



ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUITS ON THE LABOR MARKET

Formal opinion for the social and professional integration of First Nations and Inuit of Québec in the program Objectif Emploi of the MTESS

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A contribution to the development of Québec

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Act 70 aimed to allow a better match between training and employment as well as to promote the integration in employment



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Preamble

The success of the program Objectif Emploi will enable the social and professional integration of First Nations and Inuit of Québec only if a cultural approach and strategies of relevant interventions are in the application program.

The cultural approach takes place first by a true understanding of the historical contexts more particularly the Indian Act, residential schools, statutes and treaties, traditional ways of life and their savings, the development of the territory and the social issues in which are involved the First Nations and Inuit.

This understanding allows to capture these effects on the specificity of each individual. The deployed strategies must thus take account of the present living context and the ways in which one can be affected. This will determine the specific support, assistance and advice required by its specificity.

This support and assistance will be provided in ensuring the application of the concept for cultural securing that consist of building trust with the FNI customer and to recognizes the role of the social-economic conditions, the history and policy in the field of employment, education, training and health. It is to be distinguished from the cultural competence which aims to create an environment of services for employment, training and health, devoided of racism and stereotypes, where Aboriginal people are treated with empathy, dignity and respect.

The cultural securing is a result defined and lived by those who receive the service. They feel safe. This is based on a respectful participation which can help Aboriginal people to find the path of wellness. We rely on an understanding of the imbalance of power inherent in the provision of employment services and health, institutional discrimination, of education and the need to correct these inequities in making changes in the system

It requires that we recognize that we are all carriers of a culture, that there is a personal reflection to bear on its own attitudes, beliefs, prejudices and values.

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1. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT ON THE LABOR MARKET

This review has been prepared and is presented by the four agreement signatories of the Training Strategy for the Skills and Employment intended for Aboriginal People (SFCEA) and its associate members in employment. The Commission of the labor market partners endorsed the creation of the advisory committee of First Nations and Inuit in December 2009 and the committee is in operation since February 2010. The committee is composed; of four permanent members, organizations invited to sit as associated members as well as governmental and Para governmental organizations.

- The four permanent members signatories to the agreements of the Training Strategy for the Skills and Employment intended for Aboriginal People (SFCEA) are: the Government of the Cree Nation (CNG), the Commission on Human Resources Development for the First Nations of Québec (CHRDFNQ), the Katovich Regional Government (KRG) and the Algonquin Nation Human Resources and Sustainable Development.
- The eight present associate members have the right to vote and consist of: the Institute Tshakapesh, the Steelworkers affiliated to the FTQ, the Movement and the Native Friendship Centres of Québec (RCAAQ), Québec Native Women association (FAQ), the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC), the Sectoral committee on the social economy and community sector workforce (CSMO ÉSAC), the Council of the Patrona of Québec (CPQ) and the First Nation of Québec and Labrador Economic Development Commission (FNQLEDC).
- The four current observing members are; the Ministry of Education & Higher Education (MEES), the Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat (AAS) and Service Canada. The Commission des partenaires du marché du travail (CPMT) has a seat as an observer and coaching within the committee.
- Historically, the four jurisdictional groups of First Nations and Inuit provide programs and services related to the labor market of all Québec's First Nations and Inuit communities. They have become the references in the development of the employment for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal people living in urban areas in Québec receive programs and services related to the labor market in the framework of the urban strategy of the federal government which is located under the responsibility of the Commission on Human Resources Development for the First Nations of Québec. First Nations and Inuit communities also provide additional funding to serve their respective populations who live in urban areas.
- The Advisory Committee has a thorough knowledge of the constraints and needs of people at risk of under-employment and is, of this fact, well placed to formulate opinions and proposals to the Commission of the partners in the labor market, at the Department of Employment and Social Solidarity and to the Agency Emploi-Québec, concerning the strategies, measures and offered services develop so that the aboriginal people improve their condition and their employability of access to employment and to maintain it.

This memory is in the framework of the mission and responsibilities of the four organizations of the jurisdictional Advisory Committee.

