their policies
- this benefits the community, the family, the individual, and the work being carried out
- there is a way to provide quality trained employees and also have employers who are responsive to Anishinaabek social and cultural needs

- around death in the family, there is a difference for First Nations employees working in a First Nations community and in an urban centre — the latter is more support to the family and extended family
- it will require cross-cultural training for employers to understand Anishinaabek ways and to recognize that these ways have been carried out for years
- revitalizing culture and language is one way to restore knowledge of identity and increase abilities to deal with systemic problems such as discrimination
- there is a need to advocate within education systems to have absences for ceremonies recognized and not marked as "absences," and to have ceremonial participation considered as a credit or towards a credit
- it is difficult for those socialized in the non-Native world to accept Anishinaabek practices regarding family and child care

Just so you know, when I started working at the band office back in [the eighties], being a single mom, like a lot were off home because they didn't have a babysitter, and I thought, that is not right because I came from the non-Native world and they didn't care if you didn't have a babysitter or not, you went to work no matter what. It took me a while to get used to that, because you should be home if your child is sick. That is one of them.

— Individual Interview

The following three quotations identify some of the benefits of indigenizing the labour market:

The attendance would be good and it's good planning too for the community if you know when these ceremonies are going to happen. It's good for the community. Of course, the workers themselves … are, you know, taking care of your life. I think, too, it's not just community, it's family.

— Individual Interview

[We need to] revitalize our culture and language. We feel that if people, if we know who we are as people, then our community members will [be] proud of who they are. The systemic problems that we do face, discrimination and that kind of thing, will always be there, but they will have better [knowledge] to handle discrimination.

— Individual Interview

Right now, say if [students in school] went on a five-day fast, then they would not be noted as absent, or they can get approval to be absent, but if we can find a way for them to have credit, then it is one [way] of also getting them an extra credit for what they believe.

— Individual Interview

The Perspective of Urban Communities

I think all that stuff is great but on the other hand, I could see it being, I don't wanna say abused kinda thing. I know that up north they shut down for the goose hunt; that is part of the whole community thing. As for down here, I don't know. I can see it being confused.

— Individual Interview

- it would create problems between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employees; might be more acceptable in different areas (e.g., remote community vs. urban centre)
- needs to be reciprocal recognition of needs between the employee and the employer
- need to increase employers' awareness of relationship with the land in terms of fishing/hunting/goose hunt (e.g., in some communities, subsistence minimizes the cost of groceries; however, urban employers aren't really aware of this when they go to rural areas)
- not sure if non-Aboriginal employers would be flexible over time off for ceremonial participation, etc.; Aboriginal organizations are more flexible
- need to address the fact that some people participate and some don't, which creates questions of equal treatment; needs to be individually based or recognized
- need to recognize how we got here, i.e., working nine to five

I tell people [when] they come in here and they want to work in Toronto, you have to adapt your lifestyle to down there; they run a business and you have to operate the way [they] operate. Your job starts at 8 and you go in at 10 or 9, you're not going to be working for that person much longer. It's an attitude, especially if you say, I'm going hunting this week. You have to adjust. So it's not that we adjust as much to them, but they have to adjust to us, too. So it is a give and take.

— Individual Interview

Wow, we can't tell employers how to treat their employees. You are only allowed so much sick time. When you are going to sweat lodges and ceremonies, it is very hard to hold on to a full-time position. I know one fellow that does that — he goes to pow-wows and cultural things on weekends and stuff, but it is not the norm.

— Individual Interview

I don't know, I can't tell you that the capitalistic society that we are living in is right or wrong. If an employer tells you that you get only half an hour for lunch and you can't leave the building, then that is the way it goes. My job is to help you understand that this is the way it goes and help you navigate it. I know for a fact that some employers have let people go because they had to go home and take care of their Mom for a couple of days. The world is not a fair and kind place; it is a bit of a fight every day; it is hard to address all those. I would like to see employers a little bit more accommodating.

— Individual Interview

> We need to look at the job and employment and see how we got here, too. We are living in this portion of the world that believes in this nine to five. Some people are starting to think differently and are liking this four-day idea. And there are a lot of people starting to work from home even at the provincial and federal levels.
>
> — Individual Interview

Additional Themes

This section highlights a number of additional themes that emerged from the quantitative data that are not explicitly addressed above.

Relationships/Partnerships: (Re)Creating, Improving, Maintaining

Relationships among everyone in the employment, training, and economic development system emerged as a significant theme across all areas of inquiry. The relationships include Anishinaabek and non-Anishinaabek people from every sector of society — First Nations community employees, citizens, and government; urban-based service providers; tribal council (NSTC) administrations, programs, and employees; various Canadian government departments and agencies; educational institutions; municipalities; and corporations. This material constitutes a site for new relationships to be created, for former relationships to be re-kindled, and for the strengths and weaknesses in existing relationships to be maintained and improved, respectively. The relationship theme emerged in several ways, discussed below under the headings Challenges, Strengths, and Improvements (see Appendix E for a list of the partnerships identified by the participants).

> **Challenges** Responsiveness to applications and the exchange of paperwork and documents was mutually identified as a challenge between NSTC and First Nations communities. Urban service providers identified three major relationship challenges: an uncertainty among urban clients regarding equal consideration being given to members residing in their home communities; lengthy turnaround times for applications, resulting in negative outcomes for clients; and an unfulfilled need for a position focused on building the relationship between employees and employers.

Respondents identified the "invisibility"[33] of First Nations people working in towns and urban centres as another challenge and were curious as to why it existed. One person commented that members of First Nations contribute extensively to the economies of cities and towns and felt that their invisibility did not make sense.

Strengths Respondents identified numerous strengths in a wide cross-section of relationships. Interestingly, there were strengths as well as challenges in the relationship between NSTC and First Nations communities. There is a general sense that the relationship is sound, particularly when the local delivery mechanism (LDM) is located within the community. There are also good relationships with educational institutions and some business partners and corporations. This can be said for urban Aboriginal communities, First Nations, and the tribal council. According to one respondent, the community is nurturing relationships with unions, increasing their knowledge and understanding of Anishinaabek ways. Another respondent saw strength in the regular meetings that have occurred historically among stakeholders within groups of First Nations employees and across sectors (e.g., ministry representatives and First Nations communities).

Improvements Respondents shared several ideas for improving relationships/partnerships. Those from the urban centre identified a desire to build the relationship with NSTC, although it is not known if there are plans to initiate this. Participants also suggested unifying programs that deliver similar services within a particular administration. Service providers indicated the need for regular meetings with departments and stakeholders within the employment and training system. Another participant suggested restoring the First Nations committees that used to determine viable projects. One service provider reflected upon a time when First Nations communities met regularly to discuss economic development projects. Unfortunately, the way the government allocated funding created divisions among the parties, which led to the fragmentation of these working groups into individual community endeavours. If partnering between communities and/or service providers were to be re-initiated, it would be beneficial to examine both the strengths and points of tension that arose in previous efforts in order to avert past failures. Finally, all service providers at

[33] "Invisibility" results from First Nations people not being employed in front-line positions, where the public could see them regularly.

each site indicated an on-going wish to establish partnerships with business, corporate, and government funding sources.

