



# Report: Employment and Training Programs Serving Aboriginal People in Ontario

Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities

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Final

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MNP was hired by the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities to conduct a comprehensive review of employment and training programs focused on Ontario's Aboriginal population. Between late February and early April 2014, MNP conducted a series of focus groups and interviews with Aboriginal People and service providers to understand the current employment and training landscape.

We engaged with a diverse group of providers including: ASETS agreement holders (the Federal employment and training program for Aboriginal people), Friendship Centres, Ontario Works Delivery Agents (on reserve), Aboriginal Women's organizations, literacy organizations, employers, Métis Nation of Ontario, and Aboriginal Institutes. In general, providers were most familiar with the ASETS program. The Provincial programs we heard the most about included: Ontario Works (OW), Employment Ontario (EO), Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS), Apprenticeship, and Aboriginal Institutes. Highlights of our findings follow:

### 1. Aboriginal Client Profile

We heard the Aboriginal population differs from the general population in some respects due to factors such as extreme remoteness and isolation, ongoing challenges with poverty, negative experiences with government and the residential school system, and a different culture/ world views. In designing employment and training programs for Aboriginal people, the most successful programs:

- Ensure a “holistic” approach to program delivery whereby participants can access various services that may or may not be directly connected to employment and training (e.g. child care, transportation, housing, skills and basic literacy, health or addictions counselling etc.)
- Incorporate culturally sensitive or safe activities
- Provide flexibility within funding allocations and program guidelines to allow providers to address specific needs of the population (e.g. providers can allocate money to child care or incorporate cultural programming)

### 2. What Works

We heard a number of examples of things that were working or had been done to better meet the needs of clients. Things that were working included: collaboration across service providers, incorporating culture and Aboriginal teachings into programming, strong relationships with clients, a commitment to helping clients to succeed, and a variety of solutions to help clients obtain work experience or employment opportunities.

### 3. The Client Journey

During their encounter with employment and training providers, a client will travel through some or all of the following phases: access, assessment, service provision (pre-employment, training, employment), and monitoring. We heard the following about each of these phases:

#### Access

Many clients are embarrassed or have had a poor experience seeking services in the past. Providing a culturally familiar and welcoming first point of contact is critical to ensuring clients follow through with their decision to seek services.

Many of the providers we spoke to also offered services that went beyond employment and training. Providing a full-suite of services was seen to be beneficial because it allows for continuity of service and enables clients to access services at one site.

### Assessment

Conducting a proper assessment of a client's needs is critical to ensuring the client receives the appropriate services. We also heard that a proper assessment takes time to complete, and that the person conducting the assessment requires the appropriate skills and training to build rapport and understand what the client's true needs are. This training can include cultural awareness, an understanding of the challenges Aboriginal people have experienced, and knowledge of how to build rapport and trust.

Currently at the provincial level there is not a common assessment or services plan. Providers must therefore collect the same information from clients (enrolled in more than one provincial program) multiple times. Furthermore, not having a common assessment or service plan can interfere with service continuity because there is not an overall plan/ approach linking all the programs a client is participating in together.

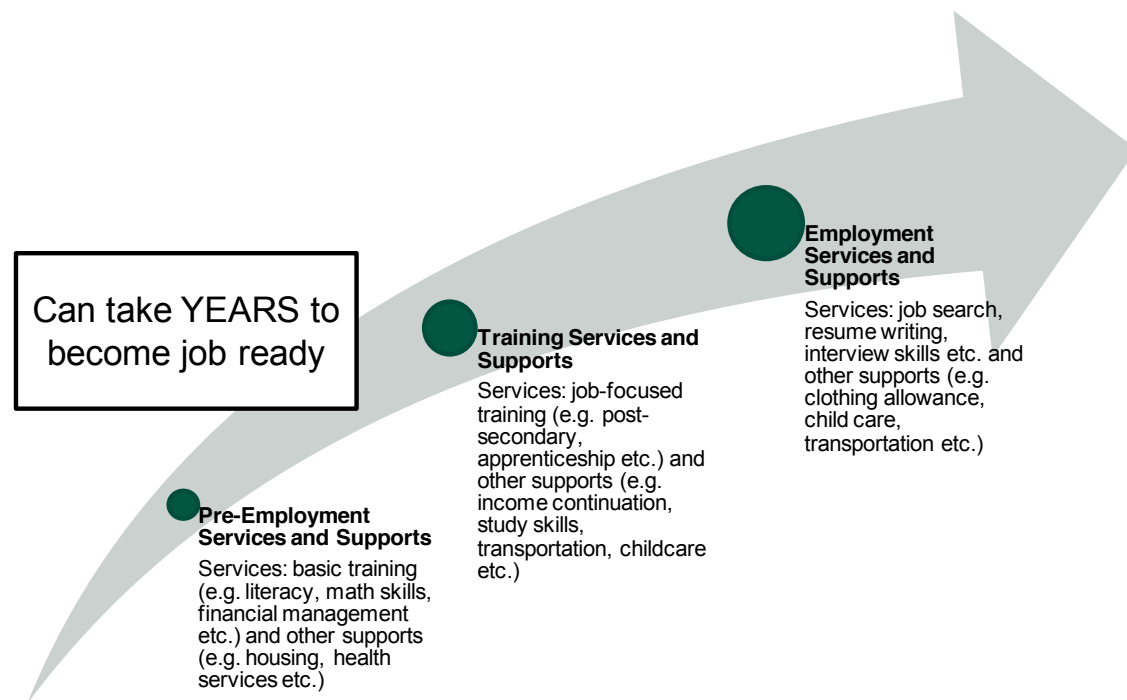
Program applications are also cumbersome to complete and have different eligibility criteria, resulting in confusion and inconsistent application across the province.

