

# The Canadian CED Network



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## Place-Based Poverty Reduction Initiative:

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*How Community Economic Development is reducing poverty in Canada and how it could be doing more*

Final Report

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November 2008

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This project is funded by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program. The opinions and interpretations in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

**Report:** Paul Chamberlain

**Project Partners:** Caroline Lachance (ÉCOF), Joe Valvasori (LEF), Michele Cherot (Trail CSC), Rosalind Lockyer, (PARO)

**Project Staff:** Abraham Tounkara, Brendan Reimer, David Daughton, Nicole Chaland

*Ce document est aussi disponible en français.*

**Published by:**

© 2008 The Canadian CED Network  
211-620 View St., Victoria, BC V8W 1J6  
Telephone: (250) 386-9980 Toll free: (877) 202-2268  
Fax: (250) 386-9984 Website: <http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca>

An electronic copy of this document is available on our website.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The gap between the rich and the poor in Canada has widened dramatically over the last two decades and the depth and duration of poverty has increased. Children, women, lone parents, older adults, recent immigrants and racialized groups are all disproportionately affected. Increasingly governments at all levels are beginning to develop policies and look for strategies to reduce poverty.

**Community Economic Development (CED)** is an approach that is working effectively to reduce poverty in many different communities across the country. CED is proven to build wealth, create jobs, foster innovation and productivity, and improve social well-being. Through holistic, participatory development, CED enables communities to reduce poverty and become attractive places to live and work.

The **Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet)** is a national, member-driven organization representing hundreds of CED organizations and practitioners across Canada. CCEDNet promotes CED as an economic development model that integrates social, economic and environmental goals that build wealth and reduce poverty.

CCEDNet's **Place-Based Poverty Reduction** initiative brought together four partner organizations from diverse communities to document and promote innovative locally-based CED approaches to poverty reduction and the quantitative and qualitative methodologies that assess the impact of this work on the lives of individuals and their communities. It also brought together a broader learning network of individuals and organizations across the country to inform and share this work. Finally, the effective poverty-reduction strategies, practices and tools of CED organizations explored in the initiative are being disseminated at CCEDNet's national conference, as well as through regional events and web-based tools.

The **core communities** we worked with were diverse - urban and rural, northern and southern, Anglophone and Francophone, immigrant and Aboriginal, eastern and western. Although they are all very different they all face high levels of poverty.

Similarly, our four **partner organizations**, which are also very different in size and scope, share many similarities. Working with their local communities at a grassroots level, they all use a CED approach to create economic opportunities and improve social conditions, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged. They are working from the premise that poverty results from multiple, complex, inter-related factors, that require comprehensive, holistic, integrated approaches to address both individual and broader community needs. The included logic models (*see Appendix 3*) of each organization capture the comprehensiveness of their multiple programs, services and supports and reflect their holistic approaches.

As CED practitioners work, they observe improvements in the lives of those in poverty as they generate business or employment income, reduce dependence on social assistance and improve mental and physical health. In evaluating these **impacts** our partner organizations, like others, use testimonials as a way of describing their impacts qualitatively. A selection of these is included in the report.

One of the main objectives of this Place-Based Poverty Reduction initiative was to demonstrate methods of measuring and illustrating the **quantifiable impacts** of CED approaches on reducing poverty. Each partner used one of several approaches to measure impacts on a selected group of constituents in their programs. These approaches include Social Return on Investment metrics; estimates of saved costs in government assistance, health services, and incarceration; the Sustainable Livelihoods Model; and measures of Value Added. These approaches produce clear numeric impact statements that demonstrate the effects of their work in reducing poverty. Our partners are equally clear about the benefits and many challenges associated with each approach. They also acknowledge that the process of evaluation can have a substantial effect on the way programs and services are delivered.

In this report, CED organizations will find several approaches from which they can adapt the methodology and tools they need to illustrate the impact of their work.

While there are many challenges in evaluating impacts of CED in poverty reduction, even more challenging are the barriers to the work itself. Our four partners, together with members of the broader Learning Network, described a wide range of challenges and barriers they and their communities face. These can be categorized as:

- personal barriers faced by individuals (e.g. self-esteem, ageism)
- policy related barriers faced by individuals (e.g. access to programs, lack of childcare)
- policy related barriers faced by the organization in service delivery (program silos, core funding, cookie cutter programming)
- community wide barriers (high unemployment, poor housing)

The **policy priorities** that came out of the Learning Network analysis are very much in line with CCEDNet's **Communities Agenda** (available at [www.ccednet-rcdec.ca](http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca)). These relate to each of the categories mentioned above and have implications for all levels of government. Highlights include income support and labour market policies that directly affect individuals - such as living wages and support in transitioning from assistance to employment, as well as policies that affect CED organizations in their poverty reduction work such as setting targets for poverty reduction and ensuring CED strategies for poverty reduction are supported.

# INTRODUCTION / BACKGROUND

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## **Poverty in Canada**

### **Poverty IS a Canadian Issue**

*In 2005, over 2 million Canadians were living in poverty, as defined by Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut Off.<sup>1</sup>*

Poverty is a complex, multi-dimensional problem with root causes much deeper than an absence of income. Many Canadians lack financial resources and are socially excluded. Social exclusion refers to an individual's inability to fully participate in the economic and social activities of society, and is both a cause and product of poverty.

### **Who is in Poverty?**

Certain groups are most vulnerable to persistent levels of poverty. For example, lone parents (particularly women), older unattached individuals before they reach pension age, off-reserve Aboriginal peoples, recent immigrants, and individuals with work-limiting disabilities are disproportionately susceptible to poverty. The continued concentration of poverty among these groups supports the claim that universal programs are not equipped to eliminate social exclusion.<sup>2</sup> Levels of education and employment, racism and discrimination, health and well-being, and access to adequate food and housing contribute to the social exclusion of these groups.

- Child poverty is prevalent in Canada: it affects 1 in 2 children in recent immigrant families (49%), 1 in 2.5 First Nations children living outside First Nations communities (40%) and 1 in 3 children in racialized families (34%).<sup>3</sup>
- In 1998, annual wages and salaries of recent immigrants were one-third less than that of other Canadians. Hourly wages were 18% less.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2005, unattached individuals between the ages of 45 and 64 had the highest rate of living below the low income cut off (LICO) at 35%. Lone parents had the second highest LICO rate at 26%. This is compared to the national LICO rate of 11%.<sup>5</sup>
- From 1980 to 2000 the poverty rate for non-racialized Canadians, or in other words Canadians of European descent, declined by 28% while poverty among racialized families grew by 361%.<sup>6</sup>
- Women and youth in Canada account for 83% of minimum wage workers with 37% of single mothers raising their families on less than \$10/hour. Women earn more than a quarter less than men for full-year, full-time employment.<sup>7[2]</sup> Approximately 70% of working women are employed in conventional "female" occupations like sales and services, teaching, administration, and health-related work.<sup>8[3]</sup>

### **Poverty and Income Inequality is Growing in Canada**

Despite economic growth the gap between the rich and poor continues to rise. In a recent survey, 49% of Canadians stated that they were one or two paycheques away from poverty. In 1976, the richest 10%

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<sup>1</sup> Income Statistics Division. *Low Income Cut-Offs for 2006*. Income Series Research Papers, Statistics Canada, 2007.

<sup>2</sup> Burstein, Meyer. "Combating the social exclusion of at-risk groups," Government of Canada Policy Research Initiative, 2005. <http://policyresearch.gc.ca/doclib/Pri-Burstein-e.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Statistics Canada's *Canada Census 2001* and Assembly of First Nations 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Ekuwa Smith, *Does a Rising Tide Lift All Boats? Labour Market Experiences and Incomes of Recent Immigrants 1995-1998*. Canadian Council on Social Development. February, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> HRSDC calculations based on Statistics Canada. *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics*. Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 2007.

<sup>6[1]</sup> The Colour of Justice Network. "Fact Sheet # 1: *Understanding the Racialization of Poverty in Ontario*". <http://www.colourofpoverty.ca>. 2007 Note: This dramatic increase partially reflects the increased population of racialized families due to immigration.

<sup>7[2]</sup> Morris, Marika (ed. Tahira Gonsalves). "Fact sheets: Women and Poverty" (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women. [http://www.criaw-icref.ca/factSheets/Women%20and%20Poverty/Poverty%20Fact%20sheet\\_e.htm](http://www.criaw-icref.ca/factSheets/Women%20and%20Poverty/Poverty%20Fact%20sheet_e.htm)

<sup>8[3]</sup> Canadian Women's Foundation and the Canadian Women's Community Economic Development Council. "From Poverty to Empowerment: A Research Report on Women and Community Economic Development in Canada". <http://www.cdnwomen.org/PDFs/EN/CWF-frompoverty-report.pdf>. March 2004

of families earned 31 times more than the poorest 10%; in 2004 they earned 82 times more, almost triple the ratio of 1976.<sup>9</sup>

### **Depth of Poverty - Low-Income Gap**

Depth of poverty is frequently measured using the low-income gap which is how far below the low-income threshold a household's income falls. The low-income gap illustrates the extent to which an individual or family is struggling to adequately support themselves.

- In 2004, the average low-income gap among families in poverty was \$7,200. In other words, it would require \$7,200 to bring the average low-income family of two or more persons *up to* the poverty line.<sup>10</sup>

### **Duration of Poverty**

An individual or family may endure poverty for a brief or extended period of time. The duration and depth of poverty are important factors in assessing the strength of the barriers trapping individuals and families in poverty.

- Between 1999 and 2004, approximately 4.5 million Canadians experienced poverty for at least one year.
- Just under two million Canadians lived in poverty for one year over that period, and almost half a million lived in poverty for all six years.
- Women were more likely than men to live in poverty for extended periods of time. Between 1999 and 2004, 2.5% of women lived in poverty for all six years, compared to 1.8% of men.<sup>11</sup>

### **Poverty Reduction**

Quebec and Newfoundland have launched poverty reduction initiatives. This past year Ontario, Nova Scotia and PEI have committed to develop poverty reduction strategies, and the federal Liberal opposition has announced poverty reduction targets and the pressure is growing for other provinces and the federal government to do likewise. Poverty reduction strategies need to be specific to the target community and account for all factors that contribute to poverty: the vulnerability of specific groups, growing income inequality, and the depth and duration of poverty. They also need to be embedded in enabling macro-political and macro-economic environments with supportive municipal, provincial and federal policies. The most effective way to achieve a specific and comprehensive strategy is to support community-driven solutions that are holistic and rooted in local knowledge.

## **CED in Canada**

Well over 3000 community organizations or initiatives are currently engaged in **community economic development (CED)** in Canada. They are using local action to create economic opportunities and better conditions, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged. Each has their unique focus and model according to the communities and regions where they work. For example, in rural and remote regions throughout Western and Central Canada and the Territories you will find Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) while the equivalent Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs) are located in rural regions in Atlantic Canada. CFDCs and CBDCs provide assistance to small and medium-sized businesses by offering access to risk capital through repayable loans or equity investments and provide business services to entrepreneurs. Some also take on a broader role of CED animation, planning, and development through training and employment services that incubate community enterprises. CED organizations, like CFDCs and CBDCs, recognize that economic,

<sup>9</sup> Armine Yalnizyan. *The Rich and the Rest of Us: The Changing Face of Canada's Growing Gap*. Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives. March 2007

<sup>10</sup> Canadian Council on Social Development. *A Profile of Economic Security in Canada*  
[http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic\\_security/poverty/index.htm](http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic_security/poverty/index.htm)

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Council on Social Development. *A Profile of Economic Security in Canada*  
[http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic\\_security/poverty/index.htm](http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/economic_security/poverty/index.htm)

environmental and social challenges are interdependent, complex and ever-changing and that solutions need to be rooted in local knowledge and led by community members.

Grassroots organizations represent a major force in innovation at the local level. They make use of untapped expertise and encourage community pride in local citizens, mobilizing them as volunteers in their communities. Many rural and urban areas are developing networks of community organizations and continue to seek new ways of collaboration with other organizations and citizens.

CED organizations span diverse typologies of population and setting (Aboriginal, rural, urban, northern, youth, immigrant and refugee) and they all work to develop economic opportunities across a full spectrum of services.

In many resource-based and rural communities local organizations are using CED to create new community resource tenures (e.g. community forests) and eco-system management systems to sustain long term community opportunities. Some community agencies and local governments, such as municipalities, social and human service agencies, and skills training organizations use CED tools and techniques in their work to enhance the social and economic conditions of their communities.

Recognition of the importance of CED as a growing component of Canada's civil society or "voluntary" sector is increasing. A survey of federal departments in 2003 revealed five departments and four regional agencies were involved in supporting CED organizations and initiatives. A survey of provincial and territorial governments in 2002/03 indicated that 12 out of 13 jurisdictions have departments with mandates to support CED, and 8 out of 13 have policies outlining their government's support of CED.

#### Nature of the CED Sector

The findings, graphs and statistics in this section are taken from the "Profile of Community Economic Development in Canada - Results of a Survey of Community Economic Development Across Canada" written in October 2003 by Nicole Chaland and Rupert Downing (Canadian CED Network).

#### Geographic Distribution

Figure one compares the percentage of respondents with per capita population per region to illustrate the relative distribution of CED groups compared with population in each region of Canada.

#### Urban Rural Distribution

Table one shows the percentage of urban-rural distribution of our survey respondents by region compared with the national urban rural distribution.

Eighty-three percent of CED organizations in the survey are registered as non-profit societies, co-operatives, charities or are unincorporated groups. Co-operatives form a significant component of the CED sector.

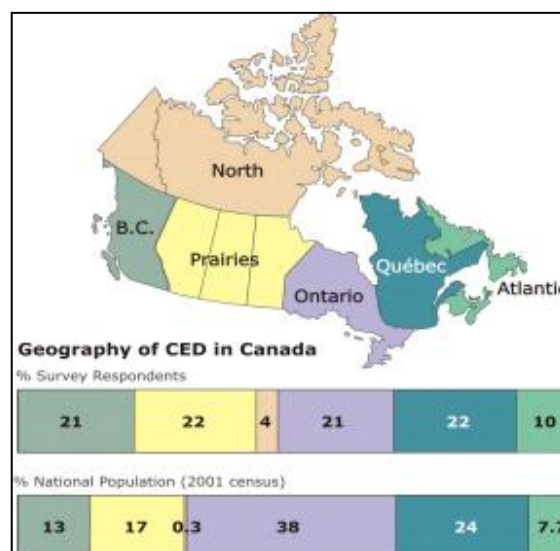


Figure 1

	BC	Prairies	North	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	Total
Urban	39%	67%	0%	73%	58%	27%	53%
Rural	61%	33%	100%	27%	42%	73%	47%

Table 1



### Legal Incorporation Type

Figure two describes the incorporation type of CED organizations that participated in the survey. Two hundred sixty-one respondents provided information regarding their incorporation type.

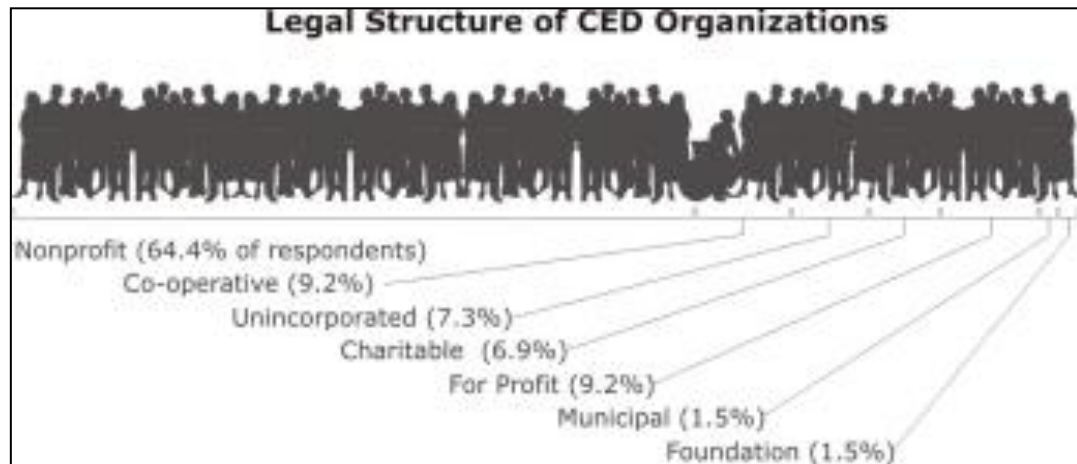


Figure 2

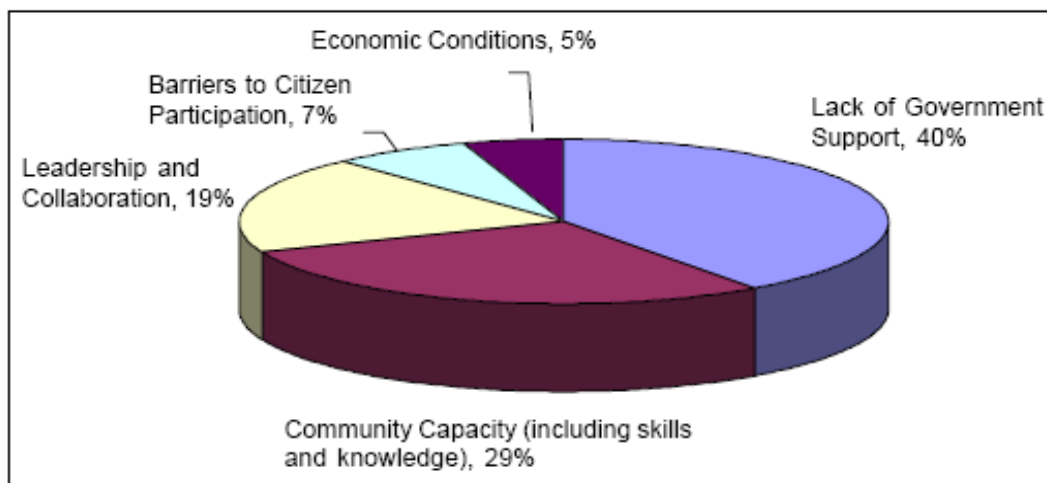


Figure 4

### Challenges faced by the CED Sector

- Lack of government support includes insufficient funds, policy and bureaucratic barriers and limited funding and the implications for human resources
- Lack of community capacity includes the lack of CED skills, of CED knowledge and of local investments in CED.

In addition to a lack of leadership and collaboration, there are barriers to citizen participation and poor economic conditions, inhibiting the progress of CED.

## ***The Canadian Community Economic Development Network***

The Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) was created in 1999 by CED organizations and practitioners across the country who are committed to dramatically reducing poverty and inequality, fostering innovation and raising productivity. The network is a national, member-based organization that is actively working to build a "communities agenda" in Canada. Its mission is to promote and support CED for the social, economic and environmental betterment of communities across the country. CCEDNet represents over 600 members who are practising CED in a wide variety of social and industry sectors. The rich experience of these CED practitioners has provided the foundation needed to promote a **Communities Agenda**, a national policy framework working to ensure that CED is recognized by all levels of government as a proven and effective strategy for development and poverty reduction. The Network wants to revolutionize how CED is understood, practiced and funded in Canada by promoting evidence based policy recommendations to all levels of government.

CCEDNet members believe that CED has the potential to dramatically reduce poverty and inequality in Canada. CED has a proven track record for building wealth, creating jobs, fostering innovation and productivity, and improving social well-being. Numerous success stories from across the country document how wealth, jobs and community health have been fostered. What is needed now to bring these successes to other communities across the country is further evidence, education and policy changes to provide better support for CED organizations, to develop human capital, to increase community investment, and to support social enterprise -all of which work to build wealth and reduce poverty.

### ***Place-Based Poverty Reduction Initiative (PBPR)***

CCEDNet's Place-Based Poverty Reduction Initiative (PBPR), was an 18 month national project, to identify, document, analyze and promote innovative community-driven collaborative approaches to poverty reduction and the methodologies they use to evaluate their impacts on the lives of individuals in their communities. Recognizing that the sector has historically done a more effective job of describing qualitative impacts, this initiative focused considerable attention on quantitative methods of describing the impacts of our work.

CCEDNet worked with four CED partner organizations from across the country who represent a range of approaches in integrated action on poverty reduction in diverse communities with complex demographics.:

- [PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise \(Thunder Bay, ONT\)](#)
- [CED Corporation of Trois-Rivières \(ÉCOF-CDEC\) \(Trois-Rivières, QUE\)](#)
- [Trail Community Skills Centre \(Trail, BC\)](#)
- [Learning Enrichment Foundation \(Toronto, ONT\)](#)

The partners developed detailed profiles of their communities, the impacts of poverty and the collaborative community action they use to address poverty. Their documentation included comprehensive organizational logic models as well as descriptions of the range of interventions and methodologies they use to evaluate qualitative and particularly quantitative impacts of their work. Challenges and benefits of this latter process were documented and shared.

Joining these four principal partner organizations were another group of organizations involved in poverty reduction and CED who, along with representatives from CCEDNet's standing committees, participated in the project's advisory committee and peer learning network. Using a series of tele-learning events, the learning network provided a mechanism to provide input into key aspects of the project and a forum to analyze, debate, critique and discuss effective CED strategies, tools and resources for poverty reduction.

The learning network teleconferences included the sharing of effective models and facilitated discussions on topics such as: community-driven place-based approaches to poverty reduction, effective measurement methodologies, challenges in evaluation and in poverty reduction related policy issues and ways to create a supportive policy environment to scale up the work. A list of the Advisory Committee/Learning Network members is included as Appendix 1.

An online toolbox of resources used in effective poverty-reduction strategies and the constructive documentation of qualitative and quantitative impacts on individuals in poverty has been developed for use across the sector to support replication of successful practices. Appendix 2 shows the inventory of the resources currently available in the toolbox. The project included a mini literature review and an annotated bibliography of relevant approaches to poverty reduction. Both of these documents are also part of the toolbox.

This final report is part of the replication strategy. It is a tool to share the strategies and models used in the four selected communities as well as the impacts on individuals in poverty. The findings are also being disseminated through magazine articles, workshops on both methodology and policy at CCEDNet's national conference, regional events and web-based tools.

This initiative was funded through the government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program.

# THE COMMUNITIES

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The diverse core communities we worked with in this project included a small border city in BC, an area within the City of Toronto, a group of urban and rural communities in Northwestern Ontario, and a group of older communities in the heart of Trois Rivières, Quebec. The populations of these communities are very different in some respects; predominantly Canadian born Anglophones in Trail, Anglophones and Aborigines in Northwestern Ontario, immigrants in the former City of York, Toronto and Francophones in Trois Rivières. Some communities, like Trail, are facing declining populations; others, like the former City of York, have increasing populations. However, the communities had more commonalities than differences - industries having left or downsized, lower than average education levels, labour force participation and family income as well as higher than average numbers of single parents, social assistance recipients, unemployed and poor families. Each of these communities face high levels of poverty.