Funding

Each type of funding has special criteria and application processes that are challenging to clients and occasionally to service providers. Several tensions emerged from the research, along with one strength. Participants had no suggestions as to how these processes could be improved.

Challenges There are a number of sites within the application process where funding can either be approved or rejected; these vary according to service providers and the relationships among them. The tribal council, First Nations communities, and urban participants all indicated that funding is significantly influenced by the paperwork, bureaucracy, and the flow (or lack of flow) of the documents required to assess an application.

Strengths In the case of applications not being supported by the First Nations community and the LDM, urban respondents indicated that there were accessible options in mainstream services. It is not known if the fact that additional options are available to First Nations people living in urban areas impacts the decisions of First Nations communities or LDMs to approve or not approve applications submitted by urban-based members.

> I would say a lot of times for some of the clients that come in, it would be access to the funding itself. Like I had clients come in and you submit the application to the LDM where they are from and then there is no more funding left. And in that case what I do is try to access Employment Ontario funding for skills development.… I have heard that if you're off reserve — I don't know if it is true or not — I heard that they will give you funding for on-reserve before off-reserve; that is just what I heard. I hear clients saying that; it may not be true. I don't know.
>
> — Individual Interview

Gender, Ability, Age, and Employment Sector

Gender Bias, Age, and Disability Caution is advised in interpreting results related to gender. Respondents' success stories in training and employment referred mainly to men, although the majority of participants both in the survey and in the qualitative data collection were women, who mentioned only one example of women's success. When respondents did

not highlight men's success or examples of men's work, the discussions of employment and training were gender neutral. The literature shows that gender-neutral discourse easily slips into a bias that focuses on the experiences, needs, challenges, and successes of men, erasing those of women and people who self-identify in other terms. This may be of particular concern when interpreting data related to trades and apprenticeships and employment opportunities, which historically have been male-dominated positions.

Service providers addressed the needs and experiences of youth (e.g., attending school, family needs, poverty) but made few references to the needs and experiences of other marginalized groups, such as people with (dis)abilities or women. While there were services identified at the LDM and community level for people with (dis)abilities and youth, there were none for women or men, indicating an oversight in the gendered needs of Anishinaabek people in the labour market.

One urban-based service provider discussed the difficulty of providing assistance to female clients dealing with domestic violence, mentioning specifically their inability to address such issues on their own. This is only one example of the necessity for a gendered understanding of Anishinaabek labour market needs and illustrates how other aspects of life can impact economic requirements and abilities. While the intersection between gender and labour-market participation would benefit from further attention, the particular connection between domestic violence and labour-market participation might be an excellent place to begin a gendered focus. In her research on the contradictions in the relationship between the Canadian government and First Nations women through the Indian Act (site of patriarchal, racist, and sexist oppression, but also intended to protect First Nations women), Jo-Anne Fiske indicates that economic independence provides women some spaces of strength when living in situations of domestic violence.[34]

As cited previously, youth navigate a number of particular tensions when engaging the labour market for the first time: the emotional stress of leaving home, particularly in single-parent families; the culture shock of migrating from an isolated or rural community to an urban centre; and poverty.

[34] Jo-Anne Fiske, "Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contradictory Implications of Canadian State Policy," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 19, no. 2 (1995): 1–30.

Diversity of the Employment Sector Service providers consistently identify trades and apprenticeship as the predominant need or area of employment for First Nations people, be it in the First Nations or the urban community. While one respondent did mention a career in the health sector and indicated the diversity available within the trades (i.e., labourer, management), there was a significant absence of discussion around education, training, and promoting livelihoods across a wide range of professions, careers, and business development.

This consistent promotion of the trades tends to exclude other areas of livelihood, neglecting and thus failing to acknowledge and develop the diverse strengths and visions of First Nations people within their homelands. It also does not take into account the fact that trades in the Western sense are typically male dominated and require full physical ability. Because the discussion here did not address the barriers that women or people with (dis)abilities may face in the trades, we assumed that respondents were referring mainly to the employment of able-bodied men, thus implicitly excluding First Nations women and (dis)abled persons.

One respondent did comment that apprenticeship is an Aboriginal way of working. It would be interesting to explore this statement to unpack its full meaning and compare it to a Western concept of apprenticeship. While Canada is currently experiencing a labour shortage in the skilled trades area, not all persons can or wish to be employed in this one sector, and communities require skills in a wide variety of occupations. Respondents indicated that they wanted, and needed, to use a variety of skill sets in a range of sectors, with diverse employers, beyond the band office and First Nations governments. Participants also indicated a desire for employment opportunities for all First Nations individuals — young, old, male, female, and of varying abilities. The residential schools of the past prepared First Nations children to be part of the servant class in a Canadian labour market, where girls/young women were socialized to be domestic labourers, invisible and undervalued, and boy/young men were socialized to be menial labourers on farms.[35] While the skilled trades pay better than the jobs of the nineteenth century serving class, funders and

[35] Janice Forsythe, "After the Fur Trade: First Nations Women in Canadian History, 1850–1950," *Atlantis* 29, no. 2 (2005): 74–75; and Allison M. Dussias, "Squaw Drudges, Farm Wives, and the Dann Sisters' Last Stand: American Indian Women's Resistance to Domestication and the Denial of Their Property Rights," *North Carolina Law Review* (1998): 670–88.

service providers need to support First Nations people to enjoy a full range of employment, including professors, doctors, lawyers, scientists, accountants, and business people.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has revealed a substantial amount about the current status and future aspirations regarding training, education, and employment of the Serpent River, Atikameksheng Anishnawbek, Mississauga, and Garden River First Nations participating in the study. It also told us a great deal about the issues facing the service providers who support them. Following is a summary of recommendations for continuing to develop the human resources in these communities in order to meet their ongoing needs.

Recommendations to Improve Service Provision

1. Build, strengthen, and where necessary, restore relationships between service providers and communities in order to maximize co-ordination and benefits. Restoring relationships may require addressing areas of tension that fractured relationships historically.

2. Develop partnerships with organizations providing support services such as crisis counseling to ensure clients have access to an array of services that meet the needs of the whole person.

3. Initiate a dialogue with youth, and between youth and youth service providers, regarding concerns related to employment and training (see full discussion in the section titled "Research Findings and Analysis," p. 17). This would include exploring the realities of students and employment opportunities and concerns related to developing dependency.

4. Identify areas of potential exclusions from programs, such as those that may have gender, age, or ability biases, and implement strategies to address these.

5. Support client advocacy at and between each site within the system: client to service provider or employer; service provider to First Nations community/LDM; service provider to funder and potential partner.

6. Strengthen communication strategies to ensure community members are aware of how to access supports to training, education, and employment.