### Pre-Employment

Pre-employment services are a critical and high-demand component of employment and training services for Aboriginal people. These services focus on supporting clients to address barriers that are preventing them from participating in employment and training. This can include training services (e.g. literacy, math, financial management etc.) as well as referrals to other types of supports (e.g. housing, health services etc.).

We also heard that baseline skills/ knowledge that are seen as a given in mainstream employment and training are not always a given for Aboriginal people. For example, some Aboriginal people (particularly on-reserve) may not have a bank account or driver's license and have relied on the band office to manage their housing needs. To succeed clients require support and mentorship with tasks that most people in the general population would take for granted.

Finally, pre-employment services usually take a long time to produce results (see below) and the results are not always easy to measure. As a result there can be a tendency for government programs to overlook these supports and focus instead on training and employment services which are more likely to produce immediate and quantifiable results.



### Training

Training services are focused on helping clients to prepare for employment (e.g. GED, certification programs etc.). When delivering training for Aboriginal people we heard it is important to consider that the profile of the Aboriginal learner is different from mainstream learners. Many are mature students, learn differently, and could have learning disabilities. Providing support (such as customized curriculums, help with study skills etc.) to help students address these differences is vital. Furthermore, because secondary completion levels of Aboriginal people tend to be below the general population, there is also a greater demand for GED or high school Diploma programs.

We also heard that a lack of infrastructure on reserve frequently means transportation to an off-site location must be provided as part of training. In addition, there are significant regional differences to consider when delivering training programs for Aboriginal people. In northern and remote regions, participants must often leave the reserve to attend training. This can be a barrier to enrolling in training in the first place and can be highly disruptive for those who do enrol. People who must leave their reserve for training therefore require additional support (e.g. housing allowances, support groups etc). For people in southern Ontario and large urban centres, attending training tends to be less disruptive and there tend to be more training programs/ opportunities.

### Employment

Employment services are focused on helping clients to obtain employment and/or supporting clients once they have obtained employment. When delivering employment services to Aboriginal people we heard there are some unique considerations including: hesitation to hire Aboriginal people in some communities, and limited role models in some cases (e.g. generations where people have been on social assistance). Regional considerations also factor into employment services. For example, people located close to large urban centres generally have more employment opportunities, and obtaining employment off the reserve tends to be less disruptive to their lives. In remote, particularly northern communities, there tend to be fewer opportunities and people must leave home for extended periods of time to work.

### Monitoring

There was limited discussion about monitoring. However, we did hear that engaging in ongoing client monitoring can be challenging given that the population tends to be transient, and because of more immediate work demands organizations tend to encounter.

#### **4. Program Design – Funding and Metrics**

We heard from participants that there are many restrictions on how funding can be used, that there are multiple sources of funding and that there is constant funding pressure.

Participants also expressed concerns that there was too much reporting, and that metrics were not capturing the right things. Perceived limitations with the current reporting requirements are a source of frustration and some participants felt excessive reporting is taking away from serving clients.

#### **5. Collaboration**

We heard many examples of how organizations were collaborating formally (through established networks such as ASETS) or informally through self-initiated groups in a region or city. This included collaboration across Aboriginal service providers as well as with mainstream providers.

We also heard about some barriers to collaboration between providers which included: no formal time or resources to dedicate to collaboration, lack of integration across IT systems, privacy considerations, and the requirement for funding to flow with the person which discourages referral between agencies/ providers.

#### **6. Regional Considerations**

The region where a person lives tends to have the greatest influence on needs and service availability. Servicing clients in northern remote regions is costly, many are required to leave their community to seek services and employment opportunities tend to be limited. In the south, clients tend to have better access to service and employment opportunities (even when living on reserve) given the close proximity to an urban centre. In summary, the engagement provided an opportunity to build a solid understanding of the current employment and training landscape for Aboriginal people in Ontario. This understanding positions the Ministry well for future engagement.