« For illustrative purposes, the guidance document of the Commission of the partners in the labor market indicates that the Advisory Committee is thus the privileged interlocutor to promote the clients' interests of the First Nations and Inuit remote from the labor market and to support, by their opinion and their proposals, integration, the reinstatement or their maintenance in employment. These clients require interventions of public employment services and social solidarity in the light of their personal situation in the face of the labor market, the presence of obstacles or limitations, the social condition of the person, the requirements and conditions of the labor market, and the evolving situations of each individual, the available resources and the necessary support for each one to reintegrate the labor market. To this effect, the Committee:

- proposes new courses of action, strategies, various initiatives in the areas of manpower and employment to be tested or implemented
- proposes sub-groups which require, as a matter of priority, assistance from public employment services because of their problems
- participates in the monitoring and evaluation of the methods of intervention used.

Publications :

Opinion of FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT
on the adequacy between the TRAINING AND THE NEEDS OF THE LABOR MARKET
June 2011 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr3.pdf>

Portrait of First Nations and Inuit in the labor market in Québec
January 2013 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr1.pdf>

Notice of relevance for the development of a departmental strategy
of social and professional integration of FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT
June 2013 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr2.pdf>

Notice to support the social and professional integration of women First Nations and Inuit offenders of Québec
Septembre, 2015 http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/avis_insertion_femme_judiciarisees.pdf

Memorandum to members of the Committee on Labor and the Economy Special consultations and public hearings on Bill 70
February 2016 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr5.pdf>

The State of the LABOR MARKET IN QUÉBEC FOR THE FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT
March 2016 <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr6.pdf>



2. The main findings :

Ready to work

- Almost all of them have already worked and almost all of them have valued it.
- The majority say they are ready to return to work
- Almost all aspire to get out of welfare in the short or long term.
- Some of the providers are ready to work and need only a helping hand.
- Others need more services: the distance to be crossed is much longer.

Obstacles

- Perception that social assistance benefits are higher than those of a job at the minimum wage.
- Lack of schooling and the aversion to the idea of (re)starting at the bottom of the scale
- The perception of job requirements: experience, training, youth, ...
- The feeling of being a victim, unlucky, powerless

Conditions of participation in the Emploi Québec program

- Accessibility for all interested providers.
- The provision of a program adapted to the needs, interests and skills of individuals (especially in training).
- The safety of not losing the benefits of social assistance.
- Financial support to start (transportation, Child care, communications, etc.)
- Long-term usefulness and real possibility to improve its quality of life (employment).

- A program of adequate duration for the client's needs
- Motivation for an interesting work

Reasons for non-participation in the Emploi Québec program

- Problems of accessibility (for reasons of age, schooling, rigidity in the granting of training, eligibility criteria, etc.)
- Lack of financial support to engage in a program; insufficient remuneration.
- The lack of supervision, understanding and follow-up by the agents
- Lack of information about the programs offered and / or the perception that it has not changed for a long time.

THE STATE OF THE LABOR MARKET IN QUÉBEC FOR FIRST NATIONS AND INUIT
(March 2016) <http://www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com/publica/fr6.pdf>



3. The stakes



The Objectif Emploi from Act 70 program will apply specifically to FNIs receiving Provincial Last-Aid Benefits, First Nations in urban (off-reserve) and Inuit regardless of their place of residence.



First Nations communities do not have the financial means to put in place measures at least similar to those that will be put forward by the Objectif Emploi program. Social development programs are clearly under-funded and the federal government's (AANC) National Income Assistance Policy is only responsive to the basic needs of First Nations communities.



We argue that an inclusive program should never be a substitute for basic financial assistance. It will be difficult for beneficiaries who are already struggling to make ends meet and to undertake job searches.



4. Areas for reflection and solutions

4.1 Accreditation, use of First Nations, Inuit resources and centers in employment and training.

- Aboriginal organizations wish to receive official accreditation for the resources and services offered in the employability and training of the urban services centers of the CDRHPNQ, the Native Friendship Centers of Québec and the Ivirtivik centers (Montréal and Inukjuak).
- For Inuit, the program must be in addition to the Kativik Regional Administration, which has full responsibility for employment programs and services under the Sivurnirmut Agreement (Global Funding Agreement).