## *Trail, British Columbia*

### **Description of the community / region**

With a land area of 35km<sup>2</sup>, the City of Trail is situated on the Columbia River in the West Kootenay region of British Columbia. The mountainous area is located just 10 km north of the US border, and 634 km east of Vancouver. The main economic activities include, smelting, mining and mineral exploration, and hydro electric power generation. Trail is heavily dependent upon one huge smelter-refinery-fertilizer complex.

About 85% of the population of 7,000 are Canadian-born with a median age of 50.9 years, 10 years older than the provincial average. This population has declined about 5% in the last 5 years, despite a provincial increase of 5%.

Typical of other regions built around natural resources, Trail lacks economic diversity. Over three-quarters of the community's jobs are spread over five sectors: manufacturing, mining, health care, retail trade and accommodation/food services.

In recent years, the community has been working hard to become more diversified, expanding its retail sector and becoming a magnet for high-tech investment. While new retail jobs have been primarily minimum-wage, requiring minimal education, the high-tech opportunities sector require a highly skilled personnel. A growing interest in the area's potential for retirement housing and recreational pursuits may provide a basis for future growth.

### **Incidence and Characteristics of Individuals and Families in Poverty**

Dependency on the social safety net in Trail is almost two times the provincial average and most recipients have to spend half of their income on rent. The employment rate has declined since 2001, compared to a provincial increase, and now stands at 5.6% below the BC level.

Due to the industrial nature of the local economy, the distribution of postsecondary qualifications is quite different than the province as a whole. Trail has a larger proportion of individuals with a trade's designation; the rest of the province has a higher proportion of individuals holding a university degree.

**TABLE: PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION 20+ WITH POSTSECONDARY QUALIFICATIONS, 2001**

Postsecondary Qualification	Trail	BC
Trades certificate	19%	13%
College diploma	18%	17%
University degree	7%	18%

Table 2: Source - BC Stats, Trail Community Facts

While the overall crime rate in the community is much lower than the rest of the province, the rate of juvenile crime is a matter of concern. Trail has almost the highest rate of youth property crime in the province -nearly six times the provincial average.

Trail also has a lower life expectancy than BC as a whole - by 2.4 years. In part, this can be explained by high infant mortality and natural and accidental causes of death or suicide/homicide - rates that are all higher than the provincial average.

### **History and Nature of Community Action on Poverty**

Many programs in Trail support individuals who are dealing with the effects of living in poverty. In the mid-1980's a small group of individuals created an anti-poverty group. It meets monthly in a local church which provides a hot meal for the 70-80 people who attend to discuss strategies that can address the community's poverty issues. A range of other programs include a women's shelter and support service, child care resources, free after school supervision, victims' assistance, mental health and addictions advocacy, a thrift store, a food bank and one small "affordable housing" unit.

In January 2007 a meeting on poverty for local communities, including Trail, brought together 150 participants from a wide variety of backgrounds and ages. Major issues regarding poverty were highlighted. Solutions identified included:

- Provide more public education on economic and social rights
- Raise income assistance rates and tie to inflation to meet housing and nutritional requirements.
- Change the culture of addressing poverty issues to one of help and support rather than policing and punishment.
- Take an integrated and holistic approach to education upgrading and skills training to equip people for long-term, sustainable employment.
- Provide a universal Child Care Program with well-paid workers.
- Provide equitable access to health services such as dental, medical, optical, prescription and non-prescription medications.
- Better coordinated and integrated provincial and federal programs

## ***Thunder Bay and Northwestern Ontario***

### **Description of the community/region**

The geographic, demographic, and socio-economic characteristics of North-western Ontario create a unique set of barriers that differentiate the region from the provincial context.<sup>12</sup> Geographically, the region is vast (half of Ontario's land mass) with a sparse population and many small, remote, and isolated communities. Demographically, considerable out-migration, especially of youths, contrasts the considerable in-migration experienced by Canada and Ontario. They also have the largest aged population in Ontario, and it is aging more quickly than the populations of Ontario and Canada.<sup>13</sup> Economic circumstances are also bleak. The industrial structure, historically heavily reliant on primary resources, is slowly being replaced by public sector service industries; the recent decline in 'blue collar' jobs, which have never been an adequate source of employment for women, has been followed by a rise in low-paying sales and service occupations and in low-paying and low-level management positions.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Northern Ontario has a lower labour participation rate, higher unemployment rate, and lower income levels than the rest of Ontario.<sup>15</sup>

### **Incidence and Characteristics of Individuals and Families in Poverty**

Women in Northern Ontario are affected by the same long-standing structural barriers that affect women nationally and internationally. Traditional concepts of "women's work" and gender roles continue to exclude women from employment. The new "information economy" requires continuous education and training, but women find themselves disadvantaged by their lack of connection to information technologies (IT)<sup>16</sup> and adversely affected by the 'digital divide'. Globalization has made

<sup>12</sup> M. Geddes, M. Robinson, and R. Lockyer, *A Literature Review Pertaining to the Employment of Women in Northwestern Ontario*, Conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise, Funded by Human Resources Development Canada, 2004, p. 2

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 6-9.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

full-time, full-benefit jobs scarcer and has triggered the rise of non-standard work like self-employment and part-time, temporary, and casual work. Women are more likely than men to become contingent workers. In addition, as women are increasingly choosing self-employment to achieve sustainable livelihoods, this “self-employment” designation can prevent access to training or employment programs.<sup>17</sup>

However, women in Northern Ontario are also disadvantaged by the constraints imposed by the particular geographic and socio-economic contexts of Northern Ontario. They face more barriers in relation to both men in Northern Ontario and women in Ontario as a whole because the economic dependence on primary resources in the north has led to a more rigid division of labour. Even the current industrial and occupational structures for women in Northern Ontario are different than those for men in Northern Ontario and those for women provincially. A recent study about the use of IT among Northwestern Ontario business women suggests that programs are needed to help women in the North to better access and use new technologies.<sup>18</sup>

The Northern Opportunities research report reveals that the most marginalized women living in northern communities are single parents, Aboriginal women, and older women. Women in small rural communities have a more discouraging economic outlook than women in urban areas who are more optimistic and describe economic prospects as fair. Many women see developing small businesses, while patching income from part-time work, as the only solution.

### **History and Nature of Community Action on Poverty**

Poverty reduction initiatives are being implemented by organizations operating in Thunder Bay. Action for Neighbourhood Change is focused on the Ogden Simpson area and works with community members to develop local solutions to creating and sustaining a safe and supportive community. One of PARO's Centre for Women's Enterprise (PARO) board members and two Accelerator Participants play an active role with this work.

Thunder Bay Counselling Centre is another key service provider that has been operating in Thunder Bay for over 40 years and offers services to individuals and businesses to move towards positive change. The Centre helps those who are experiencing crisis through counselling services for credit, grief, family violence and more. Other supports in Thunder Bay include the Lakehead Social Planning Council, the women's emergency shelters, the homeless shelter, and various faith-based food banks. Services for the poor are scattered and almost non-existent in outlying communities.

## ***The Former City of York in Toronto, Ontario***

### **Description of the community/region**

The former City of York is located in the south-west area of the City of Toronto and has a community of 148,000 residents. Once home to large-scale industrial plants for Dominion Bridge, CCM, Bauhaus and Kodak, the community was hit hard by de-industrialization. Since 1978, these major employers have relocated - taking with them thousands of quality manufacturing jobs and leaving only empty factories, environmentally damaged properties and decaying spaces.

From 2001 to 2005, the Weston/Junction area of the community lost 1,500 jobs - almost 50% of all employment in the area. As the industrial tax base dropped, income levels and rental rates dropped in the adjoining residential areas making the neighbourhood more affordable for waves of new immigrants. The area is one of the largest immigrant communities in Toronto, comprising over half of the local population. In a short time, the City of York saw its need for social, education, employment and settlement services increase, while the tax base that would allow it to provide some of those services was reduced significantly.

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<sup>17</sup> M. Robinson, *Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report*, Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur, 2004, p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

### Characteristics of individuals, families, households in poverty

In the former City of York, the average median income is approximately \$5,000 less than the rest of the City of Toronto, and comparatively more individuals rely on government transfers.

Statistics reveal the community has a higher level of low-income families and individuals than the rest of Toronto. Table 3 reveals the growth in concentration of poverty in the former City of York - referring to the number of neighbourhoods with “high” levels of poverty. In 20 years (1981 to 2001) the number of these neighbourhoods increased from 12% to over 48%.

In the same period, the area experienced a 12% population growth, a 10% increase in the number of economic families; but a 54% increase in the number of ‘poor’ economic families.

Concentration of Poverty			
	1981	1991	2001
Former City of York	12.4%	23.0%	48.5%
Former City of Toronto	26.2%	46.3%	40.2%

Table 3

This area has the highest number of single parent families in Toronto and almost twice as many teen (aged 15-19) pregnancies than the rest of Toronto - 29% vs 16 % for 1997-2001.

The data also show that within Toronto, this area has the lowest percentage of residents with post-secondary education

and the highest percentage of residents with less than a grade 9 education.

Comparing the former City of York with Toronto as a whole, labour force data clearly shows higher levels of sales, service and blue collar occupations and lower levels of business, finance and management occupations.

Within the last year, the area has had an increase in the number

of sexual assaults, thefts over \$5000, robberies and auto thefts. However, with the exception of robberies, crime within Toronto has decreased overall.

Labour force Data	Former City of York	City of Toronto
Sales and service occupations	25%	21%
Trades, transport, equipment operators and related occupations,	15%	12%
Occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	10%	8%
Business, finance and administration occupations	19%	22%
Management occupations	8%	13%

Table 4

### History and nature of community action on poverty

Recently, the City of Toronto’s Strong Neighbourhoods Task Force identified “Priority Neighbourhoods” in the city, using a wide variety of indicators to determine areas lacking resources and services necessary to address challenges of poverty, violence and inclusion. Neighbourhoods that measured 20% worse than the city average were identified as a target community.

A number of neighbourhoods in the former City of York were identified as “at risk” and Weston-Mount Dennis, where the Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF) is located, was identified as one of 12 “priority neighbourhoods” within Toronto.

As a result the community has received increased attention and resources, but much of the effort has been framed in the context of youth violence, as opposed to poverty alleviation. While the community is home to a number of well-established and respected service providers offering a broad variety of programs, little concerted effort has focussed exclusively on poverty alleviation within the community.

## **Trois-Rivières, Quebec**

### **The “first neighbourhoods” (premiers quartiers)**

#### **Description of the community/region**

Trois Rivières, a city of 126,000, is located in the Mauricie region of Québec. The area at the mouth of the St. Maurice River is one of the first settlements of the province, at that time New France. These neighbourhoods, once a part of the seigniorial farming system, have in recent years been experiencing acute socio-economic decline



#### **Incidence and Characteristics of Individuals and Families in Poverty**

Based on 2001 statistics collected by the district, half of the population of the first four neighbourhoods (Ste Cecile, St. Francis, Notre Dame and St. Philippe) are unemployed, 46% - 54%. Nearly half of all youth aged 15 to 24 are out of work or out of school (40% - 48%).

In the Sainte Cecile district nearly 50% receive social assistance. Sixteen per cent to 20% of providers receive income security in the Notre Dame and Saint Cecile districts. Half of these providers have been receiving welfare for more than five years.

In these two districts the average household income was between \$15,600 and \$17,800. The average income per person in Saint Philippe and the western part of St. Francis was \$20,000. Low-income families make up most of the population in these districts.

**The family:** All neighbourhoods have a very large number of families with children (6 of 10 families). There is also a strong presence of single-parent families, 35% of families with children compared with 18% for the city as a whole.

A large number of people are also living alone in these districts - nearly 40% in Notre Dame and Saint Philippe. In St. Francis and St. Cecilia, the rates are 22% and 31% respectively. The proportion of single people is generally higher than the rest of Trois Rivières where the rates range from 3% to 28%.

In Saint Philippe 23% of the population is aged 65 years and older. In other districts, this proportion varies between 14% and 19%.

**Schooling:** Among those over the age of 15, Saint Philippe has the highest proportion of people with less than a Grade 9 education (30.4%). In other core districts, the rate ranges from 22% to 28%. This phenomenon is more pronounced than in the rest of the city.

52% to 64% of adults have less than a grade 13 education. Only 16% to 19% possess a high school diploma.

**The housing situation:** In 2001, the first neighbourhoods had 6,550 houses. In Saint François almost 40% of housing is owner-occupied. The situation is different in other areas where the proportion is closer to 20%. This means that 62% to 83% of housing units are occupied by tenants and almost 50% of them spend 30% or more of their income on rent. In addition, much of the housing stock is in poor condition with 6% to 11% of dwellings requiring major repairs.

#### **History and Nature of Community Action on Poverty**

The history of community action in this community since 1996 is, in many ways, the history of the CED Corporation of Trois-Rivières (ÉCOF) which, as described below, grew out of a literacy program that recognized the severe economic needs of the population they worked with.



In November 2000, a socioeconomic picture of the historical districts of Trois Rivières was released. This was the conclusion of work done by a committee established for this purpose by a group of community organizations and stakeholders. That document created a socioeconomic picture of several high needs neighbourhoods using data from the 1996 census.

The statistics used above update that original information under the themes of housing, family, education and employment, according to 2001 census data. The report these figures come from presents a picture of the above-mentioned districts and gives statistics (numbers and percentages), patterns or trends (in a simplified representation) and maps (geomatics and geographic).

This report is the result of close cooperation between ÉCOF / CDÉC of Trois Rivières and *Demarche des premiers quartiers* of Trois Rivières. The data from several government agencies and community organizations are included as well. Many participants were involved in creating this report, particularly *l'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de la Mauricie* who provided the statistical data.

# THE COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

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The four organizations are very different in size and scope as well as geography. PARO is a women-centred organization that provides training and support around small business start-ups. The Skills Centre is an employment and training focused organization with clients as diverse as street youth and corporate employees. ÉCOF has a local economic renewal focus and uses employment and entrepreneurial support as key components of that process. LEF provides employment, training and service delivery in areas as diverse as childcare, food preparation, language skills and forklift operation.

Despite these differences these organizations share many similarities. All four organizations are involved in employment or self-employment preparation, training and support. In addition, entrepreneurship is key to what they do, whether providing training and support to individual entrepreneurs like PARO and ÉCOF, running their own social enterprise like the Skills Centre or running their whole organization as a social enterprise like LEF. More significant than these similarities is the fact that they all use a CED methodology in their work -they work with their local communities at a grassroots level to create economic opportunities and better social conditions, particularly for those who are most disadvantaged.

All organizations recognize that poverty is the result of multiple, complex, inter-related factors that combine to marginalize individuals and communities from mainstream social and economic activities. Consequently, they need to use comprehensive, holistic, integrated approaches that address individual, community and regional levels, recognizing that these levels are all interconnected.

## *The Greater Trail Community Skills Centre (Skills Centre)*

The Greater Trail Community Skills Centre was established in 1997 as part of a joint provincial - federal government initiative which established 20 Skills Centres in smaller, rural communities in British Columbia that were experiencing economic downturn due to reductions or closures of operations in the natural resource sectors.

The Skills Centre was intended to provide skill development through enhanced, customized and innovative local training opportunities. It had the flexibility to respond to specific community needs, but was not permitted to duplicate any existing training programs.

Skills Centres were provided core funding on a decreasing scale over a 5 year period and were expected to be completely self-supporting by the sixth year. The Skills Centre has no core funding now and relies completely on project funds to meet its budget demands.



Right Stuff that, since 2002, has provided employment for youth facing severe barriers to work; and a contract managing the Teck Cominco Learning Centre that, since 2004, has worked to enhance the learning culture, skills and personal wellness of the company's 1,400 workers. These contracts ensure

The Skills Centre won bids to deliver both the Targeted Wage Subsidy program and Employment Assistance Services in Greater Trail. In addition, adult education services in the community were re-structured to deliver customized training in the community through a unique partnership established with the local school district, the community college and the Skills Centre.

The Skills Centre has two other well established programs: a social enterprise known as the

the Skills Centre continues to play a key role identifying and responding to learning and training needs, ranging from personal interest to high level corporate training.

A recognized role in relation to community development and learning is of critical importance for the Skills Centre. The organization is guided by a policy that envisions an inclusive and healthy community with a balance of social and economic development, a mission to be a community leader in social economic development and learning, and values that support individual potential, that strive for equity of access in serving the diverse needs of the community with respect, integrity and fairness and that provide leadership to promote mutually beneficial results with clients and partners. Their Ends Policies include a statement that, “Community members will have an understanding of the value of social economic development.” (Outcome #4)

The Skills Centre’s Board of Directors represents a broad cross-section of community interests and expertise, including business and industry, labour, education, community services, local government, the Aboriginal community and youth.

#### **View of holistic approaches to community economic development**

It is the core function of the Skills Centre to serve the community by providing diverse learning opportunities thereby blending social and economic development and creating value in a way that is different from other organizations in the community.

The Skills Centre intentionally commits to building relationships with other organizations in the community. This commitment requires open dialogue, a respect for different values and a determination not to engage in win-lose negotiations or problem solving.

The Skills Centre operates under a Transformative Theory of Change model, demonstrated through acknowledging and reflecting on the Skills Centre’s various experiences to determine how to adjust and address similar problems in the future.

The creation of the Right Stuff is a good example of this model’s application. Previous to the creation of this social enterprise, the Skills Centre had a group of youth-at-risk receiving provincial Income Assistance but ineligible for federal government employment supports. They had faithfully attended a “Job Club” for as long as two years which was proving to be a frustrating exercise for both the clients and the counsellors because few or no successful job placements were found with this group.

A different approach to this on-going problem was needed. Through a new understanding of the business model known as social enterprise the Skills Centre developed a contract with the local daily newspaper to provide collating services. The majority of the youth-at-risk in the “Job Club” were hired at the Right Stuff, with most of them developing the necessary employment practises to move on to less supported employment situations. If Skills Centre staff had not been willing to consider the limits of the first situation and had remained stuck looking for typical solutions, the Right Stuff might not have been established.



The operation of a social enterprise has brought new and emerging challenges to the organization, requiring the staff to wrestle with on-going tensions between business results required for its operation to be successful and the more traditional social service frame of reference in which most staff have worked for many years.

### **View of their role in reducing poverty**

The organization has the basic belief that every person has the capacity to learn and develop and benefits from the opportunity to do so. The community improves when everyone is learning and developing, from the CEO of a large corporation to unemployed or disadvantaged persons. The ability to secure employment or maintain employment in this globally competitive world is influenced by both an individual and community's capacity to access the learning they require to keep themselves competitive.

The Skills Centre has four major areas of programming: Employment Solutions; Training Solutions; Entrepreneurial Solutions and Community Solutions. Each of these areas has been created as a means to respond to community needs from the perspective that the alleviation of poverty can be supported through various methods of skill development and learning.

The Skills Centre supports individuals in gaining employment; helps individuals upgrade their skills - whether it be workplace essential skills, computer training, safety training and professional development; and provides customized training for businesses who want to train their staff on new techniques and practises. All of these opportunities blend to create a vibrant, skilled community, which contributes to the alleviation of poverty.

### ***PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise***

PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise is a not-for-profit charitable organization committed to enhancing the economic independence of women and their families in Northwestern Ontario. PARO provides an innovative, multi-faceted, holistic program, accessible to all women, including Aboriginal, immigrant, young, elderly, differently-abled, rural, local and regional women. Although PARO headquarters are located in Thunder Bay, Ontario, PARO brings programs and services to women in communities and northern reserves through *PARO On Wheels* and creative use of technology, west to Kenora and east to Wawa.



PARO evolved from three peer lending circles, begun in 1995, into an independent organization that developed and marketed enterprise development training programs and business counselling for women. Today, PARO supports a multitude of programs and services that are designed to enhance micro-enterprise development and employment opportunities for women. Programs and services include a business incubator offering space, office equipment and other resources for program participants, and access to credit through peer lending. PARO also supports *PARO Presents*, a social purpose enterprise that offers training and marketing to Northern women entrepreneurs and artisans.

PARO Centre is governed by a volunteer board of directors who are elected annually from the organization's Circle membership. Financial support for PARO programs is varied, and includes municipal, federal, and provincial government grants, as well as funding from foundations, project income, social enterprise revenue and service work fees.

PARO has a long history of bringing together community and developing partnerships,

### **PARO Strategic Planning Session - May, 2007**

Board, staff, Circle members & community



collaboratives and networks both in Thunder Bay and across the North, as well as actively participating in a variety of national CED and policy initiatives. PARO was a founding agency of the Canadian Women's CED Council and continues to administer the body. Putting their core values into action, PARO members seek, respond to, offer, and nurture alliances with local, regional, provincial and national groups. The nature of these partnerships ranges from participation on boards to funding partnerships with other CED organizations. The organization is mindful of avoiding duplication of service and conscientious about utilizing existing community resources.

A recent evaluation states: *"It is important to note that all the program participants interviewed mentioned that they found added value from learning in PARO's women-friendly, women-centered environment . . . Some participants emphasized that this supportive atmosphere made the difference between 'success' and 'failure' for them - in terms of acquiring the confidence to pursue their business idea despite the obstacles involved..."* (CEDTAP, Carleton University, Ottawa)

#### **View of holistic approaches to community economic development**

Working with the Canadian Women's Foundation and Eko Nomos, PARO has incorporated the Sustainable Livelihoods Model at every level of the organization, from strategic planning sessions, to program curriculum. This model recognizes five asset areas -*financial, social, personal, human, and physical*- which are considered to be the key elements in a balanced livelihood, recognizing that financial assets do not alone determine one's quality of life or chances of achieving success. Research was conducted from 2005-2007 which tracked ten Business Accelerator program participants. Working from baseline intake statistics, interviews were conducted on all 5 asset areas to measure progress on an annual basis.

In analyzing research results and statistics onsite in 2007, Janet Murray of Eko Nomos commented on how PARO's research, when compared with most other sites throughout the country, have been positive and substantive. This result is attributable to the level of program integration and interaction by participants. PARO's Accelerator statistics and research interview results are significant and tell a larger story.

In each asset area, PARO provides resources and supports to help women build skills and achieve their goals. For example, in building social assets, PARO offers participants a women-friendly environment where they can network with other women and receive mentorship from members of the PARO team; through the peer lending program, women can access small loans, which impacts their financial asset area; and rental spaces at the PARO Centre incubator offer women low cost office space and access to necessary office equipment, which increases physical assets.

The research shows that all participants attributed personal advancements with the program's ability to inform them of their assets and provide them with the knowledge of how to define success in their own terms. One *Accelerator* participant cites *'I use the SLM model for everything in my life'*.

PARO's holistic approach to CED provides all the advantages of an integrated women-centred approach.

#### **View of their role in reducing poverty**

Peer Lending Circles are an important tool for reducing poverty in Northern Ontario. With more women identifying small business development as a viable means to increasing low or moderate income and achieving sustainable livelihood, difficulty in accessing credit is often a major barrier in micro-enterprise development and in acquiring further training and education.