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## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Ontario's employment and training programs, like other jurisdictions, have recently undergone a number of changes. Most significantly, in 2007 responsibility for employment benefits and support measures was devolved from the federal government to the province via the new Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA). Then in August 2010 the Employment Ontario Services transformation was implemented.

While this was a major achievement in streamlining employment and training programs, a significant proportion of individuals with employment and training needs continue to be serviced through programs administered by other ministries and Federal departments with limited integration across the programs.

In 2012 the Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services (Drummond Report) as well as the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario released findings of their reviews. Both highlighted the opportunity for integration across employment and training programs:

- The Drummond Report recommended the government streamline and integrate other employment and training services with Employment Ontario, including the bulk of the employment and training service component of social assistance and integration and settlement services for newcomers, in a carefully sequenced manner (recommendation 9-2).
- The Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario recommended the government make available a range of integrated high-quality pre-and-post-employment services and supports, tailored to individual needs.

In response to these reports, the 2012 Ontario Budget announced that:

*“The government will further enhance its employment and training programs to better prepare Ontarians to meet the challenges of increasing globalization and rapid technology change. Measures will include integrating employment and training services across the government with Employment Ontario”*

In support of this commitment the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities (MTCU) has contracted with MNP to conduct a comprehensive review of employment and training programs focused on Ontario's Aboriginal population.

This report represents findings from the engagement with Aboriginal people and employment and training service providers. Additional details on the engagement follow.

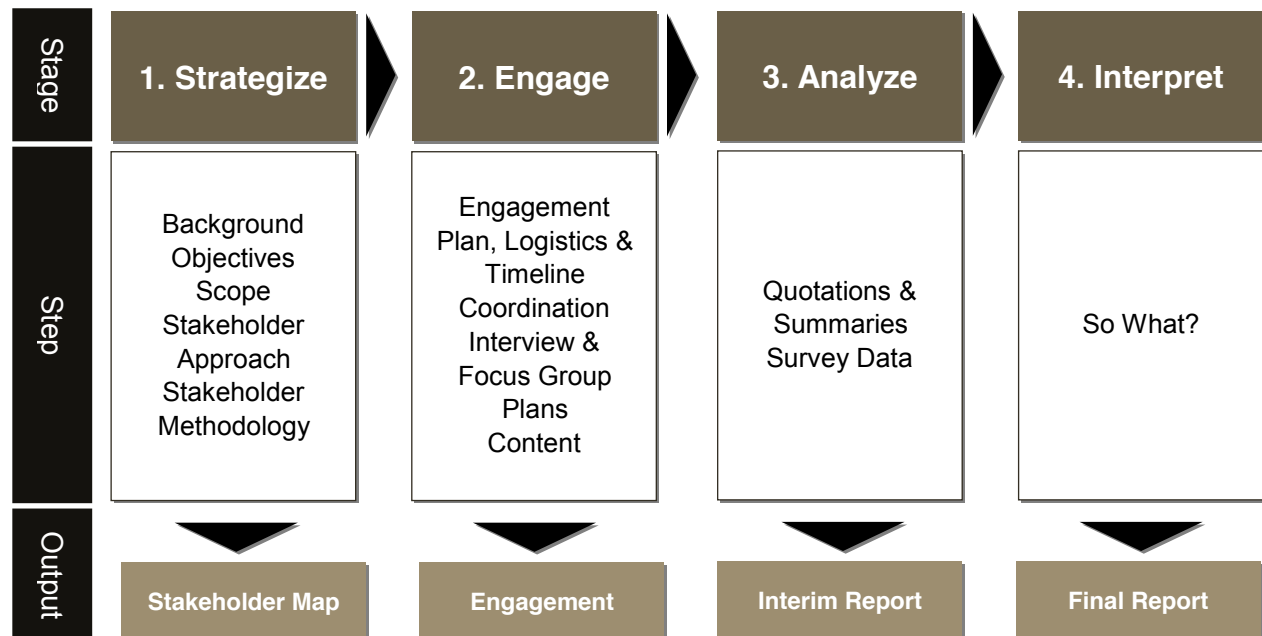
## OBJECTIVES OF THE ENGAGEMENT

The objectives of the engagement were to:

- Seek input, knowledge and experience from Aboriginal people and organizations providing employment and training services
- Ensure that the knowledge and experience of Aboriginal partners across the province was collected and used to help make improvements to Ontario's employment and training system
- Provide organizations and participants with additional information about this project, including why the Ministry is seeking to make improvements

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY

The engagement methodology employed is shown below:



Activities carried out during each of these stages were as follows:

### 1. Strategize:

- During this initial phase MNP compiled a list of organizations and people across Ontario to engage with. We also developed an engagement strategy detailing how the engagement would occur. Following review and validation with the Ministry, a final version of the strategy was submitted.