7. Provide training to increase awareness of Canadian labour market structures and functions (i.e., how the labour market is segmented at sites of race, gender, and ability) and the historical relationship(s) between this market and Anishinaabek people.

Recommendations to Address Structural Issues

1. Indigenize education, training, and employment services and the labour market. Develop curricula that reflect Anishinaabek knowledge and practical forms of labour such as artisan work, wilderness survival skills, and environmental expertise. Utilize Anishinaabek philosophy of gifts, responsibilities, and personal visions to shape Anishinaabek "labour forces."

2. Develop community vision(s) for socio-economic well-being, including member visions of how they see themselves contributing. NSTC's Human Resources Development Agreement programs can then work closely with communities to assist in creating these visions.

> And you know in a community vision too, the community themselves really need to look at their vision, what do they want for their community. In order to bring their youth back when they go to school, it takes a lot of planning. They really should be doing community planning, what do you/they need? And I talked about this before — succession planning, people are going to retire, do they have enough human resources within their community now to take over some of those skilled jobs? So they should be looking at the succession planning and that is part of their overall vision, what do they want in the community, what types of economic developments are going to help the community?
>
> — Individual Interview

Appendix A: 2009 AHRDA Labour Market Survey

The North Shore Tribal Council's Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement — Naadmaadwiiuk Unit and Saulteaux Enterprises is conducting a survey to gather input regarding employment and training in your First Nation community and from your urban-based members. The information collected will be utilized to plan employment and training programming, so that Naadmaadwiiuk and Saulteaux Enterprises can better meet your members' needs.

We greatly appreciate you taking the time and effort to complete this survey. Miigwech!

SECTION A: Demographics

1. Are you a First Nation member of:

- ☐ Atikameksheng
- ☐ Serpent River
- ☐ Sagamok
- ☐ Mississauga
- ☐ Garden River

2. To what extent do you agree that: "I would prefer to live in my First Nation for the foreseeable future."

☐ Not at all ☐ Not very much ☐ Somewhat ☐ Mostly ☐ Completely

3. Where do you live now? _____

→ What are your main reasons for living there?

_____

4. During your lifetime, about how many years have you lived in your First Nation?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1 to 3 years
- ☐ 3 to 5 years
- ☐ 5 to 8 years
- ☐ 8 to 10 years
- ☐ More than 10 years

5. During your lifetime, in what other communities/towns/cities have you lived, for more than one year?
(please list all)

_____

6. Have you ever moved in order to obtain employment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Are you… ☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Other: _____

8. How old are you? ☐ 16–29 years ☐ 30–49 years ☐ 50 years and over

9. Do you have any dependents and/or children in your care?

☐ No

☐ Yes → How many? _____

→ Approximately, how many of your children will be entering the workforce in the next 5 years? _____

10. Are you a member of any trade unions or associations?

☐ No

☐ Yes → Please list them: _____

SECTION B: Education/Training/Skills Inventory and Needs Assessment

1. Have you taken any job training or work-related courses (e.g., WHMIS, CPR, First Aid)?

☐ No

☐ Yes → Please list them: _____

2. What are the highest level(s) of formal education you have completed?

☐ No formal schooling

☐ Some elementary school

☐ Completed elementary school (grade 8)

☐ Some high school (grades 9–12)

☐ High school graduation certificate or equivalent

☐ Some trade, technical, or apprenticeship

☐ Completed trade, technical, or apprenticeship: _____ (describe)

☐ Some community college

☐ Completed college diploma: _____ (describe)

☐ Some university

☐ Bachelor's degree: _____ (describe)

☐ Master's degree: _____ (describe)

☐ Professional degree in medicine, dentistry, law, teaching, social work, etc.:

_____ (describe)

☐ Doctorate: _____ (describe)

3. Do you have knowledge in any of the following areas? Please check all that apply.

☐ Anishinaabemowin ☐ Song, dance, and/or drumming

☐ Healing ☐ Crafts, art and/or clothing

☐ Storytelling ☐ Harvesting/eating/preparing foods

☐ Indigenous thought ☐ Ceremonies

☐ Hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, and/or growing food

☐ Making items (e.g., cradleboard, drum, canoe, etc.)

☐ Other: _____

4. Please indicate any licenses you have, including level/class etc.:

☐ Drivers → which class(es)?_____ ☐ Heavy equipment _____

☐ Boating_____ ☐ Trapping_____

☐ Commercial Fishing_____ ☐ Gun_____

☐ Other_____ (describe)

5a. Do you own or have regular access to a vehicle?

☐ No ☐ Yes

5b. If required, do you have access to transportation to get to work?

☐ No ☐ Yes

6. How well do you communicate in the following languages?

	Not at all	A few words	With effort	Relatively well	Fluently
a. Anishinaabemowin	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. English	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. French	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. Other: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. Please list any additional skills or education you possess that were not included in the questions above:

_____

_____

8. Following is a list of training and/or skill building areas. Please select any that you are interested in, specify particular areas of interest, and then designate each selection as something you need (i.e., to get a job) or as something you want (i.e., for your professional development):

	Need (to obtain work)	Want
☐ Job preparation and/or search	☐	☐
→ Which areas? _____		
☐ Computer Skills	☐	☐
→ Which areas? _____		
☐ Starting your Own Business	☐	☐
→ Which areas? _____		
☐ Indigenous Knowledge	☐	☐
→ Which areas? _____		
☐ Literacy (i.e., reading, writing, etc.)	☐	☐
☐ Math	☐	☐
☐ Communication Skills	☐	☐
→ Which areas? _____		
☐ Time Management	☐	☐
☐ High School equivalency	☐	☐
☐ Trade, college, or university degree	☐	☐
→ In what area? _____		
☐ Other: _____	☐	☐

9. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
a. I am aware of the resources available to me for job training and/or apprenticeship programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. I feel that the available job training and/or apprenticeship program resources are accessible and would be easy for me to apply for.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take job training, we could receive financial support from within my First Nation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take job training, we could receive financial support from a First Nations or Aboriginal organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take job training, we could receive financial support from off-reserve sources (e.g., OSAP, EI, Ontario Works).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take an apprenticeship, we could receive financial support from within my First Nation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take an apprenticeship, we could receive financial support from a First Nations or Aboriginal organization.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h. If I, or someone in my family, wanted to take an apprenticeship, we could receive financial support from off-reserve sources.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION C: Employment History, Current Status and Goals

1. Over the past 5 years, approximately how many paid job positions have you held?

☐ # of paid jobs in last 5 years

2. Over the past 5 years, approximately how many months have you been unemployed and looking for work in total?

☐ None

☐ 1–5 months

☐ 6–11 months

☐ 12–24 months (i.e., 1–2 years total)

☐ 25–48 months (i.e., 2–4 years total)

☐ Close to 60 months (i.e., all 5 years)

3. On average, approximately how many hours of paid employment do you work per week?

☐ Less than 20 hours ☐ 31–44 hours

☐ 20–30 hours ☐ More than 44 hours

4. On average, how many hours of volunteer and/or community-building work do you engage in per week?

☐ Less than 20 hours ☐ 31–44 hours

☐ 20–30 hours ☐ More than 44 hours

5. On average, how many hours of unpaid work (e.g., care-giving, household labour, paying bills, etc.) do you put in per week?