To increase community capacity for economic self-reliance, women require access to adequate and appropriate credit. PARO's community loan fund, a peer lending program, provides women with access to credit, the necessary planning and training to establish their micro-enterprise, and support in navigating through systemic impediments to self-employment. The community loan fund aims to help women become active partners in their community's economic development.



Although membership in a PARO Peer Circle is a means to accessing credit for many women, other additional benefits to Circle members should be highlighted. As Circle members women also have the opportunity to share experiences and receive support and mentorship from fellow members.

PARO supports the largest network of women-centred peer circles in Canada, and possibly in North America.

### ***The Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF)***

The Learning Enrichment Foundation was formed thirty years ago in response to the needs of the former City of York. LEF is a registered charity, and a membership-based organization, governed by a board of directors elected by members. Their mandate is CED, with a mission to provide “community-responsive programs and services which enable individuals to become valued contributors to their community’s social and economic development”. The organization develops and implements programs and services based on the needs of the local community. Because poverty, unemployment and social exclusion are not unique to the former City of York, LEF attracts people from across the city and surrounding areas.

Programs and services include skill training in areas where local jobs are available, job searching, counselling, recruitment services for employers, self-employment training and support, training enterprises including LEF Wood Works and Cooks Training for at risk youth, technology help desk, computer access sites, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and literacy classes, a training loan fund, several social enterprises, 18 child care centres, 16 Before & After School Programs and a kitchen in which LEF prepares 500 meals a day for the child care centres and homeless programs.



#### **LEF Integrated Services**

LEF takes an integrated approach to employment support and clients are often involved in multiple interventions. Clients receive an introductory assessment and information session, followed by a wide range of client centered services and supports. This includes career exploration, ongoing employment counselling, literacy classes, skills training, life skills workshops, personal supports such as food, clothing and telephone voicemail service, community information and referrals, work search instruction, job placement and retention services. Unlike many service providers within Toronto, the LEF model offers all three components of Ontario Works (Community Placement, Skills Development, and Employment Placement) not only under one roof but integrated and with other supports to provide participants with a seamless, flexible continuum of supports tailored to individual needs. The organization is able to modify service paths according to client progress and changing circumstances, maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions. The LEF strategy also focuses on local resources, leveraging relationships with community partners and engaging local businesses in organizational initiatives.

#### **View of holistic approaches to community economic development**

The organization believes community development strategies are most effective when designed and implemented by local organizations based on the needs of local stakeholders. Communities are not homogenous, but complex and always changing, with unique strengths, weaknesses, needs and opportunities. Local organizations develop and maintain the networks of partners and stakeholders necessary to holistic program development and innovative delivery systems tailored to specific local conditions. These services are powerful enough to address complex, inter-related barriers, yet flexible enough to respond to changing community needs.

While individual initiatives are supported by a broad range of government departments, private funders, and fees for service enterprises, each with its own targets and reporting requirements, LEF maintains an integrated and seamless model of service delivery based on client needs, rather than specific target groups. The LEF model has been identified as an example of how various government and locally initiated services can be integrated to meet community needs. Some of the benefits of the integrated model are:

- **Cost effective:** individuals utilize only the services they need; allows for nearly seamless transitions between interventions and into employment; able to augment government-supported services with programs funded by other means, enterprises or donations, for example.
- **Maximize impact:** clients benefit from interventions suited to their individual needs, while organizations benefit from the ability to leverage services. This creates synergies that are not possible with stand-alone programs. For example LEF Food Services prepares over 1500 meals daily for LEF childcare centres and Second Harvest, and serves as a training program.
- **Accessible:** serves target populations and individuals who do not qualify for traditional stand-alone programs. For example LEF's Community Skills Development Fund provides training loans for individuals ineligible for government funds.
- **Responsive:** allows combinations of services that can be tailored to the needs of individuals or industry through nimble and flexible program development to meet new challenges and demands. By combining employment counselling, skills training and job search services under one roof, LEF can provide more clients with rapid access to available employment opportunities, serving both job seekers and employers effectively.



#### View of their role in reducing poverty

LEF views poverty as a symptom of multiple, complex, inter-related factors that combine to marginalize individuals and communities from mainstream social and economic activities.

The evidence base shows that poverty alleviation requires comprehensive, holistic strategies, flexible enough to be tailored to address unique challenges faced by individuals and their communities at the local level. LEF views its role in this process as working with individuals to engage local stakeholders to develop and deliver services that build on assets and address deficiencies in financial, human and social capital in a manner that is inclusive and sustainable.

### *ÉCOF Corporation for Community Economic Development*



ÉCOF is a CED Corporation (CEDC), which has worked in the Mauricie region in Quebec since 1996, more specifically in the older parts of the city of Trois-Rivières. ÉCOF is geographically located in the heart of the first neighbourhoods - an area of social and economic poverty.

ÉCOF was developed by local people as an initiative to find solutions to employment barriers for people dealing with low levels of education as well as exclusion. Indeed, before their exclusion from the labour market, illiterate members of COMSEP, a popular literacy program, had pushed workers to further explore the problem of access to

employment to generate solutions and develop alternatives to this problem. This exploratory thinking, work, and experimentation led to the establishment of a new resource which is the CEDC of Trois-Rivières - ÉCOF. Based on its activities, ÉCOF was recognized as a CEDC and was admitted as a member of the official group of Quebec CEDCs in 1999.

In Quebec, the social economy represents more than 6500 business collectives which generate a sales turnover of \$4.3 billion. In Mauricie, there are now 140 business collectives that generate \$50 million and employ 2000 people.

ÉCOF's mission is to improve the living conditions of the community, both socially and economically, taking into account their central values of solidarity, equity (social justice and equality), mutual assistance, democracy, and promoting universal participation in sustainable development initiatives. The organization's sphere of activities include employment and labour, social economy and entrepreneurship, and the revitalization and animation of communities (a living, quality of life and living conditions). Specifically this includes Employment Assistance Services (EAS), an Internet Access Points Program, a Social Economy Mentorship project supporting peer mentorship between social enterprises, and the Multiple Job Project which takes an integrated approach to preparing people for the labour market.

#### **View of holistic approaches to community economic development**

ÉCOF is an intermediary CED organization and, by definition, believes in and implements holistic approaches to CED. The CEDC is "a multi-sectoral group of social actors committed to the concerted action in local development through the adoption of economic development strategies. Starting research and analysis, CEDC plans interventions that will lead to an assumption by the community of its economic future on the basis of a comprehensive approach, that is an approach that is an economic, cultural, social and political-based endogenous development perspective. "(Favreau and Ninacs, 93).

The degree to which programs are holistic and integrated is exemplified by the Multiple Job Project. As part of labour market preparation, and in addition to training and supports that are directly employment related, this program includes a clothing counter, a citizens' community bulletin, breakfast clubs, distribution of Moisson Mauricie baskets, district festivals and activities related to community life.

#### **View of their role in reducing poverty**

ÉCOF and its collaborative partners have developed strategies for CED in the first districts over five years, from 2007 to 2012. This plan integrates economic development, employment, housing, education, health and citizen participation.

**Economic Development** plans include the creation of a district grocer in one community, supporting the development of social economy businesses -including one based on tourism, the creation of a local initiatives fund to support the creation of new companies to provide local employment, support to three existing companies to create additional employment and the commercial revitalization of certain streets and empty lots. **Employment** goals include doubling the number of people who will have access to employment assistance services, supporting more social inclusion projects that bring together people most susceptible to poverty and exclusion, and the creation of a centre for immigrant women. Goals in **Housing** include the creation of 200 new units of social housing, the addition of 100 new occupying owners in the first districts, the restoration of 200 residences and the operational startups of 25 new buildings with residences. **Education** goals include involvement with a local school-family-community project and setting up a program of bursaries to stimulate the continuation of the studies. **Health** goals include doubling the number of people who have access to the collective kitchens, supporting the development of a collective group purchase of fruit and vegetables. Finally, **Citizen Participation** goals include providing training for all the people involved in their districts, supporting projects developing volunteer involvement, ensuring citizens are involved in each project envisaged in this strategic planning, paying attention to social groups often less present in the processes of citizen participation - in particular young immigrants, women and those with little education.

This plan clearly aims to reduce poverty and the affects of poverty within the community.



## LOGIC MODELS

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To better understand the purpose and design of each of the four partner organizations in the above case studies, this report includes a logic model for each organization. These logic models for each organization begin with an overview chart and then outline each of the program or service components of the organization. These include the objectives, the program components/ the activities and the anticipated outcomes (or results). Because of the differing sizes and functions performed by the four organizations, the format and language used in the logic models varies slightly from organization to organization, however the general approaches are very similar. The logic models capture the comprehensiveness of each organization's multiple programs, services and supports and reflect their holistic approaches. Unfortunately, the logic model is not a tool that can adequately demonstrate how all of these components are integrated.

The logic models have been included as Appendix 3

# THE IMPACTS ON POVERTY

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## ***Personal profiles of impacted participants*** ***(“Testaments” on how lives changed)***

The harsh reality of poverty cannot be fully understood through community profiles and numbers alone. To have a true picture, we need to understand the impact of poverty on individual lives, person by person, life by life, story by story. Similarly, to understand the impact of CED on reducing poverty, we need to know the stories of real people and the impacts this approach has had on their lives. These stories often best describe the qualitative impacts of a CED approach.

Most CED practitioners know from personal observation and from anecdotes told by those we work with that CED helps improve the lives of those in poverty. We see people generating their own businesses or employment income, reducing dependence on social assistance, improving in health mentally and physically, building support networks, becoming more engaged with their communities, and so on.

The sector has a history of effectively sharing success stories and testimonials as part of describing qualitative impacts. These stories are extremely important in putting a human face on the work we do. In evaluating their impacts our partner organizations, like others, use these testimonials as a part of their qualitative evaluations and a collection of eleven of these stories has been included as Appendix 4.

These are stories of personal courage, determination and dignity and stories of community. Women and men, parents and single, some are young and only just old enough to be legally employed, others are now being considered “older workers”, but all are people who lived in poverty and faced challenges that often seemed insurmountable. Connecting with a local CED organization helped them to connect with others in their community, to build their skills, to build their self esteem, to develop a community network and to earn an income. Some gained regular employment, some worked in a social enterprise and some started their own businesses to gain independence and sustain themselves and their families. One common thread in a number of these stories is that, for many of these people, as their lives became more stable, they decided they wanted to find ways of giving back to their communities.

## **2007 data on impacts on poverty for a cohort of individual participants**

More and more we are being asked for results that are quantifiable. Other than providing statistics on numbers of people employed or self-employed, the sector has not had effective ways of specifying the impacts of CED in concrete numeric terms. One of the objectives of this Place-based Poverty Reduction initiative is to demonstrate methods of evaluating quantifiable impacts of our CED approaches on reducing poverty.

To demonstrate results in quantitative terms, each partner used one of a variety of approaches to measure impacts on a selected group of constituents in their programs. These approaches included :

- Social Return on Investment tools and metrics such as estimates of saved costs in government assistance, health services, and incarceration.
- the Sustainable Livelihoods Model
- measures of Value Added, which monetize the contribution of such goods and services as volunteer labour, donations and skill development

These approaches produce clear numeric impact statements that demonstrate the effects of their work in reducing poverty.

## ***The Skills Centre***

### **The Program**

In response to youth employment challenges and eligibility limitations for training and support, the Skills Centre initiated a youth social enterprise. The Right Stuff hires youth with barriers to collate advertisement flyers into the local newspaper.

### **Participant profile**

Since its inception, in October 2002, the Right Stuff has employed 39 individuals. All were unemployed, the majority were between the ages of 20-25. The original eight employees were all receiving Income Assistance for which, with the change in provincial government, they would no longer be eligible.

There are a number of common characteristics of the youth that are hired at the Right Stuff. Very few have completed their high school education, although some now attend the alternate high school program, which allows them to complete high school at their own pace in a less structured environment. Some have children of their own and some have criminal records or were “getting by” based on their illegal activities. For their housing needs, the majority of them were “couch surfing” - moving from one friend’s home to the next. At best their housing situations are tenuous, usually involving frequent changes of addresses. In addition, they have a very limited employment history and do not have employment ready skills, including a resume, nor do they have an understanding of employment standards. They typically have piercings and tattoos, which do not make them the first choice for entry-level customer service type of work.

The types of challenges encountered working with this client group include mental illnesses such as depression, Attention Deficit Disorder, and various personality disorders. There have also been those with developmental challenges such as Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, and learning disabilities. In all cases, these challenges have not been professionally diagnosed but are based on the Centre’s assessment as a result of working with them. There are also other barriers to employment such as socialization issues, drug and alcohol problems, anger management and communication difficulties.

The weekly hours of employment is dependant on the volume of work but typically it is 15 hours which can increase up to 25-30 as they gain seniority and demonstrate their reliability. The flexible scheduling means that a second job is a typical first step in moving to more full-time less supported employment.

In addition to gaining fundamental employment skills, counselling support is provided for the youth to increase their personal management skills and teamwork abilities. Financing for certified training such as Occupational First Aid, Workplace Safety, forklift operation, and computer training is also offered. Employees are also paid to attend regular monthly workshops focussed on Essential Skills: teamwork, communication skills, problem solving, personal budgets, nutrition and conducting a job search. The goal of this project is for the youth to develop work experience and the personal skills to secure employment on their own.

### **Tracking the Impacts**

The systems for tracking the socio-economic impact of the Right Stuff are fairly simple and rely heavily on effective communication with the participants. During the hiring and orientation process the employee, interview panel, and frontline supervisor all complete detailed checklists. The counsellor also works with employees on-site to develop and monitor a Personal Growth Plan. When an employee leaves an exit interview is conducted and s/he is contacted by staff at 3-month intervals for up to a year.

The Right Stuff used Social Return on Investment metrics to quantify impacts in six ways. They are also in the process of fine tuning and implementing the Sustainable Livelihoods model (see PARO sections), to increase the ability to measure the changes that take place in their lives but also to help these youth to recognize the benefits of their choices.

## The Impacts

To date the Right Stuff has achieved about a 64% success rate. Success in this case is classified as the individual remaining employed, moving on to other employment, enrolled in formal education or re-locating to another community. Re-locating to another community is considered a success because it typically requires improved self-esteem and confidence to move away from the surroundings with which they are familiar. Twelve per cent have quit their jobs at the Right Stuff and 23% have had to be dismissed.

### Numeric Measurements

#### 1. Annual Income & Cost Savings to Income Assistance Budget

Wages earned by all 8 RS workers 2002-2003	Total Income Assistance these RS workers would have rec'd over a similar period	Aggregate increase in income
\$59,936	\$49,920	\$10,016

Table 5

#### 2. Annual Benefit of Additional Consumer Spending

Research on the Economic Multiplier or Local Multiplier Effect demonstrates the economic value to a community of locally owned businesses and local purchasing<sup>19</sup>. The local Chamber of Commerce in the Right Stuff's region uses a multiplier of three, estimating that each dollar paid to local merchants for rent, utilities, new clothes, electronic equipment and discretionary items (e.g., video games, take-out) helps supply buying power for two more local purchases. In other words, if spent in town, the wages of Right Stuff participants could have an impact on Trail's economy that is triple their face value<sup>20</sup>.

Total annual wages by RS workers in 2006	Estimated impact on the community economy in one year	Estimated impact on the community economy in three years
\$50,037	\$150,111	3 years = \$450,333

Table 6

#### 3. Cost of incarceration

A number of hired youth-at-risk have histories of being involved in criminal activity, in various degrees of seriousness. Once these individuals start working their criminal activity, such as illegal substance abuse, decreases substantially while other activities, such as theft, completely stop. For example, because of a job at the Right Stuff, one program participant was allowed to be in the community weekdays, rather than in jail.

Cost of supporting 1 individual in a federal prison for one year = \$85,000	X 4 individuals = (10% of total participants)	\$340,000
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Table 9

#### 4. Cost of a Single Parent & Child on Income Assistance

Cost of supporting 8 single parents on income assistance with one child under the age of 3 for one year = \$90,816	X 3 years =	\$272,448
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Table 7

<sup>19</sup> <http://everything2.com/node/1282828>

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.worldproutassembly.org/archives/2005/05/why\\_the\\_local\\_m\\_1.html](http://www.worldproutassembly.org/archives/2005/05/why_the_local_m_1.html)

### 5. Cost to Health System

Forty-one per cent of hired youth-at-risk have undiagnosed mental illness. Work helps to stabilize their lives, intermittent stays in the psychiatric ward would cost:

Cost of supporting 4 individuals in a hospital facility for one day = \$4,000	X 10 days = (average hospitalization time)	\$40,000
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Table 8

### 6. Value of volunteer work

As a result of being involved in the Right Stuff several youth have volunteered for community events. Most significantly, one program participant chose to volunteer for the local ski patrol and worked 11 8-hour days over the ski-season. Since three seasons is the average length of time that volunteers dedicate to such commitments, this activity adds significant value to the community.

Value of one ski patrols volunteer work per season (with 14% employer. costs) = \$1,003	X 3 seasons =	\$3,009
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Table 10

## PARO

### The Program

PARO provides a wide range of entrepreneurial development supports for individuals and collective enterprises. Participants can be involved in self-employment training programs, and access supports such as lending circles, member networks, a business incubation centre and a retail outlet. Once they have launched and established their micro-enterprise they then have the opportunity to participate in the Business Accelerator program to enhance the growth of their businesses, and to help them achieve a sustainable livelihood. The Accelerator program facilitates business mentoring; provides access to 'Experts' and provides advanced workshops and counselling on topics such as: IT planning & web development, marketing, PR, risk management, financial statements & financial software.

The Sustainable Livelihoods (SL) model, described below as the method of evaluating impacts, inevitably affects the program delivery. PARO provides resources and supports to help women build assets and achieve their goals in all five asset areas - *financial, social, personal, human, and physical*. For example, in building social assets, PARO offers participants a women-friendly environment where they can network with other women and receive mentorship from members of the PARO team; through the peer lending program, women can access small loans, which impacts their financial asset area; and the rent of space in the incubator at PARO Centre offers women an office area at a low cost, as well as access to the equipment required to run a business, which increases physical assets.

### Participant profile

Long-term, detailed research conducted from 2005-2007 tracked ten **Business Accelerator** participants who were representative of the group demographics.

PARO's 10 Portrait Research Participants	
Economically marginalized	10
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Unemployed at entry to PARO	8
Low-paid, part-time jobs at entry to PARO	2
Out of the job market for at least a year	5
Re-entering the job market after years of caring for younger children	3
Receiving government support - employment or disability supports	7

<b>Marital Status</b>	
Single	5
Married/common-law	5
Divorced	5
Lone parent	3
Dependent school aged children	5
<b>Location</b>	
Thunder Bay	5
Towns and villages in the broad, remote geographic regions of North-western ON	5
<b>Housing</b>	
Lived in family owned homes *	7
Low quality housing rent-gearred-to-income housing	3
Paying over 50% of their income on housing (25% is recommended)	10
<b>Cultural backgrounds</b>	
Aboriginal	1
Born in Canada	8
Immigrant in the country more than five years.	2
*home ownership is much more common and possible in northern communities	

Table 11

All of the portrait participants joined PARO some time around 2000. They noted that their unemployment was primarily caused by changes in childcare responsibilities, ageism, disability and/or illness.

At intake to the Accelerator, all of the portrait participants had started their business and were generating some sales revenues. Most were working in self-employment on a full-time basis or were income patching, combining part-time outside employment and self-employment. At intake to the Accelerator, all portrait participants were still low-income, earning personal gross income of under \$20,000 at interview one. Of those eight who could report their household income at that time, six (75%) had household incomes of under \$35,000.

### Tracking the Impacts

PARO has incorporated the **Sustainable Livelihoods Model** at every level of the organization. This model provides a way to quantify qualitative changes in people's lives and recognizes five asset areas—*financial, social, personal, human, and physical*—which are considered to be the key elements in a balanced livelihood. Working from baseline intake statistics, PARO interviewed participants on all 5 asset areas to measure progress on an annual basis. Participants rated themselves from 1 to 5 as where they saw their assets at intake, during interview one, and during interview two. The areas and types of improvement are supported by answers to many interview questions.

### The Impacts

Based on increases from baseline intake stats 2005 to 2007:

- Financial Assets 29.8 % increase
- Personal Assets 26 % increase
- Social Network Assets 24.8 % increase
- Human Assets 12.3% increase
- Physical Assets 11% increase

The results determined that all research participants had an increase in all assets.

- **Financial Assets** showed the most significant increase (29.8%). This increase and interview discussions demonstrated that all research participants have a better understanding of money, have gained the ability to generate increased revenues and profits, while having increased skills and systems in place for financial planning.

- The significant increase in **Personal Assets** (26%) was supported by evidence of improved identity as a business woman, improved self esteem and independence, motivation and resilience.
- The increase in the area of **Social Assets** (24.8%) reflected the fact that these women have established their business networks and supports, and have put their life connections in place.
- **Human Assets** increases (12.3%) confirm that these women have the skills, knowledge and ability for better earning power but continue to struggle with the balance of work and home life. Finding this balance is the biggest struggle and common denominator with all research participants.
- **Physical Assets** saw an increase of 11%, confirming that their access to housing, food, child/elder care information and transportation has improved.

To summarize; all participants attribute their increases to the program's ability to make them aware of all their assets and provide them with the knowledge of how to define success in their own terms. One *Accelerator* participant cites '*I use the SLM model for everything in my life*'

To further evaluate and quantify its holistic approach to CED (volunteer contributions and social outputs, for example), PARO has also used an Expanded Value Added Statement to quantify some of the impacts of PARO on the community. The resultant report states, "In comparing the \$386,999 of combined social value added in this 11-month period to the \$254,364 of value added based on the audited financial statements, we can see that PARO created at least \$132,635 in additional social value. This additional social value would not normally be recognized in financial statements, but it is a more accurate reflection of the value PARO creates with the resources available to it. It is estimated that the organization generated \$2.09 for every dollar spent on goods and services. The social value added component of this was \$0.72, indicating a large contribution of social value added for every dollar received by PARO from grants and other sources."

**Table: Expanded Value Added Statement (Partial) for PARO for the Year Ended Mar 31, 2006**

Value Added Created		Financial	Social	Combined
Outputs	Primary	\$435,892.00	\$93,860.00	\$529,752.00
	Secondary	\$3,601.00	\$3,575.00	\$7,176.00
	Tertiary		\$35,200.00	\$35,200.00
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$439,493.00</b>	<b>\$132,635.00</b>	<b>\$572,128.00</b>
Purchases of external goods and services		\$185,129.00		\$185,129.00
<b>Value Added Created</b>		<b>\$254,364.00</b>	<b>\$132,635.00</b>	<b>\$386,999.00</b>
<b>Ratio of value added to purchases</b>		<b>1.37</b>	<b>0.72</b>	<b>2.09</b>

Table 12

The research reflected in this report was conducted between January and April 2007 under the direction of Dr. Ted Jackson, Chair of the Carleton Centre for Community Innovation. CCCI's recently published tools on Social Return on Investment and Expanded Value Added Statements provide a useful synopsis of these two approaches to measuring impact.