4.2 Pre-employability is a phase to be incorporated into First Nations and Inuit employment objectives.

- The impact and application of the Objectif-Emploi program should be participatory. Pre-employability is an essential phase to integrate. The program should not cause a degradation of the situation in terms of poverty and socio-professional integration among Inuit as well as First Nations living off-reserve.
- The program should be adapted to accommodate FNI client groups who are often too far from the labor market to participate in the Objectif-Emploi program, especially those seeking last-resort assistance. These clients are difficult to set in motion and the resources to support them are limited. For example, our clients who pass essential skills tests are often ranked below the scale.
- Tools should be developed and culturally adapted to improve their employability. Our clients are virtually all vulnerable and need pre-employability to take control of their lives.
- The 12-month period is too short for a clientele far from the labor market.
- 50% of our clientele do not speak French. This is a major barrier to employment. Language courses should also be recognized as part of the client's intervention plan.

➤ **Expand accessibility and eligibility for programs, including training:**

Enable greater flexibility of programs and services regardless of the age and level of education of participants. Provide work experiences that would allow clients to gain a rich work experience while enhancing their skills. A program that encourages the hiring of participants, including incentives for the client but also for the employer.

A system of gradually decreasing financial assistance could be beneficial in order to compensate the employer while making it attractive for the employer to keep an employee trained in his or her needs on the job.

➤ **Better inform providers about programs:**

Systematically include group and individual information sessions to ensure candidate's understanding.

Ensure that they follow up on the ground to advise them and assess their challenges and to adapt rapidly measures corresponding to the candidate's real skills.

➤ **Customize support and orientation of providers to programs:**

Personalized support is the key to ensuring the integration of candidates into a workplace.

Encourage the hiring of FNI staff and train all staff and businesses involved in the Aboriginal reality.

It is important that our consultants continue to connect with their clients in order to offer them, among other things, a freedom in career choices that will reflect their individual needs and abilities.

➤ **Secure providers so that they do not fear to lose everything but see what they must gain in employment:**

Emphasize the personal valorization of the candidate and the positive impact on the latter's entourage.

Improve the benefits of candidates taking part in the measures.

Provide transportation to candidates taking part in the measures.

Publicize in the form of pamphlets, advertising, testimonials of successful candidates that have integrated the labor market.

Provide work placements in a variety of workplaces to promote opportunities and re-engage candidate's interest in returning to school or in the workplace.

Offer a sponsorship program to maintain and stimulate the candidate's efforts and interest.

➤ **Ensure continuity and alignment in the follow-up files**

Try to slow the rotation of the staff assigned to the follow-up in order to develop a bond of trust with the candidates.

➤ **Provide child care assistance**

Provide child care spaces and homework assistance to the children of the candidates.

Maintain these services after returning to work in order to support the candidate's efforts and assure employment retention.

➤ **Recognize the skills already acquired**

Promote and expand the prior learning assessment program to reduce the candidate's reintegration process into the labor market and to enhance the latter.

Fund training and upgrading programs within the company

Develop a recognition program for employers participating in these programs (eg, public recognition awards, property benefits for companies hiring these candidates).



5. Recommendations

- ▶ That the MTESS accreditation of our employment and training organizations recognized by our respective authorities (CDRHPNQ, Ivirtivik (ARK) and RCAAQ) for the management of programs and services including Objectif Emploi.
- ▶ That the MTESS financially contribute to enable our organizations to obtain additional funding for an appropriate service structure and delivery that reflects our capabilities in complementarity with federal agreements.
- ▶ That the MTESS allow us to actively participate in the criteria and objectives development set out for the Objectif Emploi program.
- ▶ That the MTESS increases the period of activity to at least 24 months.
- ▶ That the MTESS fund and allocate the mandates of Carrefour jeunesse emploi to the holders of Aboriginal agreements in their territories and in urban areas. (CDRHPNQ, Ivirtiviq, RCAAQ).
- ▶ That the MTESS develop a protocol of reception with the organizations FNI and Emploi Québec and Carrefour jeunesse emploi in place for the FNI.



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*Commission
des partenaires
du marché du travail*

Québec 