☐ Less than 20 hours ☐ 31 – 44 hours

☐ 20 – 30 hours ☐ More than 44 hours

6. What are your current occupations? (Check all that apply. Provide details to the right.)

☐ Caring for family

☐ Living off the land (i.e., hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering)

☐ Self-employed full-time → Doing what? _____

☐ Self-employed part-time → Doing what? _____

☐ Employed by others full-time → Doing what?_____

☐ Employed by others part-time → Doing what?_____

☐ Seasonal Employment → Doing what?_____

☐ Going to school or taking training → In what?_____

☐ Recovering from illness, injury, disability

☐ Not working or laid off

☐ On temporary layoff, expecting to return to same job

☐ Looking for work

☐ Retired

☐ Volunteer work → Doing what? _____

☐ Other → Please specify _____

7. If you are currently working for <u>paid employment</u>:

a) Where do you currently work?

☐ On-reserve ☐ Off-reserve ☐ Both

b) Where / for whom do you currently work? _____

c) What other places have you worked in the past? (Please list).

_____

_____

8. If you have completed an apprenticeship, where did you complete it? _____

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about <u>your most recent paid employment</u>? (If you have more than one job, answer for the one in which you spend the most hours).

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The pay is good.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The work is interesting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The job security is good.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am satisfied with my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can influence important decisions in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
There is an opportunity to develop my abilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

There are opportunities to utilize my personal gifts and responsibilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The chances for promotion are good.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The benefits are good (e.g., health, retirement).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

10. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following:

	Strongly disagree	**Somewhat disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Somewhat agree**	**Strongly agree**	**Don't know**
a. If I wanted to start a small business, there are funding opportunities for me in my First Nation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b. If I wanted to start a small business and needed to borrow money, I could borrow money from a First Nations or Aboriginal organization (e.g., Waubetek, ABDC).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c. Banks lend money to businesses in my First Nation (e.g., fisherperson, farmers, stores, tourism).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. In terms of location, how willing are you to work:

	Not at all	**Not very much**	**Somewhat**	**Mostly**	**Completely**
In my First Nation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Off-Reserve	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

12. What is the longest amount of time you would be willing and/or able to travel to work on a DAILY basis?

_____ minutes OR _____ hours

13. What is the farthest distance away that you would be willing and/or able to RELOCATE for work?

_____ kilometers OR _____ hours OR ☐ Anywhere

14. Do you plan to retire within the next 5 years?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

15. To what extent have you experienced the following barriers to employment, job training, and/or education:

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Lack of child Care	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other family obligations	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not enough education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of information about jobs available	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Few jobs available	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Criminal record	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm overqualified	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of transportation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discrimination	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of computer/internet access	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of accommodation for Indigenous culture/practice (e.g., hunting season, spring ceremonies, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Lack of funds (e.g., for required clothing/tools, resources, space)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Health problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other → What? _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

16. a) Approximately, what is your income each month from <u>all sources</u>?

- ☐ Less than $500
- ☐ $500-999
- ☐ $1,000-1,499
- ☐ $1,500-1,999
- ☐ $2,000-2,499
- ☐ $2,500- 2,999
- ☐ $3,000 or more

b) Please indicate which of the following sources contribute to your monthly income:

- ☐ Paid employment (including from own business)
- ☐ Education assistance / Education Unit
- ☐ Disability
- ☐ Family benefits
- ☐ Employment insurance
- ☐ Ontario Works
- ☐ Social Assistance (SATF)
- ☐ Canadian Pension Plan
- ☐ Settlement support
- ☐ Other: _____

c) To what extent do you feel that you have enough money to meet your needs such that you and your family can live a good life?

Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

17. If you had all the necessary training and could work at any job you wished, what job would that be? [Describe it if you are unsure what it is called or if it is a job that you think is needed but not already existing.]

SECTION D: Community Level

1. Below is a list of descriptions. On a scale of 1–5, where would you place your First Nation at the present time?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor employment opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Good employment opportunities**
Poor formal educational opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Good formal educational opportunities**
Not enough Anishinaabemowin education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Enough Anishinaabemowin education**
Not enough economic development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Enough economic development**
Not enough cultural development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Enough cultural development**
Not enough political development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Enough political development**
Not enough social development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Enough social development**
Poor relationships with the land	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	**Good relationships with the land**

2. To what extent is the labour market consistent with Anishinaabek values and practices with regard to work and providing for self, family, and community?

Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. In what ways could the labour market be improved to better reflect and support Anishinaabek values and practices?

4. Are there any ideas that you have regarding employment, training/education/skills, or the labour market that you would like to tell us about?

Miigwech! Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this survey!

Appendix B: Focus Group Questions

1. What challenges, barriers and concerns have you experienced when seeking employment, job training, attempting to start your own business, and/or finding an apprenticeship?

2. a) What personal strengths, skills and strategies do you draw upon to navigate these challenges and barriers?

   b) What services, programs and individuals currently help you to overcome these challenges?

   c) How would you like to see such services and programs improved so that they can better meet your needs? What accommodations would help?

3. How could the Labour Market be improved to better reflect and support Anishinaabek values and practices with regard to work and providing for self, family and community? Please note that this can be anything from a longer maternity leave to time-off for taking care of elderly parents to time-off following a death in the community to time-off for sweat-lodge, spring ceremonies, hunting, etc.

Appendix C, Part 1: Algoma Workforce Investment Committee, Skills Asset Mapping, Serpent River First Nation, Final Report, May 2008

Introduction

In February 2008, the Algoma Workforce Investment Committee (AWIC) contracted Lucidia Ltd. to undertake a pilot skills-asset-mapping project on the Serpent River First Nation.

The Lucidia research team, Jack McGoldrick from AWIC, and Chief Isadore Day and Karel Grant from Serpent River First Nation held an initial meeting at the Serpent River Band Office. Participants agreed to hire two members of the Serpent River First Nation to complete a door-to-door canvas of community residents.

The goals of the survey were multi-faceted:

- to indentify the skill sets of Serpent River First Nation residents
- to identify gaps in the skill sets of Serpent River First Nation residents
- to identify their educational backgrounds
- to identify gaps in their educational experiences
- to identify the willingness of the residents to initiate or complete an academic or vocational course of study in order to enter the job market or to seek other employment
- to identify the career goals and/or aspirations of Serpent River First Nation residents

The basic survey was drafted and forwarded to Chief Isadore Day and Karel Grant on 3 March 2008. The Lucidia research team travelled to Serpent River on 13 March 2008 to meet with the canvassers and provide them with training in the completion of the surveys. The survey process began on 17 March 2008 and formally concluded on 4 April 2008. The canvassers informally revisited the homes of several persons they had been unable to contact. Lucidia received the completed surveys on 9 May 2008. On the final full day of the survey, the Lucidia team returned to Serpent River. The band hosted a free luncheon, hoping to capture the interest of people who had not completed a survey and to encourage them to do so.