( <http://www.carleton.ca/cedtap/stories/sroi.pdf> <http://www.carleton.ca/cedtap/stories/evas.>)

## LEF

### The Program

The Learning Enrichment Foundation assists individuals in making the transition from unemployment to sustained participation in the labour market through an integrated model of service delivery. These services include: continuous intake and assessment of clients, employment counselling, job development, and business development services for employers; as well as literacy and ESL language instruction, and skill training in six areas (cooks training, industrial skills, construction, Early Childhood Assistant, project management, and Community Access Program). Childcare and education loans are provided for those who need it.

### Participant profile

LEF's 211 Portrait Research Participants			
Receiving Social Assistance		100%	
<b>Sex</b>			
Male		68%	
Female		32%	
<b>Age</b>			
16-24 years		15%	
25-30 years		22%	
31-44 years		42%	
45-54 years		17%	
55+ years		4%	
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Single		75%	
Married/common-law		14%	
Separated		6%	
Widowed		1%	
Dependent school aged children		29%	
<b>Social Assistance level</b>			
Single, no dependents - \$536 / month		64%	
Couple, no dependents - \$969 / month		8%	
Single, one dependent - \$987/ month		13%	
Single, two or more dependents - \$1198/ month		11%	
Couple, two or more dependents - \$1289/ month		4%	
<b>Below 2005 Before-Tax Low-Income Cut Offs (LICOs)</b>		100%	
Below 50% of LICO		100%	
Below 34% of LICO		65%	
<b>Last Reported Employment Income</b>			
Within last 12 months		45%	
Within last 2 - 5 years		51%	
Within last 6 - 12 years		4%	
Average years without employment		2.1	
<b>Location</b>			
Within 5 kilometres of LEF*		23%	
<b>Education</b>	<b>In Canada</b>	<b>Outside Canada</b>	
Did not complete high school	35%	20%	32%
Complete high school	53%	30%	42%
Completed post-secondary education.	13%	50%	26%

Table 13



This data table shows that LEF's Ontario Works (OW - Ontario social assistance) clients:

- Are primarily unmarried males, mostly between the ages of 31 and 44 years of age
- Have a high school education or less, with most post secondary education occurring outside of Canada
- Have weak attachment to the labour force, with an average unemployment span of over two years
- Are experiencing persistent and deep poverty, comparing reported earnings and income related to LICO levels<sup>21</sup>

### Tracking the Impacts

Over a 12 month period, LEF successfully assisted hundreds of individuals in making the transition from unemployment to sustained participation in the labour market through an integrated model of service delivery. Of these clients, 211 were social assistance recipients. While they represented only a portion of training graduates and successfully employed participants, this group had unique data sets that were crucial to calculating quantitative impacts. When compared to Low Income Cut-Offs (LICOs), measuring benefit levels based on marital status, number of dependents and the last year of reported earned income enabled the establishment of pre-intervention baselines in terms of income and depth of poverty.

The data in Table 13 was derived from client registration forms (which clients complete upon their first visit to LEF), Toronto Social Services-Ontario Works social assistance data, Statistics Canada data and LEF client files. Rough calculations can be completed with this data to provide insight into how participants' financial situations change before and after accessing LEF services.

### The Impacts

All 211 participants had received assistance through multiple interventions within LEF and moved into employment between January 2005 and December 2006. As was noted earlier, on average, this was the first employment income reported by these participants in over two years.

Starting Wages	
Starting Wage: \$7.75 / hour - \$24.00 / hour	Median starting Wage: \$11.28
Full-time positions: 91%	Part-time positions: 9%
# with increased income from transition to employment: 99%	
Increase in income: 24% - 616%	Median increase in income: 199%.

Table 14

The Participant Profile above shows that all participants (100%) were living on less than 50% of the 2005 Before-Tax Low-Income Cut Off (LICO) amount while 65% were living on less than 34% of the LICO amount. These figures reflect deep levels of poverty. The impact after employment is dramatic since almost all participants are now at the 50% LICO level or higher, with 63% actually earning above LICO.

Starting Wages compared with corresponding before tax LICO	
Assuming starting wages for all 192 full-time employed was sustained:	
Before interventions	After interventions
65% earnings below 34% of the corresponding LICO	
100% earnings below 50% of the corresponding LICO	97% earnings above 50% of the corresponding LICO:
	85% earnings above 80% of the corresponding LICO
	63% earnings above 100% the corresponding LICO

Table 15

<sup>21</sup> For further explanation regarding definitions and calculations involved in these terms, see "The Other face of Working Poverty", Policy Research Initiative Working Paper Series 006

While securing employment is an essential start to moving out of poverty, sustaining employment is equally important. Toronto Social Services (TSS) monitors employment income and reduced social assistance benefits for OW clients for six months following an employment start date, and this data can provide insight into job retention for this group. However, the TSS data is available only for those clients who achieved outcomes within OW mandated timelines. While the ongoing support structure through the LEF model tracks similar outcomes for the entire group, only TSS results are used here in the interest of consistency. This data is available for 100 members of the group, and shows 56% of these clients retained their original employment past the 6 month follow-up. Of these clients, 66% reported a starting income that would move them above the corresponding LICO. We can also calculate the impact on the “depth” of poverty for the remaining members of the group. Even though the starting wages of these individuals would not move them above their corresponding LICO, the data show 79% of individuals in this group moved within 25% of their corresponding LICO.

The data regarding the 211 social assistance recipients that LEF assisted in securing and retaining employment in 2005 - 2006 demonstrates the potential of these approaches in poverty alleviation. This client group was characterized by, multiple barriers to employment and income well below established “poverty” levels.

Through a combination of services and supports based on community needs as well as individual assets, goals and circumstances, these clients were all successful in securing employment, for the first time on average, in over two years. Data from TSS show that many of these clients maintained employment past six months and earned a starting wage that could move them out of low income. The data also shows that even those who did not report a starting wage significant enough to lift them past the low-income threshold, significantly increased their earnings, and increased their labour market experience and attachment, important first steps in the path out of poverty.

These outcomes represent significant progress in the lives of these individuals, and within the community. Reduction in benefit payments for the six months retention period alone can be calculated at **\$242,910**, however, as the individual testimonials show, the impacts cannot be measured solely in financial terms.

## **ÉCOF**

### **The Program**

ÉCOF’s Employment Assistant Service provides a range of supports and potential interventions in both individual and group settings. Participants have access to practical resources such as computers, fax and telephones and they can learn a variety of job search techniques as well as interviewing and resume skills. Social involvement is also encouraged through opportunities for volunteer activities in the community. Group training at ÉCOF includes self-esteem, communication, conflict resolution and teamwork. Many of these skills are built and enhanced as staff support trainees working together on practical projects where they need to learn how to work as a team, communicate effectively and resolve conflicts.

### **Participant profile**

There is a high level of unemployment, particularly with youth, and low education and literacy levels.

- 20%-50% receive social assistance
- most families are large but there are also many isolated people living alone
- most do not have grade 12 education (employers are less open to recruiting people without grade 12. Employers need to be aware that most people have many skills and competencies even though they don’t have Grade 12. Grade 12 certification would open doors to employment)
- years of absence from the workforce (experience but not education)
- receiving social assistance for more than 4 years
- difficulty accessing programs because they are ineligible for EI
- lack of confidence
- older workers
- 60% - 80% of homes are rented by tenants and many of these are in need of repair

Other factors limiting employment include access to day care and lack of transportation.

ÉCOF once assumed that the social enterprises would hire these disadvantaged people, but staff are noticing that these social enterprises more frequently have higher requirements because they must meet output goals. Consequently, even they restrict access to the high needs unemployed.

### Tracking the Impacts

ÉCOF has solid individual participant data, based on the interviews and data collection that are part of their regular intake, support, and monitoring process (and are required for government funding). Data on the duration of unemployment, receipt of government assistance, education levels, and parental status are collected, as well as the results of the support provided - training, further education or employment acquired and earned income. Like LEF, data analysis under the PBPR focused on participants who transitioned from government assistance to full-time employment over a 3-year period.

### Impacts

Government income, while receiving social assistance prior to employment, varied based on marital status and the number of dependents. For these 63 individuals who transitioned from government assistance to full-time employment in this period, the average monthly amount was \$802. The monthly total in government supports for this entire group was \$50,509 (63 participants x \$802) .

The federal government requires that post intervention employment statistics be collected for a 6 month retention period. Using calculations based on this relatively short 6-month retention period alone, estimated savings in social assistance payments for this group totalled **\$303,054** (6months x \$50,509). Based on staff anecdotal information from their ongoing connections with many of these individuals, it would be safe to multiply most of these savings over several years.

### Government Savings over 6 months = \$303,054

Once employed, starting wages for this group varied from the provincial minimum wage of \$8.00/ hour to a high of \$26.00 / hour. The average starting wage for these employees was \$12/hour. Monthly wages therefore totalled approximately \$114,660 (63 x \$114,660). For this same retention period this amounts to **\$687,960** (6 months x \$114,660).

Gaining employment added an average of \$1,018 to the monthly income of each participant (\$1,820 employment income - \$802 social assistance) . Most of this is money added to the local economy. Over the same 6 month retention period this totals **\$384,906** (\$1,018 x 63 employed participants x 6 months).

### 6 month Financial Impacts Summary

Savings in government assistance	\$303,054
Employment income	\$687,960
Addition to the local economy	\$384,906

Table 16

ÉCOF had hoped to be able to show impacts on poverty by creating a picture of change in the community with comparison data between the 1996 and 2001 Statistics Canada censuses. In November 2000, ÉCOF and their community partners began working together and created a socioeconomic picture of several high needs neighbourhoods using 1996 data. They have used 2001 census data to update this information under the general themes of housing, family, education and employment and these were used in the community profile above, but lack of resources prevented them from doing the same postal code by postal code analysis of the former study. This is the level of detail that would have been needed to show changes in poverty levels at a community wide level.

## Impacts Summary

Our partners have demonstrated some of the quantitative impacts of their work with selected groups of participants using a variety of approaches. Social Return on Investment tools; estimates of saved costs in government assistance, health services, and incarceration; the Sustainable Livelihoods Model; and measures of Value Added, have all been effective as ways of providing quantifiable impact statements. These kinds of evaluation are not an exact science but each method provides a means of providing credible hard numbers that effectively demonstrate the results of our work.

The Toolbox includes summary information and links for two additional social enterprises using both Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Return on Investments methodologies to describe their impacts. These CED enterprises are Atira Property Management Inc. in Vancouver and Inner City Development Inc in Winnipeg.

## THE CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

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### *Challenges in Quantitative Data Collection*

Whichever approach is used, measuring quantitative impacts is obviously not without challenges. Michele Cherot at Trail CSC describes the years it has taken to develop a system that measures the personal successes of the youth that work at the Right Stuff. “We have tried numerous renditions of a Personal Growth Plan,” she explains, “which ultimately measured and highlighted their failures rather than their successes, a system that doesn’t benefit anyone.” Then there are the “un-measurable successes.” Three program participants took part in a day-long walk-a-thon fundraiser for cancer research last spring, for example. This was the first time any of them had been involved in a community event. The impact on them was significant,” Michele recalls, but adds, “The challenge for us is how do we measure that kind of success?”

There is also the fact that development patterns involve both progress and regression in a participant’s life. “It is very difficult to pull out the positives when the setbacks tend to dominate the perception of what is happening in their lives,” she observes.

With the Sustainable Livelihoods Model, by contrast, data collection becomes integral to the work of staff and participants. It becomes part of the program. The Right Stuff has started to use the Model, and involves their young participants in the very design of the process. “We asked the youth to identify their success indicators in each of the five asset categories,” says Michele. “In this first round of self-assessment we found they were very receptive to the process.”

PARO reports that it has “incorporated Sustainable Livelihoods at every level of the organization, from strategic planning sessions, to program curriculum. All participants attribute their asset increases to the program’s ability to make them aware of their full range of assets and to provide them with the knowledge of how to define success in their own terms. One Accelerator participant declared ‘I use the model for everything in my life’.”

As the latter remark reveals, the ability to measure program results is important not just for funding partners. The participants themselves want a quantifiable way to assess how their lives are changing. In Michele’s words, “When they can see measurable results it gives them the confidence to continue with their new choices and lifestyles.”

Our PBPR partners and our broader learning network have had many debates in the last two years about the relative merits of these methods of quantitative measurement: the accuracy, challenges, and shortcomings of each and of other methods, individually-based or community-wide; the need for better access to community-wide data; and the pros and the cons of the whole endeavour.

LEF’s Joe Valvasori describes some of the issues. “We have embedded data collection procedures that make quantitative measurement ongoing and relatively painless. The data is based on individual program targets, as defined by the funder, and focuses primarily on post-intervention outcomes. However, the pre-intervention indicators required to establish appropriate baselines are absent. For LEF, the PBPR project has highlighted the need to create and implement quantitative indicators and

data collection methods focussed on poverty reduction. Accordingly, it is establishing a ‘poverty lens’ that will be applied across the organization to measure impacts and guide its work.”

The lack of resources that prevented ÉCOF from doing the level of analysis needed to properly compare Statistics Canada census data from different years is clearly another barrier. However, Caroline Lachance, ÉCOF’s Executive Co-ordinator, acknowledges that these statistics can only ever provide a partial picture. “It would have been good to derive more meaningful comparative material,” she said, “but as good as Stats Can data is, it can’t really show the impact of what’s happening on the ground in a community - a school closing or a number of individuals finding employment. Positive or negative, we have to document those results case by case.”

The research initiative also highlighted how the single-issue focus of many funded programs not only fails to adequately address the complex and interrelated issues of poverty, but also acts as a disincentive to service providers to focus efforts on the problem. For example, when the number of people gaining employment is the single measure of a program’s value, organizations can feel pressured both to “cream” intake for the most readily employable clients and to encourage them to take low paying, shorter term employment. A broader focus that accommodated the real complexity of poverty would make it clear that the goal is to attain sustainable employment income, and that steps accomplished towards that goal need acknowledgment.

PBPR also demonstrated how important it is for communities to create, modify, and adapt strategies to reduce local poverty, filling the gap left by government policies and programs with community-based approaches.

To summarize, how do the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative measurement balance out?

On the **negative side** of the balance there is:

- The time and cost of collecting and analyzing the data take away from the resources available for direct CED work.
- The intrusion into participants’ lives when additional information is requested. This is especially the case for social assistance recipients who fear their benefits may be affected by the supplementary self-employment or part-time income they earn.
- The temptation to invest more effort in things that are more easily quantified or monetized, to the detriment of programs that generate important qualitative results. Even among programs that do offer quantifiable results, the ones with the “most spectacular numbers” may become favoured for resources on that basis alone.

On the **positive side** of the balance:

- Quantitative assessment enables us to “make our case” more concretely to policy-makers, funders, and other investors.
- We can speak with increased confidence of the effectiveness of the CED approach to poverty reduction.
- Depending on the methodology, program participants can track their own progress more easily and assume more responsibility in the development process.

Our partners are clear about the benefits and challenges associated with each approach. They also acknowledge that the process of evaluation can have a substantial effect on the way programs and services are delivered.

We have been able to demonstrate quantitatively that CED has an impact on reducing poverty. There are many challenges to the process of quantifying the impacts of our work. It can profoundly change the way we work. But is it worth the work? So long as the quantitative measures are used in conjunction with qualitative ones to convey a more complete appreciation of the outcomes that have occurred, our partners in this project believe it is.

## ***Barriers to Poverty Reduction in the Four Communities***

While these challenges to evaluating quantitative impacts of CED in poverty reduction are significant, even more challenging are the barriers to the actual work of poverty reduction. Our four partners, together with those participating in the broader Learning Network, described a wide range of range of challenges and barriers that their communities face. These barriers can be divided into four categories: personal barriers faced by individuals (e.g. self-esteem, ageism), policy related barriers faced by individuals (e.g. access to programs, lack of childcare), policy related barriers faced by the organization in service delivery (program silos, core funding, cookie cutter programming), community wide barriers (high unemployment, poor housing).

When asked to describe challenges and barriers each partner focussed primarily on one of the above categories. ÉCOF focussed most on the broader community wide barriers - statistical unemployment and poverty levels. At the other end of the spectrum, PARO primarily documented physical and mental barriers faced by individuals. Trail CSC placed more focus on organizational issues - core funding, competition between non-profits and cookie cutter programming while LEF focused more on the policies related to individuals - access to programs, loss of benefits with some focus on organizational policy issues such as the silo approach to programming and the effects of restricted participant eligibility.

In subsequent discussions it became clear that, other than a few geographically based factors, most of these barriers are important issues for all four organizations, it was just a difference in focus at the time of answering the questions.

What the work with our partners, and the discussions of the Learning Network, made abundantly clear is that there are a great many barriers and challenges faced by individuals in poverty and by the organizations and communities working to reduce poverty. Although the list below is by no means exhaustive, it does serve to highlight many of these challenges.

### **1. Personal barriers faced by individuals:**

- Lack of self confidence
- Poverty of time - personal resources spread too thin (especially for women with family responsibilities )
- Demanding caregiver roles and limited support for medically dependent adult children or parents/siblings,
- Low baseline income levels, fluctuation of income (especially for self employed)
- Mental and physical health limitations, psychiatric survivor / psychiatric disability, inability to focus, depression, motivation fluctuates
- Ageism: “older worker” challenge to get hired (leads to need to create self-employment.
- Limited strategic business networks and partnerships (both personal and business )
- Need specialized equipment & staff (especially for the self-employed)
- Isolation

### **2. Policy related barriers faced by individuals:**

- Low wage rates that do not provide a sustainable living wage
- Income support and labour market policies
  - EI benefit eligibility that excludes 75%-80% of unemployed for training and supports (long-term unemployed, recent immigrants, youth with little labour market experience and women who have been absent from the labour market for over five year due to childcare obligations)
  - Provincial policies (e.g. Ontario) which has resulted in reduced benefit levels, eligibility requirements that require recipients to liquidate any assets, a “work-first” approach that results in precarious, low-paying jobs without benefits, opportunities for career progression and recycling back onto social assistance in a short period with no additional skills
  - Restrictions that discourage individuals on income assistance and long-term disability benefits from entering the work force on a part-time basis e.g. risk of losing the medical benefits
- Lack of affordable childcare

- Foreign credentials not recognized
- Inadequate transportation systems (rural communities)
- Lack of computer and/or internet access
- High tuition and supply costs
- Lack of workplace training and capacity building
- “English only” jobs in Francophone areas

### **3. Policy related barriers faced by the organization in service delivery (program silos, core funding, cookie cutter programming):**

- No core funding to cover operational and administrative overhead costs
  - competitive staff compensation packages
  - the true cost of the high levels of tracking and accountability
  - the cost of strategic planning or staff development
  - the cost of developing partnerships and strategic relationships.
- Non-profit organizations required to compete against each other on contracts, when a collaborative approach would be more effective and efficient
- Governments’ “cookie cutter” template services to be delivered regardless of local context
- Single issue government funded program silos
- Limited funding opportunities and the time consumed to apply for those opportunities
- Fee for performance funding based on placement outcomes (with short training, and payment triggered after 6 months job retention) which encourages “creaming” and no service for “hard-to-serve” clients - those with multiple or significant barriers that require longer-term, comprehensive interventions are denied access to programs.
- Hesitation on the part of the private sector to be doing business with the non-profit sector, being suspicious of the capacity of this sector to meet the bottom line
- Human resource issues in the CED sector (inability to maintain trained staff because of uncertain and short funding contracts)

### **4. Community wide barriers:**

- High levels of unemployment
- Weak job market
- Diminished local employer base meaning jobs leave the community
- Few opportunities for sustainable, quality employment in the area
- Reliance on government income support, entrenched poverty and few comprehensive, targeted solutions.
- Lower than average levels of education
- High cost of doing business in remote areas, difficulty reaching the market or supports
- Poor infrastructure.
- Seasonal nature of work or work affected by extreme weather conditions
- Insufficient affordable housing and poorly maintained housing stock

Evidence shows the journey out of poverty is long, arduous and very rarely linear. Successful approaches to assist individuals out of poverty must address a broad range of complex and interrelated challenges through a comprehensive, sustained approach.

Place-based CED strategies, such as those employed by our partners are effective due to their connections within the local community, and their ability to tailor services and supports to the needs of the individuals and the local labour market, while often solving issues of access and fragmented support systems. Community-based organizations are adept at leveraging a variety of resources to achieve broader impacts while meeting individual contract outcomes, however, program requirements fail to allow for changes in client circumstances, or see the importance of sustained supports and longer-term approaches to success.

Clear from the list of barriers identified above, the process of evaluating impacts also reveals the need for many policy and program changes in order to increase our effectiveness. The place-based CED approach works, but some changes to policies and programs would facilitate a major scaling up of this

work leading to a corresponding reduction in poverty in some of Canada's most challenged communities.

## ***Conclusions from Learning Network Discussions***

The presentations and facilitated discussions of the Peer Learning Network process provided valuable input into the project, greatly increasing the breadth of experience and the level of knowledge on issues, such as the pros and cons of various data collection approaches to measure poverty reduction

Most significant, and the natural outcomes of the overall process, were the conclusions and recommendations that resulted from the discussion of policy issues that are barriers to poverty reduction.

A common element within the policies and program barriers to poverty reduction encountered by community-based organizations is that they are primarily individual-based as opposed to community or place-based. Research shows that poverty tends to be localized. However, most labour market and human capital development policies are designed around individual circumstances and are primarily single-issue supports, rather than focusing on broader, cross cutting issues that attempt to address the multiple, compounding factors that result in "poverty traps"

Due to the single-issue focus, individual-based policies essentially transform people in need of services into a commodity used to measure outcomes against narrowly defined program targets, rather than partners with firsthand knowledge and valuable input into the challenges they face within their neighbourhoods. This "commodity effect" of single-issue policies also acts as a disincentive for inter-agency cooperation, and the development of innovative strategies tailored to take advantage of local assets and address local challenges.

Finally, the single-issue focus of individual-based policies discourages horizontal integration of policies, which makes it difficult for organizations to effectively engage a diverse range of local stakeholders and combine the various program options needed to offer and sustain the comprehensive strategies and range of services.

In short, with the current policies and programs, those in our communities that require help most are least likely to receive it.

For example, EI benefit levels and eligibility vary slightly based on designated "economic regions" but the regions are far too large to reflect significant differences within communities, and are skewed by surrounding labour market conditions.

Most of the policy priorities identified by the Learning Network grow out of the above listed challenges and barriers to poverty reduction that they and the partner organizations identified.

There were also several recommendations that applied specifically to the sector. These involved the sector setting its own goals and targets for poverty reduction as well the need for consensus about measurement and evaluation frameworks so that we are defining measurement for ourselves in a consistent way, based on community priorities rather than the priorities of funders. It was suggested that a series of grass-roots consultations in low-income communities could provide a mechanism for establishing appropriate goals and frameworks.

## ***Salience in Literature***

The annotated bibliography and a literature review of key relevant articles on place-based approaches to poverty reduction are included in the project toolbox.