Our Approach

In order to meet the objectives outlined in the February 2008 contract, the research team prepared a questionnaire consisting of thirty-six questions as well as a rationale. The questionnaire is attached as Appendix C, Part 2, while the rationale is in Appendix C, Part 3.

The survey was divided into four distinct sections as outlined below.

General

One of the goals of the survey is to enable the Serpent River First Nation to prepare and regularly update workforce information and statistics. It is thus necessary to identify workers and potential workers, their skills, and their experience.

Education

Another goal is to identify education levels in the community and detect gaps, which will enable the community to determine suitable upgrading opportunities.

Employment

Most residents of Serpent River First Nation are or have been employed. The goal here is to identify the number of persons who are employed by a third party or who are self-employed, as well as the nature of their employment. Employment history would allow for Prior Learning Assessment and credit, direct connection to employers, and refresher programs.

Employment Skills

Employment is not necessarily indicative of employment skills. It is not uncommon for persons in isolated communities such as Serpent River to accept employment in fields far removed from their academic or vocational training, or from their previous job experience, simply because they have no alternative. The purpose of the questions in this section was to identify both objectively and subjectively the skills that residents would bring to the workplace.

Methodology

Given the nature of the research, the time allocated for its completion, and the cultural sensitivity of the information being sought, the Lucidia research team determined that hiring residents of the community would be the most effective way to complete the surveys. The canvassers went door-

to-door and completed surveys with all willing participants between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five. Researchers subsequently decided to survey all persons over the age of fifteen.

There were two reasons for this. First, Elders are the most respected members of Aboriginal communities and ought not to be precluded from commenting on academic, vocational, and employment matters simply on the basis of age. Second, the Province of Ontario has eliminated the mandatory retirement age, enabling people to work until they are no longer able to fulfill the requirements of their jobs. Researchers thus eliminated the upper end of the age scale.

Researchers initially planned to post the survey on the Serpent River First Nation website so that off-reserve members could participate in the process. Given the geographically fixed nature of the survey, however, mapping the skills of on-reserve members of the community took priority.

Literature Review

This project did not warrant copious amounts of secondary research, although researchers did review Statistics Canada census reports for 2001 and 2006. They also examined the community's website at www.serpentriverfn.ca and the Aboriginal Portal at www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca.

Results

Serpent River First Nation is situated on the north shore of Lake Huron roughly half way between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. According to the Aboriginal Canada Portal Connectivity Profile, the band population is 1,118. Census Canada 2006 results indicate, however, that only 340 of these band members reside on reserve. This number reflects an increase of 17 persons, or 5.3%, up from 323 on-reserve residents in 2001.

Serpent River occupies 75.75 square kilometres, or 10,913.5 hectares, with a population density of 4.5 persons per square kilometre. There are 136 private residences in the community.

Census statistics indicate that the number of persons residing on the Serpent River First Nation is equally divided between male and female. The median age of the population is 35.7 years. Given the equal division of males and females, the median age is the same for both genders. Seventy-five percent of the population — 260 residents— is over the age of 15.

According to the results of the surveys:

- 112 people completed the survey forms; of this number, 47 (42.0%) self-identified as male and 64 (57.1%) self-identified as female; one person did not respond to the question
- those who completed the surveys ranged in age from 15 to over 65
- of the total number of survey participants, 92 (82.1%) indicated that they were members of the Serpent River First Nation, while 20 (17.9%) indicated that they resided on the First Nation but were not members
- of the total number of survey participants, 36 (32.1%) were single; 37 (33.0%) were married; 18 (16.1%) were living with another person in a common-law relationship; 6 (5.4%) were separated but not divorced; 10 (9.0%) were divorced; and 4 (3.6%) were widowed; one person declined to answer the question

Of the 112 participants who completed surveys:[36]

- 14 (12.7%) completed elementary school only
- 32 (29.0%) attended high school but did not graduate
- 36 (32.7%) graduated from high school
- 7 (6.4%) attended trade school but did not graduate
- 12 (10.9%) graduated from trade school
- 29 (26.4%) attended college but did not graduate
- 20 (18.2%) graduated from college
- 9 (8.2%) attended university but did not graduate
- 3 (2.7%) graduated from university
- 3 (2.7%) attended a graduate, postgraduate, or professional school after graduating from university
- 2 persons declined to respond to this question
- 25 respondents indicated that they had taken courses at a trade school; courses taken (but not necessarily completed) included: heavy equipment, 7 (28.0%); carpentry, 6 (24.0%); driving, 5 (20.0%); mechanical, 3 (12.0%); barber or hairstylist, 3 (12.0%); masonry, 2

[36] In some instances, overlap in categories in the section below has resulted in the number of people answering the survey (112) and the percentages not to add up as expected.

(8.0%); welding, 2 (8.0%); landscaping, 1 (4.0%); water treatment, 1 (4.0%); secretarial, 1 (4.0%); drywall and painting, 1 (4.0%); and information technology, 1 (4.0%)

- 43 persons indicated that they had taken courses at a community college; fields of study can be broken into several broad categories and include business administration, corrections, education, engineering, health care, general arts, general science, information technology, recreation, and social work
    - business courses included: business administration, office administration, public administration, human resources, and secretarial science; corrections programs included police foundations and corrections studies; education included early childhood education, education counselling, Native education, and education assistant; engineering included civil engineering, mechanical engineering, instrument technology, and gas technology; health included nursing, personal service worker, addictions counsellor, and drug and alcohol counsellor; general arts included dramatic arts, journalism, photography, and general arts; general sciences included environmental studies, general science, and culinary science; information technology included graphics and web design; recreation included general recreation studies, Native education studies, and adventure and eco-tourism; social work included social work, Native social work, and social services
    - fields of study pursued at the university level included fire science engineering, environmental science, humanities, general arts and education, social work, and native studies
    - graduate, postgraduate, and professional studies included social work, accounting, and law
- 49 (45.0%) of the survey participants indicated that they have considered upgrading their academic qualifications
    - barriers to academic upgrading included a lack of funding, 34 (33.3%); financial burden, 27 (26.5%); lack of child care, 13 (12.7%); health or disability, 17 (16.7%); and lack of transportation, 8 (7.8%); other factors included age, lack of spare time, family responsibilities, working full-time, and lack of academic qualification or need of tutoring; 18 (17.6%) said that there was no identifiable barrier, and 2 persons did not respond to the question

  - of those interested in upgrading academically, 61 (55.5%) indicated a willingness to leave the community to do so; 2 persons did not respond to the question
  - if academic upgrading or skills training was available in the community, 85 (76.6%) of the respondents would be interested in pursuing these options; one person did not respond to the question
- of the 112 survey respondents, 46 (44.2%) were not employed outside the home; 44 (42.3%) were employed outside the home on a full-time basis (more than 30 hours per week); and 14 (13.5%) were employed outside the home on a part-time basis (less than 30 hours per week)
  - of this number, 25 (45.5%) were working in the field in which they obtained formal or academic training; 57 respondents did not answer this question
  - of those who indicated that they were employed full-time outside the home, the nature of the employment was as diverse and varied as would traditionally be found in any community, ranging from executive to managerial to community and personal service
- 16 (14.3%) of the survey participants indicated that they were self-employed
  - areas of self-employment included: sanitation engineer, consultant, heavy equipment operator, shop keeper, cake decorator, contractor and home renovator, construction worker, social worker and healer, driver, artist, financial advisor, handyman, outdoor adventurer, craftsperson and bookkeeper
  - of those who indicated that they were self-employed, none indicated that they also worked full-time for a third-party employer; 8 (50.0%) indicated that they also work part time for a third-party employer; and 1 (6.3%) indicated that they work seasonally for a third party employer
  - 6 (37.5%) of those who are currently self-employed have worked for a third-party employer at some time in the past
  - currently self-employed persons were previously employed in a number of capacities: custodian, bookkeeper, consultant, social worker, and heavy equipment operator
- 53 (47.3%) of the survey participants indicated that they were unemployed

  - unemployed persons were most recently employed seasonally in fields such as labour, construction, and mining; some unemployed persons had previously worked in customer service, retail, and the restaurant field, as well as in personal service areas
  - the reasons for unemployment among the residents of Serpent River First Nation included a lack of transportation, 11 (34.4%); a lack of jobs in the area, 12 (37.5%); health or disability issues, 9 (28.1%); and a lack of education or need for training or certification, 6 (18.7%); other issues included lack of adequate day care, attendance at school, family issues, seasonal work, and retirement
  - income sources for the unemployed included Ontario Works, 12 (30.0%); Employment Insurance, 4 (10.0%); training funds, 1 (2.5%); disability, 5 (12.5%); pension, 13 (32.5%); Niigaaniin, 2 (5%); and child tax credit, 3 (7.5%)
- 58 (54.2%) of those who completed the survey indicated that they would be prepared to leave the community in order to accept a job; 40 (37.4%) are not prepared to leave the community; and 9 (8.4%) are undecided; five respondents did not answer the question
- 62 (55.9%) of survey respondents have an up-to-date resume; 1 person did not respond to the question
- 25 (26.0%) of the survey participants applied for one or more jobs within the preceding three months, while13 (13.5%) applied for one or more jobs within the preceding six months; 16 respondents did not answer this question
- 84 (75.0%) of respondents indicated that they had experience attending job interviews
- 35 (46.1%) described this experience as very comfortable; 26 (34.2%) described it as somewhat comfortable; and 21 (21.1%) described it as not comfortable; 36 persons did not answer this question

Everyone brings a unique set of skills to the workplace. Survey participants indicated that in addition to work-related and professional skills, they would enrich the workplace with traditional knowledge, skills, crafts, and language; interpersonal skills; organizational skills; the ability to budget; assessment skills; bilingualism; and the willingness to learn and to work hard. They indicated that they could/would become more valuable employees if they had

skills such as increased familiarity with computer software, administrative training, and expanded knowledge of Aboriginal culture and cultural activities.

Recommendations

Supply Meets Demand

Our efforts are focussed on improving the potential for successfully marrying labour supply and workplace demand in order to ensure Aboriginal persons have an equal opportunity to enjoy a quality of life on par with other Canadians.

Employment

The City of Elliot Lake is situated within the traditional territory of the Serpent River First Nation. The city will be undertaking an assessment of its labour and workforce needs within the near future. Once the gaps and needs have been identified, the First Nation could work with employers in the Elliot Lake area to meet the needs of the community and, at the same time, satisfy the economic needs of Serpent River residents.

Recruitment and retention issues surrounding off-reserve employment could be resolved through hiring a job coach or social worker to assist those who are unaccustomed to working in an urban or non-reserve environment. The results of the skills survey clearly indicate that there are individuals within the community trained and capable of fulfilling this function.

Education

The skills asset mapping indicates that the residents of the Serpent River First Nation are well educated. More than 66% of the residents surveyed have completed high school and 34% of this number has pursued postsecondary education in the form of vocational, academic, and professional training. Figures for the Province of Ontario indicate that 33.7% of the population has graduated from high school. Academic and/or vocational upgrading would be of benefit to Serpent River residents who have:

- completed some but not all high school graduation requirements
- completed some but not all trade school completion requirements
- completed some but not all requirements for college graduation
- completed some but not all credits required for graduation from university, but have academic upgrading in secondary/postsecondary.

The results of the survey clearly indicate that Serpent River residents would take advantage of academic and/or vocational upgrading if it was available, though more would upgrade if the programs were offered in the community than if they had to travel to other communities. The barriers to upgrading are unique to each individual but, broadly speaking, the major obstacles are financial. Those who are not working cannot afford to take often costly courses, and those who are working, but still want to expand their academic and vocational experience, have neither the time nor the discretionary income.

Ideally, partnering with a regional school board, with Contact North, with Sault College, with another community college in the area, or with a private agency such as Frontier College, would enable the residents of Serpent River to complete their diplomas and degrees, thereby rendering them more valuable on the job market.

Skills Training

There is a serious lack of skilled tradespersons in Canada. In many quarters, the solution to this shortage is being addressed through the proposed importation of thousands of skilled tradespersons from overseas. A more reasoned and logical approach to the problem would be to provide skills training to the most rapidly growing segment of the Canadian population: First Nations people.

In the case of Serpent River, a significant percentage of the population has either attended or completed trade school or has attended or completed community college. These are prime candidates for pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships with little or no upgrading. With short-term intervention, many residents of Serpent River would be ready to fill some of the well-paying trades positions that go begging every year.

An attempt is being made to expand the number of Aboriginal persons in the trades through the proposed Nitamisin Aboriginal Apprenticeship Centre at Sault College, which would operate in conjunction with the Native Education and Training Department. First Nations and other AHRDA holders in the North Shore tribal area would be invited to participate in the program and to sponsor participants.

Other

Residents of Serpent River identified the lack of transportation as an obstacle to employment. In the absence of public transport, perhaps a band-owned and -operated commercial van or a formal car pool would ease transportation difficulties.

Unemployed and under-employed persons, especially those who have been chronically so, benefit from the assistance of a job coach or social worker to ease them back into the workforce.

Systemic racism and racial intolerance hinder both recruitment and retention. Again, the services of a job coach and/or social worker could assist people unaccustomed to working in an urban, non-Aboriginal environment.