The literature in the Place-Based Poverty Reduction annotated bibliography is very supportive of CED as an effective strategy to reducing poverty. Predominately, authors have written about the strength of CED in seeing the complexities of poverty and modelling its efforts to holistically address the issue. CED



looks at individual, family, and community levels, the effects of legislation and public policy such as taxation and social program designs, the barriers within local and regional economies, the cultural face and voice of poverty, access to continuing and appropriate education, etc. Papers, such as the Caledon Institute of Social Policy's "Learning and Evaluation for Poverty Reduction", examine the effectiveness of CED in engaging those who are marginalized within our economy by not passing judgement but remaining open to learn from people in poverty and to continue evaluation of anti-poverty efforts.

Many of the articles, books, and web pages indicate the importance of place-based approaches to poverty reduction work. 'Place', or in other words neighbourhood, community, or municipality, has significant bearing on the quality of an individual's life. Place reflects and, in turn, influences the character and conditions of life of its community members. Place is integral to all facets in the identity of a population, containing the infrastructure, facilities, employment, and goods and services that constitute the social determinants of health. In creating place-based initiatives CED modifies its approaches to be more sensitive to the needs of the community, identifying the assets and shortfalls in community resources. At the same time, a manageable parameter is set for poverty reduction efforts, making these efforts more possible to measure.

## ***Policy Recommendations***

As CED organizations come up against the barriers and challenges involved in poverty reduction work in their local communities, it quickly becomes apparent that many of these obstacles arise from a policy environment that is often not supportive of this work. Governments at all levels are increasingly creating targets and developing strategies to reduce poverty, but it is clear that there are currently many policies that hinder community-driven approaches to poverty reduction.

As well as naming the barriers and challenges in this work, it was important for the partner organizations and the peer learning network to identify key policy changes that would create an environment that is supportive of a CED approach to reducing poverty. Most of the policy recommendations they developed grow directly from the challenges and barriers they have identified. During the process it became clear that many of these recommendations had already been prioritized by the CCEDNet membership and were included in recently developed policy frameworks such as the national *Communities Agenda* or similar provincial frameworks like the *Ontario Communities Agenda*. Others were the same as those coming out of CCEDNet's Human Capital Development Subcommittee in the draft report *Improving Human Capital Development Policies and Programs and Strengthening the Labour Market in Canada*. The fact that these recommendations coincide with others being proposed throughout the network heightens their importance to practitioners across the country.

What is also very gratifying is that several of these recommendations coincide with those in the recent House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HUMA) publication *Employability in Canada*

### **Policies addressing barriers faced by CED organizations in service delivery**

**Shift labour development policy to concentrate on reducing poverty and social exclusion and increase support for community-driven human capital development initiatives:**

- Recognize local CED organizations as full partners in the labour force development system by consulting them on a regular basis.
- Support CED approaches to human capital development by providing training opportunities for welfare-to-work officials with regard to community strategies for labour force development.
- Increase core funding and ensure ongoing financial support is stable and fair to cover operational and administrative overhead costs.
- Provide longer-term funding and adopt performance-based contracting“ with negotiated staged performance outcomes that are appropriate for “hard-to-serve” clients.
- Support efforts to build multi-sectoral networks focused on labour force development.

- Coordinate and integrate all government labour force development programs among all three levels of government and across departments designed to provide flexible programming based on local needs, support effective and efficient collaborative approaches and end “cookie cutter” template services and single issue government funded program silos

**Recognize CED and social enterprise development as an effective strategy for poverty reduction and a pathway to self sufficiency for people in poverty by creating an enabling environment for co-operative and social enterprise growth**

- Invest in a long-term patient capital social enterprise loan fund that is accountable to community organizations
- Create a program to support the development and strengthening of co-ops and social enterprises that would include funds for capacity building grants including start-up and technical assistance
- Implement federal and provincial CED Tax Credits to facilitate investment in CED funds operated by local non-profit corporations
- Support local procurement policies. that purchase contracts, goods, and services offered locally so that tax dollars reverberate locally instead of flowing away.
- Create a national action plan on homelessness developed by all three levels of government with input from community organizations to identify root causes and implement effective solutions.
- Generate a comprehensive Social Housing Spending Program for low-income Canadians renewing and extending the Homelessness Partnering Strategy and Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for five years to help create sufficient affordable housing, with a priority for non-profit housing units being developed by community and co-operative organizations working closest to the homeless, the aged and other vulnerable people who are in need of housing.

#### **Policies that address the barriers faced by low income individuals**

- Shift national and provincial tax structures to benefit low-income Canadians so those in poverty receive tax relief and are able to build assets, savings, and the capacity to escape the poverty trap.
- Immediately increase the minimum wage in all provinces to address low wage rates that do not provide a sustainable living wage.
- Increase social service payments to at least the LICO level in all provinces and index assistance rates to decrease the widening income gap
- Reform Federal Child Benefits, EI, and Pension programs so they provide better income support for low-income Canadians.
- Adjust eligibility criteria and broaden access to government human capital development services such as E.I. and provincial social assistance and disability programs.
- Re-engineer social programs to provide incentives for people to transition to sustainable employment removing the “shortest route to employment” approach, penalties for part-time employment and the requirement to liquidate any assets which recycle people back onto social assistance and keep them in poverty.

#### **Invest in children**

- Develop a national universal childcare policy.
- Increase provincial support for non-profit and co-operative childcare centres.

#### **Give newcomers the tools to contribute**

- Improve accreditation for foreign-trained professionals which will also address skills shortages.
- Ensure funding for Adult ESL includes all classroom costs.
- Support the expansion of public transportation systems in urban and rural communities.
- Expand support of the CAP program to increase access for community based computer and/or internet.

- Develop labour force transition funds and Contribute to the organizing and financing of skills development partnership funds to provide access to training for those ineligible for funded programs and to ameliorate the high cost of tuition and educational program supplies.

### ***Reflection on What Could Be Achieved if Barriers are Removed***

Partner organizations reflected on what could be achieved if these recommendations were implemented and some of the current barriers were removed. There were several thoughts related to specific issues and then some more general reflections.

If ***Restrictions to Earned Income*** for individuals receiving Income Assistance or recipients of a Disability Income were removed many more of those individual could earn or generate a more sustainable income. Even those whose maximum potential is to participate on a part-time basis, with the proper support and training, could make a positive contribution to their own support and to their communities.

If ***Barriers to Learning Opportunities*** were removed the often multi-generational cycle of those currently destined to lives of low-skilled, low-paid work could be overcome

If ***Rural Businesses were Supported to Remain Competitive***, rural communities could remain vibrant and healthy, stemming the tide of migration to the urban areas. In this global economy where competition is now worldwide, affordable access to training to promote improvement and innovation is essential. Otherwise the country will be comprised of a handful of large, unmanageable urban centers and a vast interior of unproductive and isolated rural communities

If ***CED Organizations were made Sustainable with Core Funding*** we could have far greater impact on helping to create healthy and vibrant communities supporting social justice, the environment and community development. We would be able to focus on the needs of those individuals or groups who have been disregarded or excluded by the public and private sectors. Currently the non-profit sector is kept very busy chasing projects that do not contribute to their long-term sustainability. This creates an environment that encourages competition rather than collaboration between organizations and between the private and public sectors. It is a system that limits the community sector to cookie-cutter solutions and severely restricts innovation.

If ***CED Organizations had Sufficient Resources*** we could begin to really meet the increasing needs of the individuals and communities we work with.

If ***the Policy Environment Supported Community approaches to Poverty Reduction*** CED organizations could scale up the work we are doing and our impacts would be multiplied many times over.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The case studies of our four partners in this initiative all demonstrate the potential of community-based approaches in poverty alleviation. All partners worked with client groups characterized by weak attachment to the labour market, low education levels, lacking many of the “hard” and “soft” skills required to acquire and maintain employment or self employment and facing many social barriers. These clients all lived on income well below established “poverty” levels. Responding to an approach that recognized local conditions and combined services and supports based on individual assets, goals and circumstances, these clients were successful in securing employment or developing their own businesses. They increased the assets they need to successfully generate income and lift themselves out of poverty and began that process.

This report has described a range of CED approaches to poverty reduction in diverse communities across Canada and has shown several concrete impact evaluation approaches that demonstrate specific numerical poverty related results for particular groups of participants. It has identified challenges and barriers in evaluating poverty reduction and, more significantly, on our work of reducing poverty. These challenges have given rise to proposals of policy directions which would increase the effectiveness of this CED approach and would facilitate scaling its ability to reduce poverty in communities.

While these policy and program barriers remain significant challenges, community economic development organizations have provided numerous examples of how the sector has developed and implemented innovative and effective strategies for community-based poverty reduction and how they are uniquely positioned to provide the balance and flexibility of both people and place-based approaches to assist individuals and their communities in lifting themselves out of poverty.

Community organizations continue to look for ways to better evaluate and demonstrate the real social and economic value and impact of their work in a way that government, funders and the public will understand. This project provides case studies and tools that other organizations can use in their poverty reduction work and more specifically, in demonstrating the impacts of that work in numerical terms. In putting this quantitative data alongside the more qualitative information collected we are better able to tell the real story of our successes and challenges.

The Canadian CED Network’s Place-based Poverty Reduction initiative provides the evidence that governments and other potential investors need to see that CED place-based approaches are effective in reducing poverty and that this approach needs to be one of the key components in any poverty reduction strategy. It also shows how, by making some key policy changes and increasing support, CED organizations could do much more, the work could be scaled up and the results multiplied to have a major impact on reducing poverty.

# APPENDICES

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## ***APPENDIX 1***

### **Learning Network Participants**

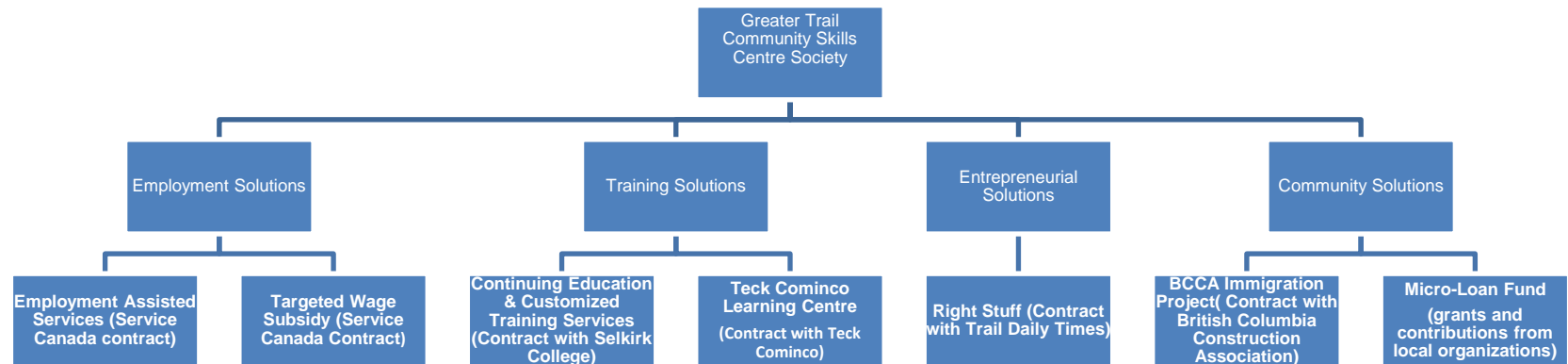
- Learning Enrichment Foundation, Toronto, ON
- Greater Trail Community Skills Centre, Trail, BC
- PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise, Thunder Bay, ON
- ÉCOF, Trois-Rivières, QC
- Storytellers' Foundation, Hazelton, BC
- Momentum, Calgary, AB
- SEED Winnipeg, MB
- Edmonton Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, AB
- Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute, Manitoulin Island, ON
- Northern Initiatives for Social Action, Sudbury, ON
- Affirmative Industries Association of Nova Scotia, Dartmouth, NS
- TEKDesk/ COIN, Peterborough, ON
- Aboriginal Mother Centre Society, Vancouver, BC
- Community Services, City of Edmonton
- CCEDNet Policy Council
- CCEDNet Practitioner & Sector Strengthening Committee
- CCEDNet Research Committee
- Algoma University College's Community Economic and Social Development Program/NORDIK Research Institute
- Somerset West Community Health Centre, Ottawa, ON

### Online PBPR Toolbox Inventory

This toolbox of online resources for communities to use in measuring, planning, developing and implementing effective place-based poverty reduction initiatives has been integrated into the Canadian CED Network's existing on-line searchable toolbox. The specific tools added through this process are included in the inventory below.

- Literature Review on Place Based Poverty Reduction
- Annotated Bibliography on Place Based Poverty Reduction
- Logic Models of four partner organizations
- Organizational profiles of partner organizations (from Report)
- Impact Tracking Process Descriptions (from Report)
  - Trail CSC
  - PARO
  - LEF
  - ÉCOF
- Forms used by Trail CSC Right Stuff for data collection
  - Application for Employment & Employability Skills
  - Interview Questions -Collator
  - New Hire Check List
  - Collator Employment Agreement
  - Exit Interview
- Summary Information on two additional social enterprises using Sustainable Livelihoods and Social Return On Investment (SROI) measurements
- Personal profiles of impacted participants -“Testaments” on how lives changed from participants with each partner organization
- Additional reports from partner organizations on measuring social impacts
  - Learning Enrichment Foundation -Measuring Social Impacts, CEDTAP
  - PARO-Measuring Social Impacts, CEDTAP
  - ÉCOF- CDÉC de Trois-Rivières: A Case Study *by* William Ninacs, with the collaboration of Francine Gareau , Caledon Institute, 2003
- Summary of Learning Network Teleconferences

## Logic Model for Greater Trail Community Skills Centre



## Logic Model for Employment Services

### Goal

Working with the unemployed, the under-employed and employers to help people secure work and reduce poverty.

### Components

Employment Assisted Services

Regional Targeted Wage Subsidy

### Implementation Objectives

To deliver Employment Assisted Services to unemployed persons in the Greater Trail area, including the Trades and Technical Information Centre; which serves unemployed clients in the West Kootenay/Boundary region.

To enhance the skills and work experience of unemployed individuals in the West Kootenay region through the delivery of the wage subsidy program throughout the service area.

### Short Term Outcomes

#### Self-Service Activities

- Initial determination of client needs and referral to appropriate services for walk in or phone in clients
- Career Station services, which support self-directed job search and career planning skills
- Website provides a range of resources to support a self-directed job search

- Assist individuals in identifying experiences, skills and abilities needed to match to possible wage subsidy placements.
- Assist employers to identify work place opportunities appropriate to the needs of the clients and the wage subsidy program.
- Coordinate the delivery of the program in Nelson and Castlegar.

### Medium Term Outcomes

#### Assisted Services

- Needs Assessment Interview
- Employment Counselling
- Specialized services for multi-barrier clients
- Assistance to clients for other forms of intervention
- Employment Readiness workshops
- Trades and Technical Information and guidance

- Provide on-the-job work experience for eligible individuals
- Provide wage subsidies to enable employers to hire individuals they may not otherwise hire
- Monitor and support the work agreements for both the employee and the employer

### Long Term Outcomes

The services are designed to be client centred and provide a continuum of service for those with employment needs by helping them prepare for, obtain and maintain employment

Facilitate quality employment opportunities for clients seeking career-oriented employment, including the trades and technologies as well as work for clients with a variety of barriers to employment.



## Logic Model for Training Solutions

### Goal

The role of the Skills Centre is to understand, identify and find solutions to local and regional training needs and then work closely with training providers to make training as accessible and affordable as possible.

### Components

Continued Education & Customized Training Services (Partnership with Selkirk College)

Teck Cominco Learning Centre (Service Contract with Teck Cominco)

### Implementation Objectives

Provide the collaborative delivery, between the Skills Centre and Selkirk College, of educational services to adult learners in the Greater Trail area.

The Skills Centre will provide the services to enhance the learning culture and skills of the Teck Cominco Trail operations workforce.

### Short Term Outcomes

- Assist employers with the development of training plans and brokering of training activities.
- Manage the College's part-time learning responsibilities

- Delivery of a diverse range of learning opportunities that respond to identified needs.
- Provide on-site operational coordination for learning by a qualified and experienced workplace learning coordinator.
- Accommodate the learning with the complexities of the shift work environment.

### Medium Term Outcomes

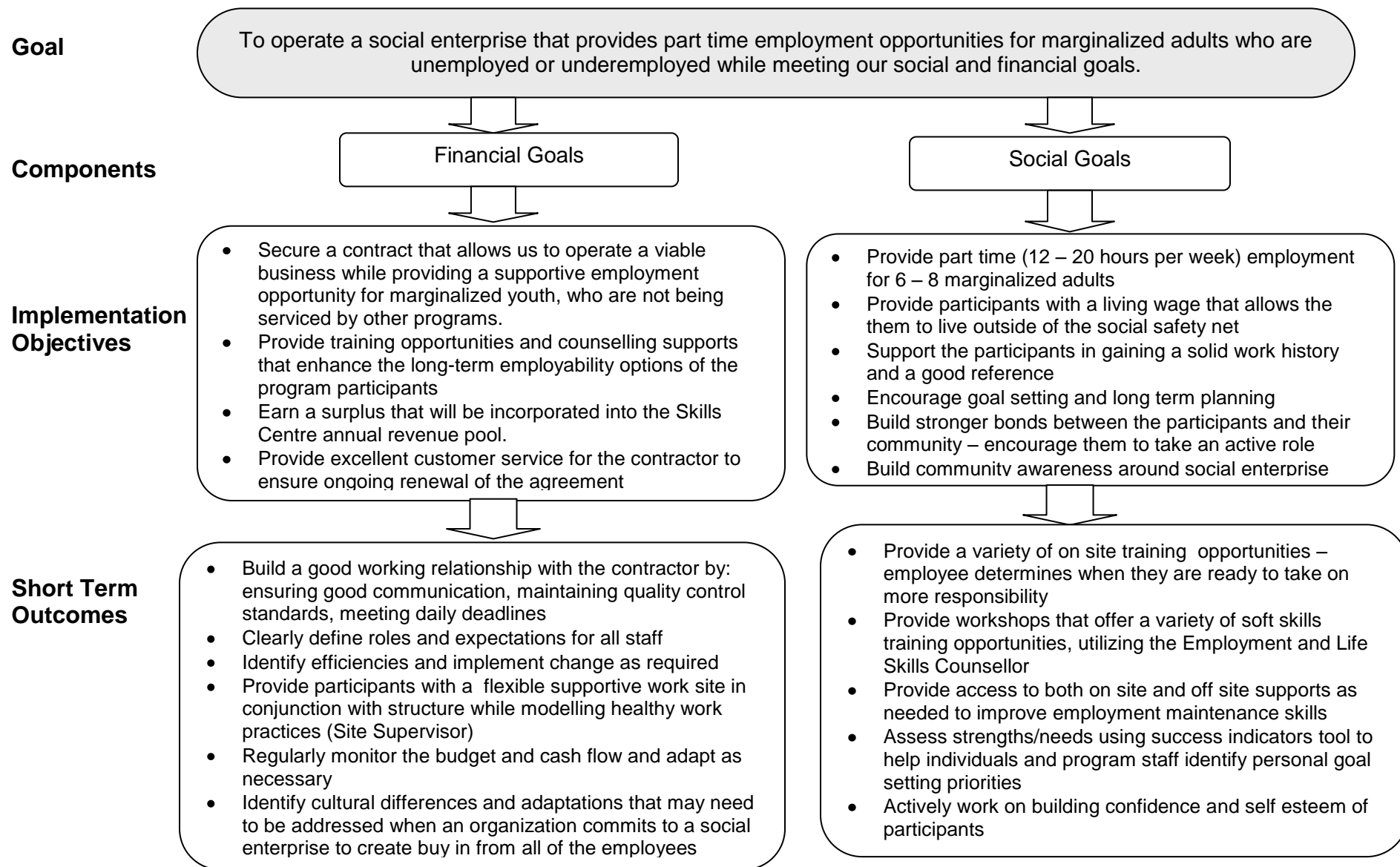
- Develop opportunities for post secondary services to be delivered in Greater Trail.
- The Skills Centre and Selkirk College will work together on the development of programs and services which promote and enhance apprenticeship and industry trades training.

- Proactively encourage individuals to identify learning needs and pursue a variety of learning paths.
- The coordinator will work with the REAL committee to identify long term needs and gaps in learning opportunities.

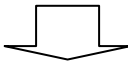

### Long Term Outcomes



A wide variety of both scheduled and customized training is offered in the area that provides quality instruction, quick response time, shift-friendly scheduling and the co-ordination of workplace learning strategies with individual needs.