Appendix C, Part 2: Questionnaire
Serpent River First Nation Skills Asset Mapping Project
Survey Questions

Part One — General Questions

1. Are you a member of the Serpent River First Nation?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

2. What is your roll number?

3. What is your Aboriginal status?

4. What is your full name and address?

5. What is your gender?

   ☐ Male

   ☐ Female

6. What is your age?

7. What is your marital status?

   ☐ Single

   ☐ Married

   ☐ Common-law relationship

   ☐ Separated but not divorced

   ☐ Divorced

   ☐ Widowed

Part Two — Education

8. What is the highest level of education you successfully completed?

- ☐ Elementary school
- ☐ Some high school — last grade completed
- ☐ Graduated from high school
- ☐ Some trade school
- ☐ Completed trade school
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Graduated from college — diploma/degree
- ☐ Some university
- ☐ Graduated from university — degree
- ☐ Graduate, postgraduate, or professional degree — degree

9. For students who attended and/or completed a trade certification program, what was the trade?

10. For students who attended and/or graduated from a college, what was your field of study?

11. For students who attended and/or graduated from a university, what was your field of study?

12. For students who attended and/or graduated from graduate, postgraduate, or professional studies, what was your field of study?

13. Have you considered upgrading your academic qualifications or completing skills training such as an apprenticeship?

14. What are the barriers that would prevent you from upgrading or completing skills training such as an apprenticeship?

- ☐ Lack of funding
- ☐ Financial burden
- ☐ Lack of adequate childcare
- ☐ Health or disability
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other — please specify

15. Would you be prepared to leave your community in order to complete the upgrading or skills training?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

16. Would you be prepared to complete upgrading or skills training if it was offered in the community?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Part Three – Employment

17. Are you currently employed outside the home?

- ☐ Full time (more than 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Part time (less than 30 hours per week)

18. If you have been employed by your current employer for less than 2 years, what was your previous occupation?

19. If you are employed, are you working in a field in which you received formal or academic training?

20. Are you self-employed?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

21. If you are self-employed, what is the nature of your employment?

22. If you are self-employed, do you also work for a third-party employer?

- ☐ Full time (more than 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Part time (less than 30 hours per week)
- ☐ Seasonal

23. If you are self-employed, did you at any time in the past work for a third-party employer and, if you did, what was your occupation?

24. Are you currently unemployed? If yes, what is the reason for unemployment?

- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Unable to work for medical reasons
- ☐ Lack of adequate daycare
- ☐ Lack of jobs
- ☐ Other — please specify

25. If you are employed, what is your current occupation?

26. If you are unemployed, what was your most recent occupation?

27. If you are unemployed, what are the obstacles to obtaining employment?

28. If you are unemployed, what is your source of income?

29. Whether you are presently employed or unemployed, would you consider leaving the community in order to accept a job?

Part Four — Employment Skills

30. Do you have an up-to-date resume?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

31. Have you applied for any jobs recently?

- ☐ Within the last three months
- ☐ Within the last six months

32. Do you have any experience going on job interviews?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

33. How would you describe this experience?

34. What skills do you bring to the workplace?

35. What skills do you believe would make you a more valued/valuable employee?

Appendix C, Part 3: Rationale
Serpent River First Nation Skills Asset Mapping Project

Survey Questions

Part One — General Questions

1. Are you a member of the Serpent River First Nation?

   Respondents may or may not be members of the Serpent River First Nation. This question is geared mainly towards on-reserve residents of the Serpent River First Nation inasmuch as some residents may not be members.

2. What is your roll number?

   This question is posed merely for verification purposes. In the event that a respondent indicates that he or she is a member of the Serpent River First Nation, the provision of a number will substantiate this claim. This will be of particular importance in situations where respondents may not be aware of their band affiliation.

3. What is your Aboriginal status?

   - Do you have status pursuant to s. 6(1) or s. 6(2) of the *Indian Act of Canada*?
   - Are you Aboriginal but without status pursuant to the *Indian Act of Canada*?
   - Are you Métis?
   - Are you Inuit?
   - Are you non-Aboriginal?

   The purpose of this question is to ascertain the Aboriginal status of survey respondents. This status may have an impact on future availability/accessibility of training and/or employment services.

4. What is your full address?

This question is of importance particularly with respect to members of the Serpent River First Nation who reside other than on-reserve. It will be an essential component of the mapping project

5. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

This question will assist in the determination of what skills are available by gender. It will also allow for cross-referencing of employment status and skill sets by gender.

6. What is your age?

In many instances, surveys deal with the issue of age in segments. Given the nature of this survey, however, we elected to deal with raw age. This introduces an element of flexibility that adds to the accuracy of the data collected.

7. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Common-law relationship
- Separated but not divorced
- Divorced
- Widowed

Marital status is often a determining factor with respect to the issue of employment and training.

Part Two — Education

8. What is the highest level of education you successfully completed?

- Elementary school
- Some high school — last grade completed

- Graduated from high school
- Some trade school
- Completed trade school
- Some college
- Graduated from college — diploma/ degree
- Some university
- Graduated from university — degree
- Graduate, postgraduate or professional degree — degree

There may or may not be a link between the academic and/or skill training received by the survey respondent and his/her employment status.

9. For students who attended and/or completed a trade certification program, what was the trade?

   This will enable us to determine the nature and extent of the trade skills possessed by members of the Serpent River First Nation.

10. For students who attended and/or graduated from a college, what was your field of study?

    This will enable us to determine the nature and extent of postsecondary achievements of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

11. For students who attended and/or graduated from a university, what was your field of study?

    This will enable us to determine the nature and extent of postsecondary achievements of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

12. For students who attended and/or graduated from graduate, postgraduate, or professional studies, what was your field of study?

    This will enable us to determine the nature and extent of postsecondary achievements of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

13. Have you considered upgrading your academic qualifications or completing skills training such as an apprenticeship?

    This question will provide valuable information as to whether or not members of the Serpent River First Nation are interested in continuing or completing secondary and/or postsecondary education, and whether or not they are interested in taking some type of skills training.

14. What are the barriers that would prevent you from upgrading or completing skills training such as an apprenticeship?

    - Lack of funding
    - Financial burden
    - Lack of adequate childcare
    - Health or disability
    - None
    - Other — please specify

    Identifying whether or not members of Serpent River First Nation are interested in continuing or upgrading their education is only part of the issue. Many people want to pursue some type of upgrading, skills training, etc., but are not in a position to do so. This question will identify the impediments to this.

15. Would you be prepared to leave your community in order to complete the upgrading or skills training?

    Not everyone is in a position to leave the community to attend school. Family or employment commitments, for example, may create a stumbling block. This may apply not only to attending school and commuting on a daily basis but also to taking a course of study in a community that would require relocating for all or part of a year.

16. Would you be prepared to complete upgrading or skills training if it was offered in the community?

Some types of upgrading might be more accessible if they were available within the community.

Part Three — Employment

17. Are you currently employed outside the home?

- Full time (more than 30 hours per week)
- Part time (less than 30 hours per week)
- Seasonal

The purpose of this question is to determine the employment and unemployment levels of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

18. What is your current occupation?

This question will provide information not only regarding the respondent's occupation but also his/her job title and job-related duties.

19. If you have been employed by your current employer for less than 2 years, what was your previous occupation?

This question will enable us to determine the variety of occupational skills of members of the Serpent River First Nation.

20. If you are employed, are you working in a field in which you received formal or academic training?

This question brings together the employment and educational backgrounds of the respondents.

21. Are you self-employed?

This will assist in determining the nature and extent of self-employment.

22. If you are self-employed, what is the nature of your employment?

This will clarify the fields in which members of the Serpent River First Nation are self-employed.

23. If you are self-employed, do you also work for a third-party employer?

- Full time (more than 30 hours per week)
- Part time (less than 30 hours per week)
- Seasonal

This question is intended to discover whether members of the Serpent River First Nation are employed at more than one job.

24. If you are self-employed, did you at any time in the past work for a third-party employer, and if you did, what was your occupation?

As with question 19 above, this question is intended to determine the nature and extent of the various occupational skills of Serpent River First Nation members.

25. Are you currently unemployed? If yes, what is the reason for unemployment?

- Retired
- Unable to work for medical reasons
- Lack of adequate daycare
- Lack of jobs
- Other — please specify

The purpose of this question is to determine the reason(s) why members of the Serpent River First Nation are unemployed. Respondents may have more than one response.

26. If you are unemployed, what was your most recent occupation?

As with several questions above, the purpose of this question is to identify occupational skills of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

27. If you are unemployed, what are the obstacles to obtaining employment?

This question provides the respondent with an opportunity to express, in his or her own words, the reason(s) why he or she is unemployed.

28. If you are unemployed, what is your source of income?

This question is intended to determine the nature and extent of the unemployment situation of the members of the Serpent River First Nation.

29. Whether you are presently employed or unemployed, would you consider leaving the community in order to accept a job?

Some respondents may be prepared to leave the community to pursue employment opportunities, while others may be limited by family or other commitments. This question will identify these factors.

Part Four — Employment Skills

30. Do you have an up-to-date resumé?

This question is intended to determine the job-readiness of respondents.

31. Have you applied for any jobs recently?

- Within the last three months
- Within the last six months

The purpose of this question is to determine if respondents are seeking employment whether or not they are currently employed.

32. Do you have any experience going on job interviews?

This question is intended to determine the interview skills of the respondents.

33. How would you describe this experience?

Some people have a difficult or frustrating experience with job interviews. The purpose of this question is to identify interview issues in order to assist in overcoming them.

34. What skills do you bring to the workplace?

This question provides the respondent with an opportunity to outline the skills he/she can offer to an employer. In many instances, the respondent may indicate that he/she does not possess any particular skills. This type of answer will require prompting. For example, it may be necessary to have the skills that the person exhibits on the job site. Other skills may include helpful disposition, organizational skills, etc.

35. What skills do you believe would make you a more valued/valuable employee?

This question is intended to discover the skills and talents a respondent may believe would make him/her a more valuable employee.

Appendix D: Interview Questions for Service Providers

1. Please describe the employment, job seeking, and training services that you offer.

2. What are the strengths of your services? Can you relate an example of a success story?

3. What are the main challenges that you face as a service provider?

4 a) What are the main challenges that your community and community members face in terms of employment, job seeking, and training?

b) What improvements could be made?

5. Please describe any labour market / training / economic partnerships that your First Nation is engaged in (or considering for the future) that may assist in employment, training, and/or job seeking.

6. What trends in the labour market do you currently see and/or anticipate in the near future? How do you think your First Nation should prepare to address these trends and changes?

7. What advice do you have for youth and young adults in your community in terms of jobs and training?

8. How could the labour market be improved to better reflect and support Anishinaabek values and practices with regard to work and providing for self, family, and community? (Please note that this can be anything from a longer maternity leave, to time off for taking care of elderly parents, to time off following a death in the community, to time off for sweat-lodge, spring ceremonies, hunting, etc.)

9. Do you have any other ideas with regard to employment, training, education, and skills that you would like to share?

10. Can you recommend any relevant written materials or reports?

Appendix E: Partnerships: Present, Past, and Future

This section documents the partnerships identified by service providers. The participants identified active partnerships, those that have eroded or have uncertain status, and partnerships they would like to see created or enhanced. Also included is a section on agencies identified by people who access employment training services as being significant sources of strength and support in their efforts to achieve social and economic well-being.

Active Partnerships

> Well, most of the partnerships are First Nation community based. Like most of our clients are employed or received their training at the community level. Usually the partnerships, if there are partnerships, then the partnerships are with various employers in their detachment area. For example, [specific First Nation community may have] partnerships with some of the local schools or local, like the health centre, auto shops, like those types of partnerships. They are very small community employers, or small to medium employers within their immediate area.
>
> — Individual Interview

Fisheries (improve relationship — work with them not against them)
Ontario March of Dimes
YMCA
Employment Ontario
Métis Services
Indian Friendship Centres
Algoma University
Sault College
Cambrian College
Contact North
Job Connect
Service Canada
Waubetek
Second Career
Employment Connection
Sudbury Chamber of Commerce

Ministry of Training and Colleges

Vale Inc.

Dissolved/Uncertain Partnerships

Other First Nation communities

Unions

Creating/Enhancing Partnerships

> [H]ow much money is being spent in Home Hardware, Wal-Mart? Where do they buy their cars? That type of information should be looked at. This leakage study is a good thing to find out. Having that type of information, we can develop programs.… They wouldn't be there [in town] without our money here, definitely. They have some of their workers working here but we have none of our workers [in town].
>
> — Individual Interview

Municipalities

Ministry of Education and Training

Ontario Hydro

Policing

Health

Other universities/colleges/high schools/alternative schools

Private businesses

Private corporations

> I do, I just met with somebody before I came here from the Ministry of Training and Colleges. I brought him my information and business card and told him what I do and how we can partner with them. Hopefully that will develop a partnership with them a little bit further. [We are] in partnership with them now with the paramedic course going on, but we actually haven't met face-to-face. It's more like paperwork, telephone. I would like to meet with the other people that he works with and let them know what I am doing here and how we can partner. And how we can make sure that a client over there is getting services and a client over here is getting services and not getting the same thing from the both of us; make sure we are not stepping on each other's toes. I want to work together to help these people.
>
> — Individual Interview

Supportive Agencies Identified by Clients

Nog-Da-Win-Da-Min Child and Family Services

Canadian Paraplegics Association

"People who have knowledge about what you are living with and the real consequences of that [reality]" (Interview Participant)

Psychiatric hospital services

Traditional healing and healers

Family members

Alternative schools

High schools that recognize and support Anishinaabek practices (i.e., when children miss school they are not punitive)

Culturally safe spaces within high schools and elementary schools

Counsellors who can assist young people with employment, education, and training possibilities

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