## Logic Model for the Right Stuff



## Medium Term Outcomes

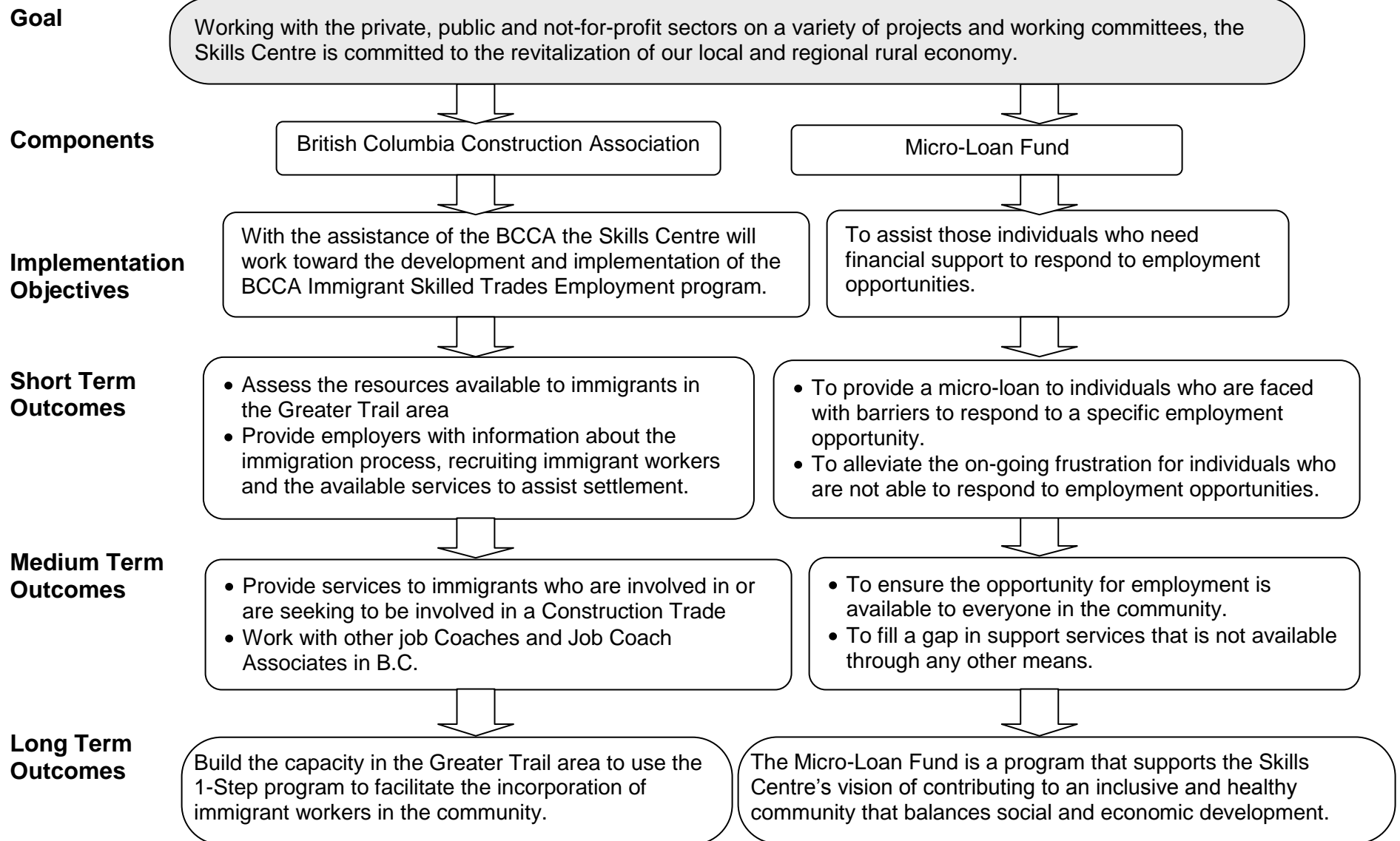
- 
- Provide team volunteer opportunities that promote engagement in community events and facilitate team building
  - Continue to modify/monitor the program and make adjustments as needed to best meet the needs of the business and the participants
  - Build a stable work team – determine balance of marginalized workers to typical workers
  - Continue to monitor the cash flow and budget – make any necessary adjustments
  - Provide cross training opportunities for as many on site responsibilities as possible to ensure the business is not reliant on any one person – build capacity for both the business and the individual
  - Operate a safe worksite – have some staff take Work Safe BC courses and represent the Right Stuff on the Health and Safety Committee
- 

- 
- Continue to assess strengths/needs using the success indicators tool every 3 - 4 months and track individuals progress
  - Provide training/counselling opportunities where required to increase skill level
  - Identify professional development interests of participants and fund or supplement funding for relevant training
  - Support participants in obtaining supplementary employment to augment their earning power, enabling them to meet their financial commitments – provide coaching on strategies for sound financial management
  - Encourage participants to take on more day to day responsibility on site as their skill level increases – build capacity both for the individual and the business
  - Participants develop stronger life skills and are able to move forward building a sustainable lifestyle.
- 

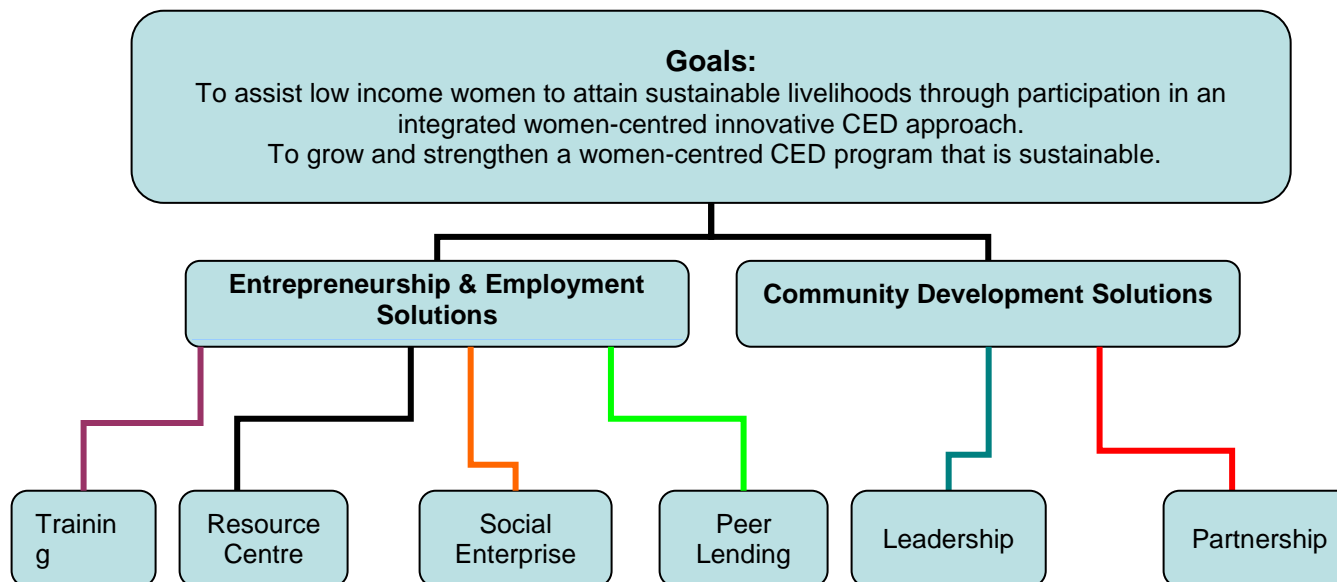
## Long Term Outcomes

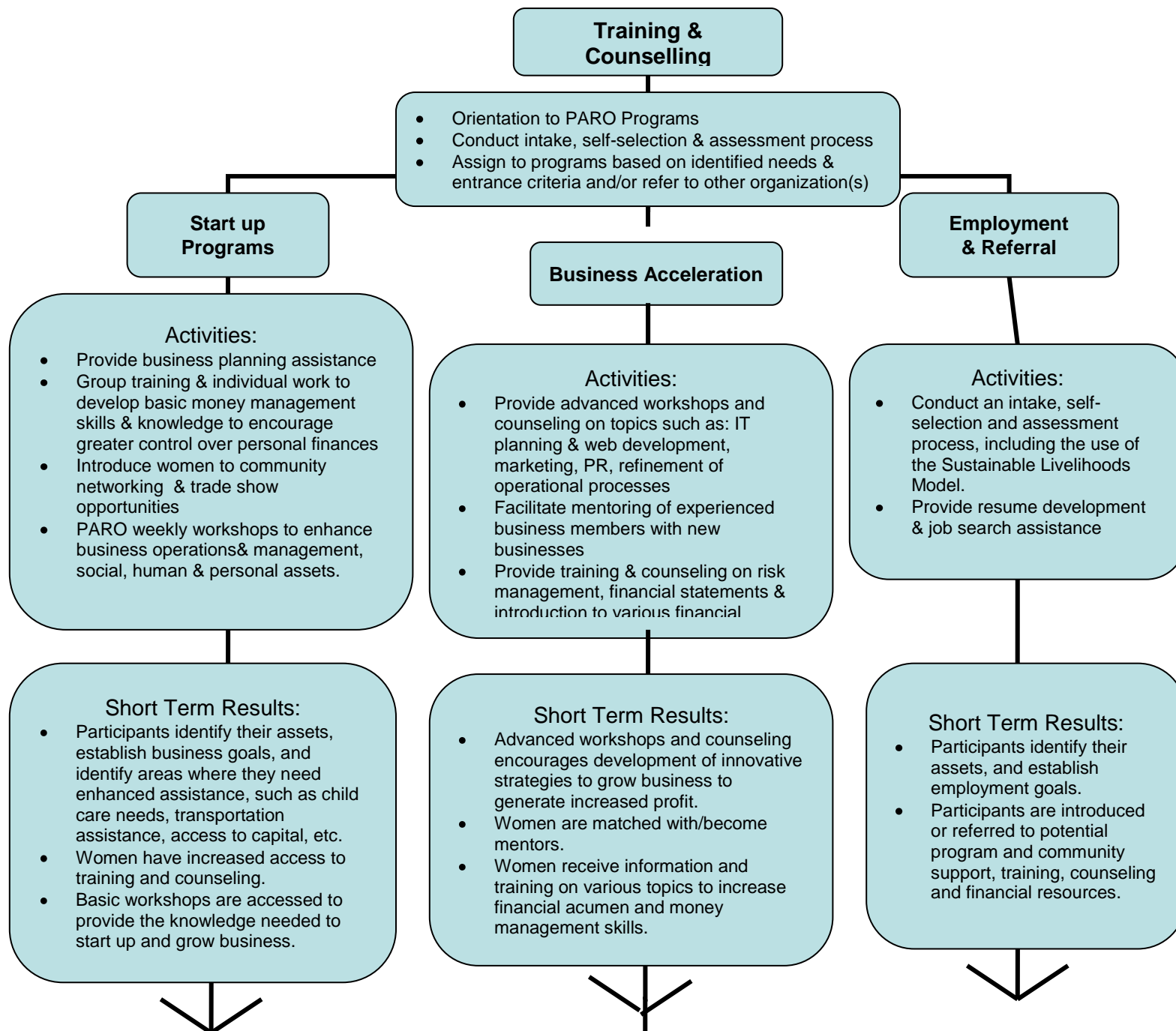
The Right Stuff continues to successfully renegotiate our contract with the customer, allowing us to provide employment for individuals, while meeting our social and financial goals: many participants successfully move through the program and on to further education or long term sustainable employment, the Right Stuff provides surplus funds to the Skills Centre contributing to the long term sustainability of the organization.

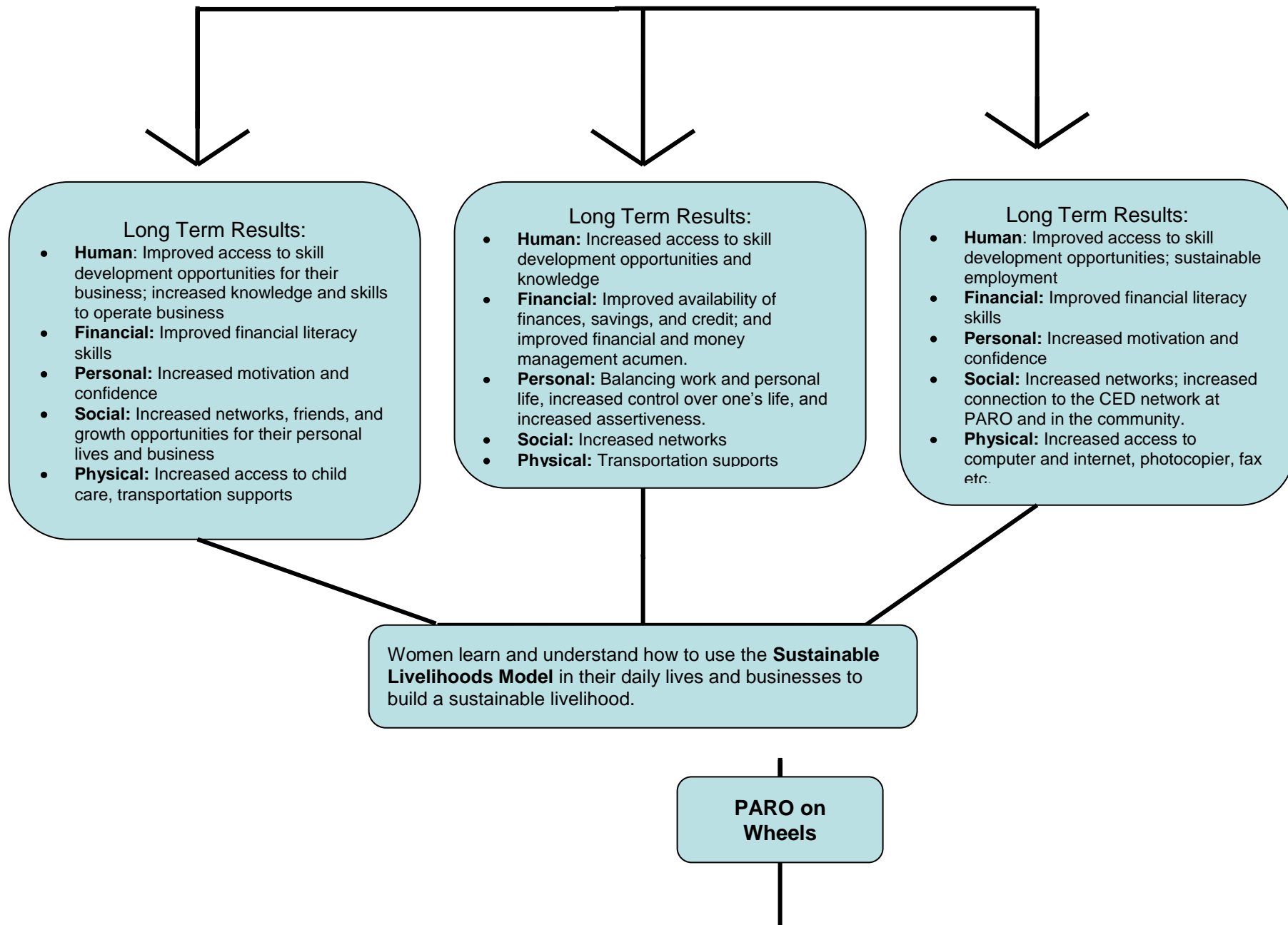
## Logic Model for Community Solutions



## PARO Centre for Women's Enterprise Logic Model







## Resource Centre

- Access to equipment, office space, and resource library; transportation; “Fashion Swap” clothing exchange and “Emergency Food Cupboard”

### PARO Centre

#### Resource Library & Computer Centre

##### Activities:

- Provide resource library and computer centre for women to access information and equipment.
- Access to items such as projectors, display boards, binding, laminating, paper cutting, and other occasional use supplies
- Provide a nurturing environment

##### Short Term Results:

- Participants have use of the resource and training centre which includes a resource library, computer/printing area with high speed internet access, and fax and photocopier equipment.
- Increased access to information

##### Long Term Results:

- **Physical:** Increased access to equipment, food, clothing
- **Human:** Increased access to information
- **Social:** Increased network and social support
- **Financial:** Decreased costs to operate business

#### Incubator

##### Activities:

- Provide a business incubator for women to access office space, equipment, and supplies.
- Provide a nurturing environment

##### Short Term Results:

- Participants rent space in the incubator at an affordable rate.
- Participants access office equipment and internet services, and information.

##### Long Term Results:

- **Physical:** Access to space & equipment to operate business; increased access to food, clothing
- **Human:** Increased access to information
- **Social:** Increased networks & business referrals
- **Financial:** Decreased costs to operate business

##### Activities:

- Regularly scheduled visits to communities East and West of Thunder Bay
- Various projects travel with the PARO on Wheels van to deliver business development / employment programs to women in Northern Ontario.

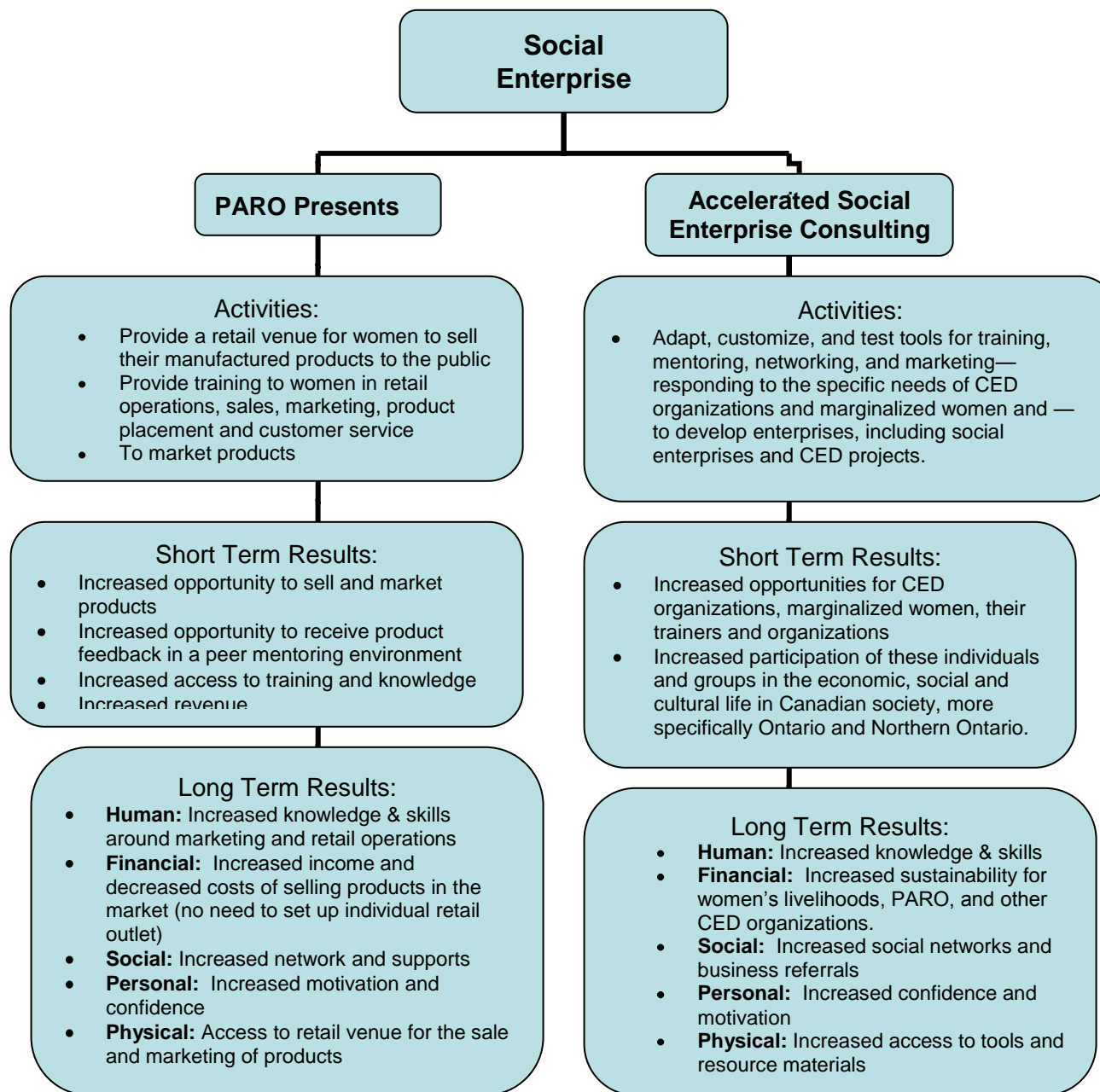
##### Short Term Results:

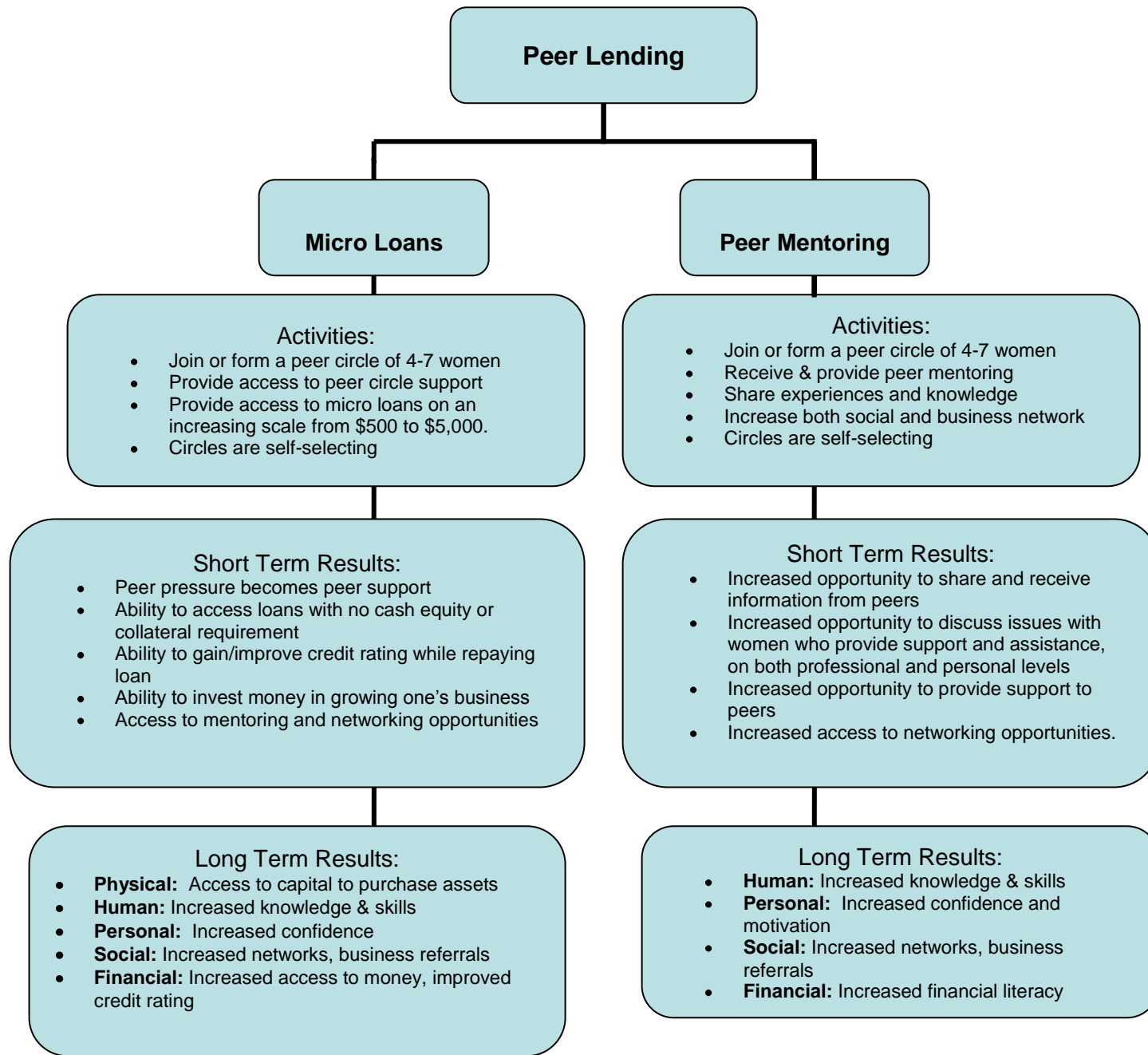
- Women in Northern Ontario have increased/improved access to business/employment programs and supports despite geographic barriers.

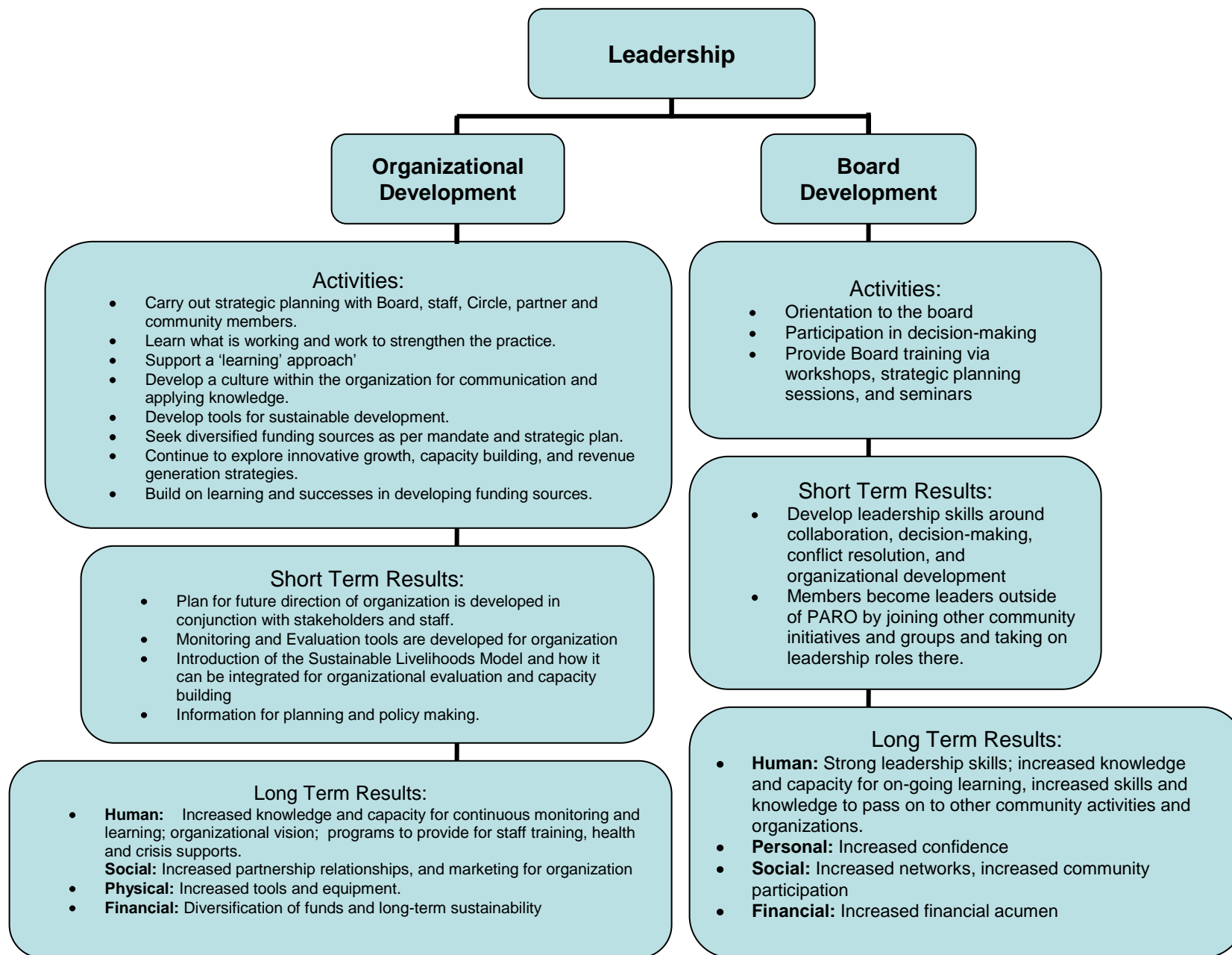
##### Long Term Results:

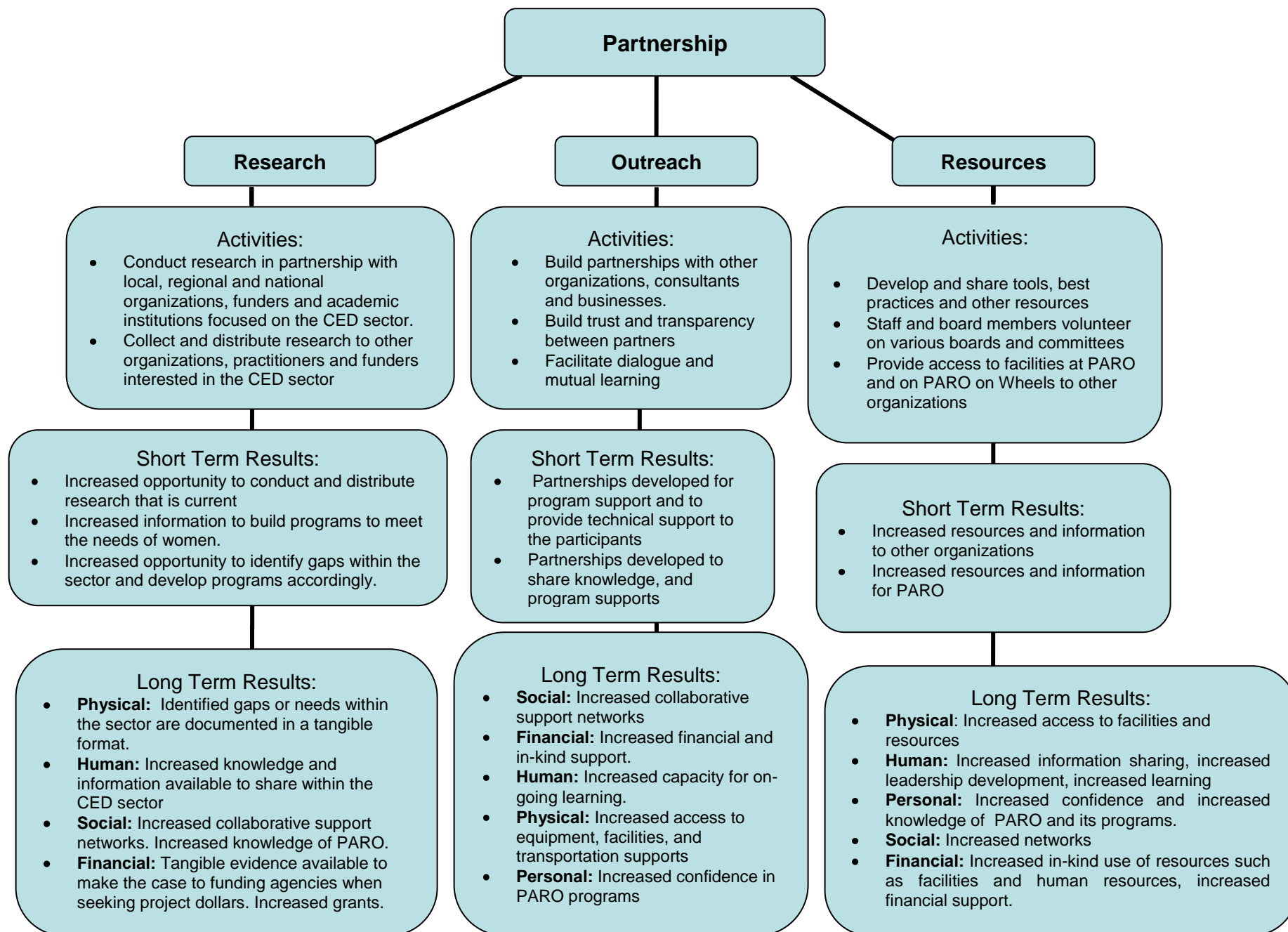
- **Physical:** Access to traveling resource centre (PARO van) including computers.
- **Human:** Increased knowledge & skills
- **Personal:** Increased motivation and confidence
- **Social:** Increased networks
- **Financial:** Improved financial literacy



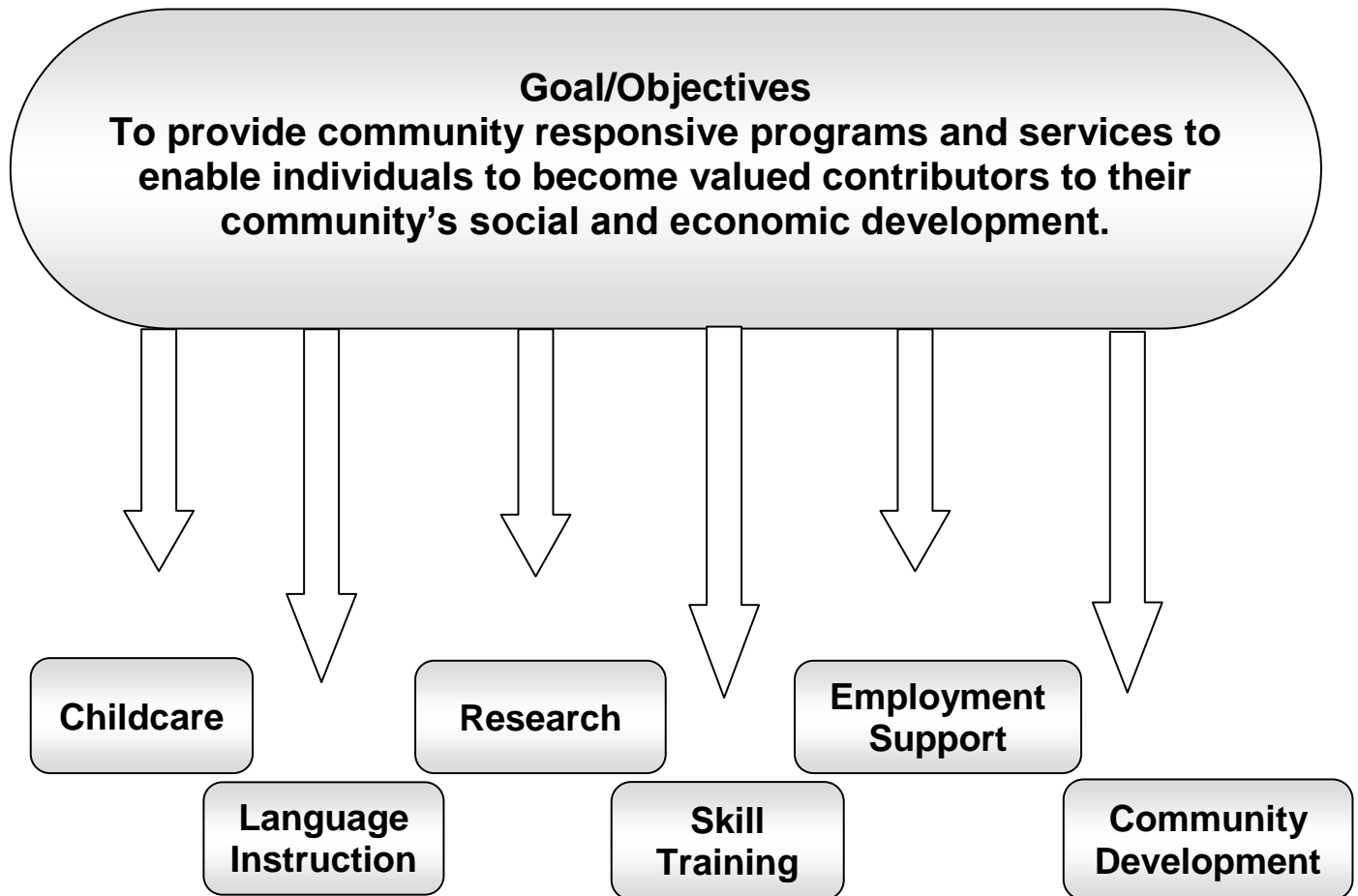








## Logic Model for the Learning Enrichment Foundation (LEF)



## Childcare

### Process/Activities

- Complete government/funding applications
- Obtain a license for each centre from the Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Obtain a Purchase of Service Agreement with Toronto Children Services (to provide subsidized spaces for families who are unable to pay full fees)
- Receive and maintain subsidies and fees
- Maintain continuous open registration
- Collect registration forms from parents
- Manage and operate:
  - 18 daycare centres
  - 16 Before and After school programs
  - 1 LINC childminding program/centre
- Follow specific procedures and policies set by the Toronto Children Services, Children's Aid Society, and LEF
- Create programs and curriculum for various age groups
- Plan and distribute meals for centres
- Maintain optimum enrolment and staffing
- Integrate other LEF and community services when and where appropriate

### Outputs

Provided high quality, accessible childcare programs for over 650 children (daily)

Provided before and after school programs for over 400 children (daily)

Delivered thousands of meals to children (daily)

6-8 Activities per age group per centre daily

### Short Term Outcomes

Healthy children within the community/ neighbourhood

Improved family life of children and families (Parent relief, increased options to employment)

Access to integrated systems of prevention and early intervention services

Pre-school children are ready and eager to learn in preparation for Grade 1 (School readiness)

### Long Term Outcomes

Improved social and economic outcomes for children and families

Increased thinking skills, social skills, problem-solving skills, confidence, creativity, and self-expression for children

## Language Instruction

- Complete Citizenship and Immigration Canada (C.I.C) applications
- Follow C.I.C procedures and requirements
- Hire Certified TESL Instructors
- Hire Certified LINC Child minders
- Maintain continuous open registration
- Maintain community outreach (weekly)
- Provide LINC courses (Levels 1 through 8) set by Canadian Language Benchmarks
- Provide general literacy and basic skills classes to support clients in other programs
- Maintain optimum staffing, registration, and enrollment
- Write lesson plan reports (monthly)
- Write evaluation reports, based on:
  - -registration and enrollment statistics
  - -accounting figures
  - -instructors' reflections
  - -child minding attendance (monthly)
- Participate in steering committee for LINC child minding conference @ LEF
- Integrate other LEF and community services when and where appropriate, i.e. LINC child minding

### Outputs

1-2 LINC Courses per Level per year (229 days/course)  
Taught English to over 500 recent immigrants and addressed their settlement and employment needs

- Offered literacy classes to over 50 clients in other programs
- # LINC learners completed Level (1-8)

- # LINC learners passed the CLB test
- Offered TOEFL classes to over 100 students in cooperation with the Toronto Catholic School Board

# Children enrolled in the LINC child minding program

### Short Term Outcomes

- Improved literacy and language skills in oral and written communication
- Increased knowledge of life in Canada and of Canadian civics

- Certification for LINC learners and clients
- Additional support services met the needs of clients acquiring language training (i.e. LINC childminding)

- Increased and improved transition to other LEF services and programs
- Ongoing learning

### Long Term Outcomes

- Improved attitude toward self and society for clients
- Successful integration (social and economic) into Canadian society

- Positive social inclusion (social and human capital)
- Increased opportunities to contribute to and receive from society

## Research

- Write and complete research proposals
- Join and collaborate with networks, i.e. CCEDNET
- Review literature on place-based community- driven methods and approaches to:
  - community economic development
  - poverty reduction
  - non-profit service and program delivery
- Develop and implement qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze data to assess and evaluate:
  - organization and community needs and issues
  - service and program impacts and outcomes
- Develop computer capacity to store, analyze, report, and track data and outcomes

## Outputs

Submitted # research proposals  
Reviewed and applied recommended community based “best-practices”

Analyzed service and program delivery impacts on individuals and community

Collected staff and client feedback on services and programs, and personal and local needs and issues

Greater understanding of policy barriers and opportunities, and advocacy

## Short Term Outcomes

Increased awareness and knowledge of “best practices”

- Enhanced service/program design and delivery
- Stronger client-staff relationships

- In depth knowledge of community issues and trends
- Stakeholder engagement and expanded

## Long Term Outcomes

- Increased organization and community capacity
- Ongoing assessments and evaluations of service delivery and practices
- Community driven and responsive services and programs

- Strong collaborative partnerships and networks
- Increased government awareness of LEF and local needs and issues
- Effective policy advocacy and change



## Skills Training

- Complete application processes for Training funding
- Hire appropriate staff
- Maintain necessary trainer certifications
- Acquire training materials and equipment
- Recruit trainees/ Maintain continuous intake of trainees
- Establish and implement referral and assessment process for each course
- Conduct research and develop targeted training programs in partnership with staff, employers, and clients
- Maintain ongoing program evaluation

### Outputs

#### 6 skills training programs:

- Cooks training,
- Industrial skills training
- ECA training
- Project management training
- Construction training
- CAP training

- Trained 300 unemployed persons identified by employers (/year)
- Trained # youth interested in entrepreneurship (/year)

- Supported # skill seekers who were unable to find funding and support for training from another source
- # Trainees registered:
- Per year:
- Per training course

### Short Term Outcomes

- Improved attitude toward self and society for clients
- Increased basic skills and life skills

- Graduates acquire occupation-specific skills
- Improved labour market outcomes for graduates

- Graduates obtain practical, hands-on work experience
- Ongoing evaluation / modification of training based on community and labour market

### Long Term Outcomes

- Increased recognition of value of community-based training
- Skilled employees and employers
- Expanded employer partnerships

- Increased knowledge of local labour market
- Increase human capital within community
- Increased opportunities for further education / lifelong learning

## Employment Supports

- Complete funding applications
- Hire appropriate staff
- Provide staffing and business development services to employers
- Continuous intake and assessment of clients
- Provide employment counselling and guidance
- Support job development
- Practice community-based employer outreach strategies
- Collaborate with local employers, businesses, and suppliers
- Organize and attend conferences and job fairs
- Collect, compile, and analyze local labour market information
- Maintain ongoing program evaluation

### Outputs

- Action plans
- Supported over 500 clients in job search

- Provided free recruitment services for over 300 local employers
- Provided ongoing counselling

- Referred clients to local employers
- Uncovered job opportunities

- Arranged job interviews
- Led clients to jobs
- Provided job retention support

### Short Term Outcomes

- Clients obtain skills and tools necessary for successful job search
- Clients improve attitude toward self and society

- Full time employment aligned with career goals
- Employers hire and retain qualified employees

- Clients complete steps identified in employment action plans
- Clients find and maintain sustainable employment

### Long Term Outcomes

- Expanded employer and community partnerships
- Increased knowledge of local labour market
- Reduced unemployment within community

- Reduced income support benefits within community
- Independent living for clients (i.e. salary to rent apartment)
- Increased income, earnings and salary benefits

## Community Development

- Support ongoing community development research and assessment
- Leverage services and programs, build projects
- Engage community stakeholders in identifying and addressing local needs and issues
- Understand the economic, ethnic, social, and educational characteristics of the community – obtain demographic data
- Understand the effects of urbanization on and within the community (transportation systems, communication systems, employment opportunities, population successions, and gentrification)
- Identify target systems for change
- Partner and consult with various stakeholders locally and nationally to support effective community (social and economic) development strategies and practices
- Create training and volunteer opportunities for clients and local residents
- Identify training and job opportunities for clients, local residents, and businesses
- Support and expand Social Service Portal Purchases
- Support local social enterprises
- Understand the role of the economic system in our community and the importance of our services and programs to meet the needs of those affected by this system, i.e.
  - -unemployment
  - -plant closings
  - -low-wage jobs
  - -taxes paid by whom

### Outputs

- Attended over 100 community engagement-stakeholder meetings
- Shared job leads with over 300 organizations and welfare offices

- Served over 150 at risk youth referred by schools or the justice system

### Short Term Outcomes

- Expanded and strengthened local partnerships
- Increased community resilience

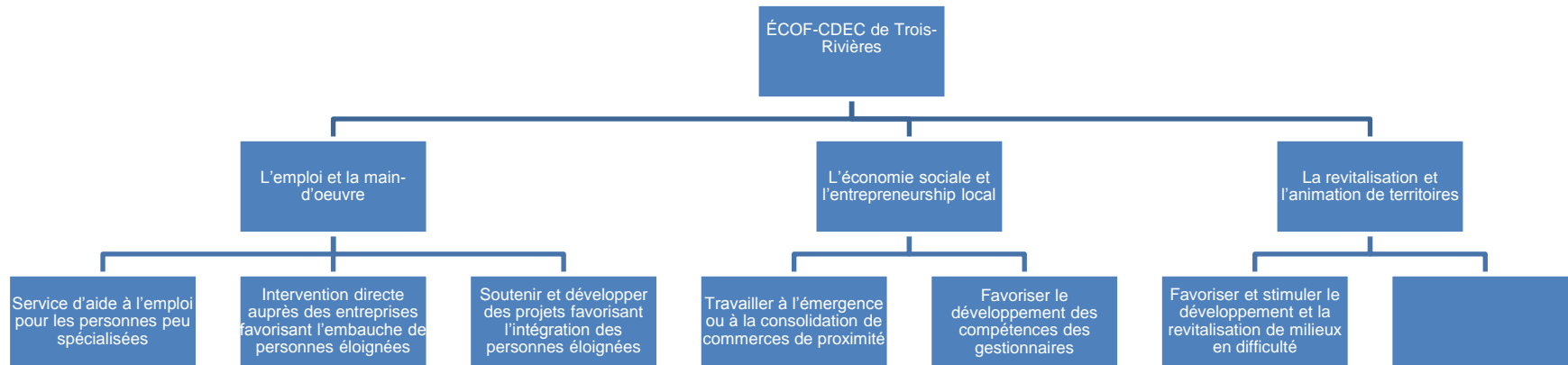
- Inclusive and innovative service/program delivery networks
- Services and programs developed by and for community

### Long Term Outcomes

- Healthy individuals and community
- Systems change
- Policy change
- Positive community mobility and capacity

- Community Economic Development
- Stronger local economy
- Interested investors, increased investments
- Poverty reduction/ alleviation

## Cadre logique- ÉCOF-CDEC de Trois-Rivières



## Cadre logique de l'emploi et de la main d'œuvre

### Goal

Cette orientation vise à favoriser l'Accès au marché du travail pour les personnes, ainsi qu'à positionner la main d'œuvre locale peu spécialisée dans le développement du marché du travail de Trois-Rivières

### Components

Service d'aide à l'emploi pour les personnes peu spécialisées

Intervention directe auprès des entreprises favorisant l'embauche de personnes éloignées

### Implementation Objectives

Accompagner les personnes qui rencontrent des difficultés à intégrer le marché du travail, dans leur processus de mise en action vers l'emploi – Personnes peu scolarisées, âgées de plus de 30 ans et éloignées du marché de l'emploi (2 ans et plus prestataires de l'aide sociale).- Une priorité accordée aux résidents et résidentes des premiers quartiers et autre zones défavorisées de la ville.

Approche d'intermédiation entre les entreprises, les ressources en emploi et la main-d'œuvre peu spécialisée.  
Intervention directe à l'entreprise.  
Approche de prospection .

### Short Term Outcomes

Favoriser l'accès à l'emploi dans des métiers peu spécialisés auprès des personnes rejointes –  
L'intégration dans un emploi régulier, souvent dans des métiers peu spécialisés - retour aux études ou l'intégration d'une formation professionnelle- mise en action des personnes vers des démarches préalables à la consolidation de leur employabilité et compétences sociales (alphabétisation, insertion sociale, insertion par le travail, plateau de travail).

Habiller les gestionnaires d'entreprise en gestion des ressources humaines – sensibiliser et informer les entreprises sur les outils et ressources existantes en lien avec les problématiques de gestion des petites entreprises.  
Susciter une offre d'emploi plus adaptée au profil de la main-d'œuvre locale peu spécialisée.

### Medium Term Outcomes

Offrir aux personnes du soutien tout au long de leur démarche de préparation, de recherche d'emplois, de stages, d'insertion socioprofessionnelle et d'intégration à l'emploi  
Progression entre la démarche individuelle et la démarche de groupe  
Offrir la possibilité de passer à une démarche plus intensive et d'explorer le travail par une période de stage assisté.

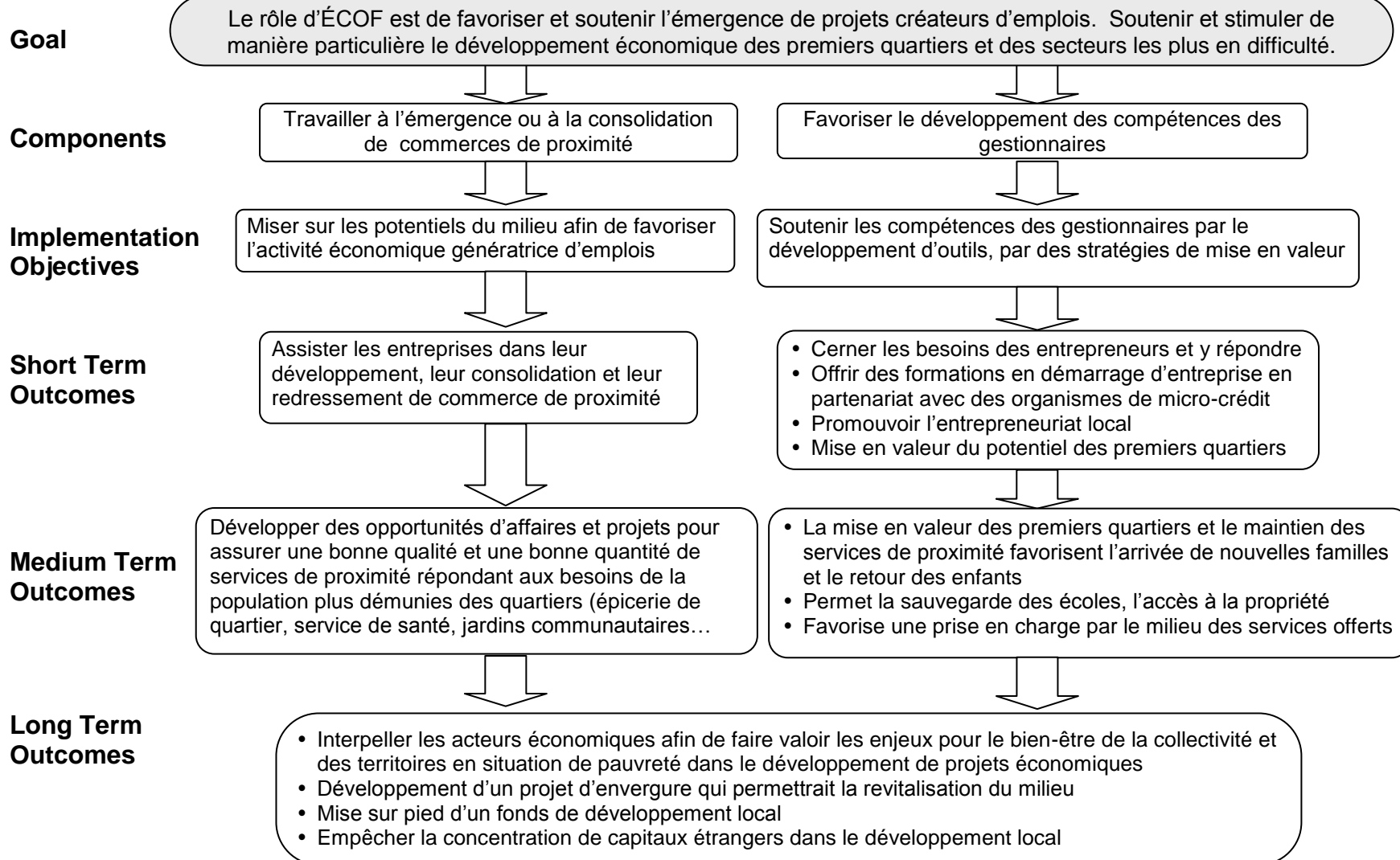
Favoriser un meilleur accès aux emplois pour la main-d'œuvre peu spécialisée.  
Expérimenter une nouvelle approche de concertation entre les entreprises et les ressources en emploi en regard de la gestion de l'offre et la demande d'emploi dans le secteur des métiers peu spécialisés.

### Long Term Outcomes

Offrir aux personnes rejointes de l'accompagnement post participation –  
Établir des passerelles entre les personnes et les ressources communautaires pouvant aider la personne à réduire ses obstacles à l'emploi ;  
Favoriser l'accès aux emplois des personnes par des activités de démarchage auprès des entreprises potentiellement employeur.

Faciliter l'accès à l'emploi et la qualité des emplois pour les personnes plus éloignées du marché de l'emploi; un emploi pour tous!  
Créer des passerelles entre les employeurs et les chercheurs afin de faciliter leur intégration et leur rétention à l'emploi  
Établir un profil des compétences de la main d'œuvre peu scolarisées

## Cadre logique pour l'économie sociale et l'entrepreneuriat local



## Cadre logique pour l'animation et la revitalisation de territoire

### Goal

Améliorer les conditions de vie, la qualité de vie et le cadre de vie des résidents et résidents des quartiers et secteurs spécifiques par un travail de revitalisation sociale et économique du milieu de vie et favoriser la concertation des partenaires du milieu et la participation des citoyens

### Components

Favoriser et stimuler le développement et la revitalisation de milieux en difficulté

### Implementation Objectives

- Soutenir et stimuler les actions concertées qui visent à la revitalisation sociale et économique des communautés, la participation sociale et la vie démocratique
- Soutenir par des activités de concertation et d'animation dans différents secteurs socio communautaires dans les territoires priorités par ÉCOF

### Short Term Outcomes

Soutenir la démarche des premiers quartiers dans la mise en place de projets structurants et de services de proximité qui visent l'amélioration de la qualité de vie des gens (gymnase social, société immobilière communautaire,  
Soutenir le travail de la Table de concertation Adélarde Dugré Jean-Nicolet en s'impliquant dans divers comité de travail contribuant au développement de la vie de quartier et associative (coordination de la distribution alimentaire dans le secteur, implantation de jardins communautaires, implantation du service de location de vélos de quartier

### Medium Term Outcomes

Impliquer davantage les citoyens dans les divers comités et initiatives  
Initier des projets structurants dans la communauté qui ont un impact sur la lutte à la pauvreté (clinique communautaire

### Long Term Outcomes

Projeter un plan de développement des quartiers de manière à intervenir et influencer l'aménagement des territoires  
Travailler des projets liés au développement durable et l'environnement

## **APPENDIX 4**

### ***Personal profiles of impacted participants ("Testaments" on how lives changed)***

#### **THE SKILLS CENTRE**

##### **Samantha's Story**

Samantha had a run of bad luck. She had been in a car accident, which affected her ability to work for a period of time. She also discovered that without a car she had limited access to work opportunities, due to the lack of availability of public transportation in this rural community. Samantha had been taking some training to upgrade her skills, but was not able to meet the required grade standards and was asked to leave the program. In addition, her mother was very ill and Samantha found herself living back at home looking after her younger siblings, who were 2 years and a new born infant.

It was at this point in time Samantha heard about the Right Stuff through a friend and was able to secure part-time employment. Through this opportunity she stabilized her living situation and found a home of her own. Samantha also took advantage of the various training opportunities through the Right Stuff, such as Food Safe, Serving it Right and Occupational First Aid.

Over-time however, the repetitive work of collating flyers was creating physical problems for Samantha and it was on her doctor's advice that she quit her job. Fortunately, at the same time the Right Stuff was looking for a driver to deliver the collated newspapers to the various carrier drop-off locations. Samantha now had her own vehicle and had developed the credibility of being a reliable worker and was therefore offered the driving job. This job involved more hours and an increase in pay. Typically the drivers for the Right Stuff are older individuals because the youth do not have a driver's licence or a vehicle. Samantha is the only collator to date that has moved into a driving position. Since she started driving Samantha has become a mother and one of the benefits of the job is she is been able to bring her baby along with her while she does her route. This benefit allows her to maintain part-time employment as a mother because she does not incur the cost of child care.

As a driver for the Right Stuff Samantha is able to enjoy a much more comfortable lifestyle, and she feels she now has the freedom and flexibility to make choices on how she lives.

##### **Peter's Story**

Peter had been working "under-the-table" since he was 12, doing handy-man type of work, but had never been able to find "real" work until he was hired at the Right Stuff. He is thrilled to be working at the Right Stuff because he is getting regular hours and regular pay; there was a point in time when he felt he would never get a legitimate job. He could have had one job, but decided against working for that particular employer because there are a lot of personal injuries at that work-site.

Before working at the Right Stuff, Peter had a very difficult time leaving his home and dealing with people, now he enjoys getting out and being around people everyday. In fact since he has been at the Right Stuff he has also taken on a second part-time job, has an on-call position for a third job and is still doing some of the handy-man type work.

Peter has pursued the training opportunities offered through the Right Stuff and is now licensed to drive the fork lift and is certified for Occupational First Aid, W.H.M.I.S and Foodsafe. In addition Peter represents the Right Stuff on the Joint Health & Safety Committee for the Skills Centre. Peter is also the Acting Supervisor for the Right Stuff and handles the operation when the full-time supervisor is away.

The greatest learning Peter has encountered is the challenges and nuances of working with other people. He has come to recognize there can be a difference between an individual's work ethic and their ability or skill level to complete a certain task. He is also learning how his reactions can impact the outcome of difficult situations. Peter's life is busier than it has ever been; he finds it easier all the time to pick up odd-jobs. He is seldom at home any more, he is usually out working.



### **Steve's Story**

After leaving home and spending a summer at a friend's, who was collecting Income Assistance, he found living on his own wasn't the experience he thought it would be. A typical day for Steve consisted of just hanging out with friends, playing video games, watching movies and playing with the friend's dog. He didn't have a job or a legitimate source of income. There were also problems living in this friend's environment, people would take Steve's stuff, the house wasn't very clean, and there would be a fair amount of physical violence whenever there was a disagreement. On top of that there wasn't any food in the house, so Steve was often hungry.

At the end of the summer Steve moved back home, and although the living conditions were better, he realized he still needed to get a job to earn an income without stealing. He heard about a chance for employment at the Right Stuff from a Counsellor at the local youth centre. Steve is one of the youngest workers ever hired at the Right Stuff and his continued employment is based on the condition he continues with his education at the alternative school. Steve's work schedule is set up to allow for regular attendance at school and because he is living at home he does not require the number of hours needed to pay for housing and food. He is able to use his income as he pleases.

Since Steve has been at the Right Stuff he has completed his high school English and his certification for Occupational First Aid. He has also quit stealing. The accomplishment he is most proud of is being accepted for volunteer work on the local ski hill as a ski patrol. As a ski patrol he is assigned a section of the mountain to tour, in the company of a more experienced ski patrol. As a volunteer he gets the benefit of skiing for free and gets to help people that are hurt with his Occupational First Aid certification.

With his work experience Steve feels he has matured and has become a good worker. Previous to the job Steve admits he didn't have much respect for people, and didn't show any respect. Now he has learned how to listen and be respectful. He makes the connection his new behaviour has resulted in having nice things and that he is now able to enjoy skiing. When he was living on his own he used to think \$10 was a lot of money, now he thinks \$300 is nothing. Steve also recognizes he behaves differently at school. The first year at the alternative school he admits to being very difficult with the instructors; that was his purpose in going to school. Now he focuses on the work and is getting through the program, the instructors have told him they notice the change in his behaviour. He feels he now has an adult perspective rather than a kid perspective; he sees a lot of immature behaviour in the younger and more rebellious students.

Steve's next goal is to be good enough to get paid as a ski patrol.

## **PARO**

### **Naomi's Story**

Naomi is a single mother who grew up in a remote northern town. She's had a hard life, struggling with violence, addictions and poverty, yet she managed to get a university education and begin to build a foundation of a future for herself and her two children. She went through an acrimonious divorce in 2000 and ever since then, she and her children have been living in poverty, struggling to survive. When she came to PARO, Naomi was very down and hard on herself; she was unable to see the tremendous skills and assets that she already had.

Naomi came to PARO in 2001 seeking a better future for her family. What she found was a supportive environment that helped her to heal and move forward with her dream of starting her own business. It took her a while to identify a focused and realistic business idea and to sort through the many personal issues that distracted her from the business. It was when she entered PARO's advanced business development program in 2004 that Naomi's business idea took off - the start up process on operations of her business really helped her to explore different options and test their feasibility. She is now contracting out her services in the non-profit sector as a project coordinator, researcher and proposal writer.

Naomi is not only keen to make changes in her life, but is also committed to promoting social change in the community. She developed a proposal which was approved for funding, and this has led to the designing and facilitating of a community development project. She gets tremendous satisfaction from this work and is very happy to be able to give back to her community. She identifies as a business woman and community leader: in addition to her professional work, she is involved in volunteer commitments related to neighbourhood policing and Aboriginal housing.

Naomi has made huge changes in her life: she is much more self-confident and assertive, and is very clear about what she wants. Her goal is to continue on to the next level of her university education, and she plans to continue to grow and refine her business. While problems persist, Naomi feels more resilient and better prepared to deal with crises and setbacks that come her way. One of Naomi's children has been struggling with addictions and Naomi has been able to draw on her own experience and identity to ensure that she has strong family support.

Four years ago she had a huge debt and no income; now, she has paid off her debt and her income is steadily growing, and it is clear that she has created an independent, sustainable way of supporting her family and achieving her wider aspirations of promoting healing and social change in her community.

### **Louise's Story**

When Louise came to PARO, she was over 50 years of age and had just lost her job. She was in crisis and was dealing with a wrongful dismissal lawsuit against her former employer who she reports 'pushed her out the door' because of her age, even though she was competent. She had been employed in the same field for her whole career and couldn't find an employer willing to hire her at her age. She now found herself with the choice of going back to school for retraining or self-employment. She decided to start her own business.

She went through PARO's business development program and created a business plan. She started her business, and accessed resources such as office equipment, internet access and space in PARO Centre, and her business grew rapidly. She quickly realized that she needed more space, and expanded as she hired a part-time employee. The business is going very well and she is able to support her family on the money she earns from it.

Louise is married and has an older son who has been hospitalized with a serious, life threatening health condition. Her life partner has been coping with their son's illness in self-destructive ways and their relationship is very stressed. While she says her life is the 'pits', she is really enjoying working on the business, which keeps her busy and distracted from her troubles. Yet she works very long hours and the business has taken over her life. She is aware that she is not eating properly, and is not taking care of herself. As a result, she is grooming her new employee to partner with her eventually, and possibly take over some of the business operations. This successful business offers a way to transition into retirement. The resources at PARO, including her Peer Mentoring Circle, will help Louise to deal with this process.

### **Sarah's Story**

Sarah is unmarried, and a mother of two. She has been coping with a long-term illness which has impacted her ability to gain and keep employment. When first Sarah came to PARO in 2000, she was looking for a program that would give her the flexibility she required, and chose self-employment as a way to keep active in the workforce.

Through PARO's start up program, Sarah developed her business plan, and opened her business. She joined PARO's *Business Accelerator* program to further grow her business, which included increasing her social network.

A lifelong learner, Sarah had set a goal to acquire further knowledge about computers. Although she had access to equipment at PARO Centre, she had expressed a need for her own computer that she could access at any time; and PARO was able to provide the supports necessary to help Sarah achieve

this goal. Although Sarah's health issues continue to limit her ability to work, she maintains her connection to PARO which she says has given her support and motivation. She continues to set new goals for herself, and gives back to the community.

## LEF

### Ed's Story

Forty-nine year old Ed was a long-term social assistance recipient when he was referred to LEF. His work history consisted of general labour and factory work, but a back injury had long prevented him from working in this field. As a result, Ed had not held regular employment in over 15 years. Instead, he had relied on sporadic temporary jobs and social assistance.

After meeting with LEF staff, Ed opted for Career Exploration workshops in order to clarify a career direction. Upon completion, he entered the job search process. While Ed found it very difficult to outreach to potential employers using cold calls, he did volunteer within the organization and eventually led external marketing groups of participants to industrial areas. LEF Job Developers arranged interviews in logistics and courier companies, but Ed then disclosed he had a criminal record and was not bondable - often a requirement within these fields.

Ed continued to conduct his job search with LEF and had made progress, but did not find employment within the mandated Ontario Works sixteen-week job search period. However, he continued to work with LEF and soon after landed a full-time job as a Superintendent in a local apartment building and moved off of social assistance. Through the job retention process, LEF supported Ed through his probationary period and has maintained regular contact. Ed has been promoted within the building management company and is now responsible for multiple sites.

### Angus' Story

Angus was fifty-eight when he was referred to LEF. He had worked for over thirty years in a trailer manufacturing company before it closed down four years earlier and left him unemployed. He had found his age, limited skill sets and grade eight education were barriers to finding work and had turned to social assistance. He started the Industrial Skills training at LEF and early on, it became apparent that Angus was unable to read and write at a level required for the training and the labour market. LEF employment counselling staff met with Angus and altered his career plan to include Literacy and Basic Skills classes on-site. After nearly a year, Angus had progressed a point where he could successfully participate in the training, and he re-started and completed Industrial Skills.

Angus then moved into the job search portion and faced many challenges, including the tragic death of his son. However, he remained committed to the process and with LEF support, landed a job as an assembler in a company manufacturing specialized transformers. He has moved off of social assistance and progressed through the company and has become their lead hand and is responsible for training new employees. He regularly contacts LEF to find candidates for new positions within the company.

## ÉCOF

### Mr. Frappier's story

Mr. Frappier is a man of fifty years who lives with his son. He has a great social network and knows very well his strengths. He has been unemployed for three weeks and was living with this difficult situation. Mr. Frappier had just applied to employment insurance (EI) *"I hadn't even received a check!"* When we talked to him for the first time Mr. Frappier was a truck handler.

Mr. Frappier has known ÉCOF-CDEC Trois Rivières through a call return for his son. His son wanted to have an assistance to write his resume, but he did not meet the admission criteria of the organization. Mr. Frappier then asked the intervener about our program. He immediately made an appointment for more information. At the meeting, Mr. Frappier appreciated the different job search techniques such

as interviewing and resume skills. The accessibility of the different services such as computers, fax and telephone has greatly played in favor for him to choose the program to help him on his job search.

Mr. Frappier attended both individual and group measures contained in the path of ÉCOF-CDEC Rivières. He also participates in various activities of social involvement, for example, the distribution of leaflets. The tour group includes a four-week unpaid program. He had targeted a business, but the employer did not want to train trainees. Mr. Frappier has sure this was the employer for him. He used many strategies to connect with the company and finally his determination paid off. He did get a job from the same company.

#### **Memories of ÉCOF...**

Mr. Frappier remembers mainly the harmony, the good mood, the general assistance provided by the facilitators and the ability to evolve at his own pace without feeling the pressure of others.

His transition with CDEC Trois Rivières allowed him to increase his confidence in himself: "Now I am able to send resumes and sympathize with employers." Mr. Frappier also had the opportunity to work on his most negative attitudes such as his impulsiveness.

ÉCOF-CDEC Trois Rivières brought him back hope to keep working, but also to maintain his motivation in his workplace.

Almost a year later, Mr. Frappier is still working for the same company.

#### **Jinette's Story**

##### **Here is the beginning of Jinette's story**

Jinette, aged 49, was living temporarily with her daughter in HLM. Jinette had been going through a bad time and was depressed and did not know how to get out of her situation. Jinette had huge difficulty sleeping. When she was alone she slept near the door, the lights on and blinds open.

She would get up in the morning wondering what she would do to pass her day. "When you don't have nothing to think about, you end up believing that you are nothing. And there are plenty of people to remind you that you are really nothing."

##### **Here is the end of the story**

Jinette has found an apartment to rent and is working full time at Time Horton's. She has regained her energy and she sleeps without nightmares.

##### **And between the two, what happened?**

A combination of courage, meeting others, responsiveness, and openness.

Someone told Jinette that she could register for the MULTIBOULOOT project. Jinette accepted. "Finally something to do." Jinette then came to a citizen committee and met someone from ÉCOF.

In addition to hours of work, Jinette had to participate in the training provided by ÉCOF. On the menu of the group training: self-esteem, communication, conflict resolution, teamwork, etc. Jinette is ready to attend the training but as she is very shy and reserved, she knows very well that opening up to others, it won't be easy for her. She had always been by herself: Asking for help...? No, thanks.

Jinette is paired with another participant for their task during working hours. Initially, it was far from being easy to work as a team. When you have never learned how to say things gently, you can talk in an inappropriate way. But during individual meetings Jinette and her teammate expressed what was not going well to their ÉCOF staff, wanting to find a common agreement.

During her training, Jinette learns that she has strengths and weaknesses and that she must capitalize on her strengths. She also learns to trust and be trusted by others. Little by little, she finds her self esteem. She has things to do; she has a network and she is trusted. And one day, Jinette dares to speak

about herself, individually at first with her intervener from ÉCOF and then to the rest of the group. Jinette feels she has just dropped an enormous ball. She can see that there are possible solutions to her problems. Being open to others allows her to be more aware of her own issues. She can try to seek solutions rather than simply being submerged by a problem. Now she feels able to take care of herself.

Of course, not everything is easy. She has to take several approaches before reaching her goal. She still has a number of objectives to be achieved. But after 7 months in the BEING and TRAINING project, she has a job and a good home for herself. And she sleeps without nightmares. Jinette still continuing to see her friends from the BEING project.

Jinette had great energy and desire to live, the only thing she needed was to regain confidence in herself and in her abilities.

### **Denise's story**

Denise is a single mother in her 50s. For many years she was alone at home with her two children. She had her family and a few close friends, but something was missing. Denise had some difficulties in terms of reading and writing. Then, she connected with a literacy organization called Comsep.

As a result of this connection, she went back to school, then became a volunteer and got involved in various committees. She also became a representations on several different boards, including ÉCOF. Denise has always wanted to work in the community; it's an environment that really attracted her a lot, she wanted more than anything to be close to people. Thus she came to ÉCOF.

Her involvement and her work enabled her to overcome her embarrassment, and to be involved in activities outside her home. Previously Denise had a felt alone and isolated: "I was tired of being alone at home. I finally decided to break my solitary confinement and I went to a Women's organization to combat world poverty. This allowed me to make my first step in literacy at Comsep and also to do a job at *Solidarity Bouffelles*. Now, I have been working at ÉCOF as a receptionist for two years and I also help my colleagues to do different things ".

All these changes were a major challenge for Denise to be comfortable to her new environment. "When you are used to living by yourself and then you get involved in group activities, it's a big challenge!"

Meeting these challenges have changed a lot of things in her personal life. For example, her personal involvement with the oldest districts of Trois-Rivières. "As a citizen, instead of staying in my living room, I feel more actively involved in my community."

Another major change in Denise life is to be "employed" and she had to adapt to having a week payroll instead of just one social assistance cheque per month. The way to handle a budget is a challenges. Denise found the transition very difficult at the beginning, but now she is very comfortable with this change. She has become an expert in Financial Management!

Denise is now an important part of a working team. This brings huge pride and also changes a lot of things in her life. She has a sense of belonging to a group and a team and this means a lot to her.

Without her involvement with ÉCOF and in the community, Denise couldn't be as helpful as a full-fledged citizen. "Well, if my civic involvement had not been there, I wouldn't be able to do something useful. I would not have shared the same problems as everyone else and wouldn't be able to change things. "