### 2. Engage:

- Upon finalizing the Engagement Strategy MNP emailed and followed up via phone with all organizations and individuals selected to participate. Participants were provided with a list of



questions in advance as well as context about the engagement (see Appendix A for a complete list of organizations contacted)

- Depending on the nature of the organization, participants were either asked to participate in a one-on-one interview or a focus group in one of 10 locations across Ontario
- Flexibility was provided throughout the process to allow participants who were unable to attend to provide written comments, and/ or to allow participants who were invited to an interview to switch to a focus group and vice-versa
- To encourage participation travel allowances were provided to participating organizations and a minimum of two weeks' notice about the session was provided
- A total of 10 focus groups and 20 interviews were conducted between late February and early April 2014. Ninety-three people from 62 organizations participated (see Appendix B for a list of participating organizations)
  - Focus groups were generally 5 – 6 hours and were conducted in person
  - Interviews were approximately 1 hour and were conducted in person or on the phone
  - Focus groups were held in: Toronto (x2), Thunder Bay (x2), Sioux Lookout, Sudbury, Oshweken, Kenora, Ottawa and London
  - The focus group planned for Sault Ste. Marie was cancelled due to low participation
  - An additional focus group with the Métis Nation of Ontario was added in Toronto in response to a request
  - A small number of employers were also contacted however, few of the employers who were contacted responded. The reasons are unknown. However, another engagement with employers was occurring around the same time and this may have had an impact on interest.
  - Where possible, focus groups were conducted in Aboriginal-owned facilities
- During the focus groups and interviews MNP facilitated a discussion about employment and training and collected feedback from participants (see Appendix C for a list of questions used in focus groups and interviews)
  - Questions for academics were focused on their area of experience
  - Questions for government were focused on the program they were involved with (e.g. Ontario Works)
- Participating organizations represented a wide variety of stakeholders including:
  - ASETS Agreement Holders
  - Local Organizations Delivering Employment and Training Programs and Services
  - Aboriginal Employment Ontario Centres
  - Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association
  - First Nations Communities delivering Ontario Works
  - Aboriginal Institutes
  - Friendship Centres
  - Aboriginal Women's Organizations
  - Aboriginal Literacy Organizations
  - Tribal Councils
  - Métis Nation of Ontario/ Selected Councils
  - First Nations Communities

- Employers
  - Academics and Government.
- Interview notes were provided back to participants for review and validation. Most people who were interviewed confirmed that notes were accurate. Any changes requested by participants were made.
- 3. Analyze and Interpret:**
- This report summarizes findings from the engagement. The purpose of the report is to present back information to the Ministry about what we heard during the engagement. The report presents back key themes, supplemented by specific examples to provide context and additional information

## GENERAL IMPRESSIONS FOLLOWING THE ENGAGEMENT

Organizations and individuals participating in the engagement were highly engaged and passionate about the services they delivered and the people they provided services to.

Many of the participants had long careers in employment and training, and organizations that were contacted did an excellent job of selecting people who were familiar with (and involved in) employment and training at their organization. Content collected during focus groups and interviews was therefore rich and contained excellent insights.

While a diverse group of participants was contacted, many were either ASETS agreement holders (the Federal program focused on employment and training for Aboriginal People) or on-reserve Ontario Works delivery agents. The large number of ASETS agreement holders was likely due to the fact that the Federal government is accountable for providing education services to on-reserve Aboriginal people in Canada. While some organizations delivered provincial employment and training programs such as Employment Ontario and Second Career there were other organizations with limited knowledge or experience with these programs. Ontario-specific programs that we asked participants about included:

- Employment Ontario
- Second Career
- Literacy and Basic Skills
- Apprenticeship
- Ontario Works – Employment Assistance
- Aboriginal Youth Work Exchange
- Aboriginal Institutes
- Post-Secondary Education and Training Bursary
- Alternative Secondary School Programs (delivered by the Friendship Centres), recognizing that many Aboriginal people are seeking training to obtain a GED or high school diploma

It was communicated to participants that not all of these programs were within scope for integration, rather this list was provided as an example of employment and training programs and services the province operated. The majority of comments we received about provincial programs were related to Literacy and Basic Skills, Ontario Works – Employment Assistance, Aboriginal Institutes and Apprenticeship. In general, many participants were unfamiliar with provincial employment and training programs or had limited experience with them.

We also heard from service providers that clients who were receiving Ontario Works often required a greater focus on pre-employment training supports. We heard that many clients receiving Ontario Works were not ready for typical employment and training programs given the number of other significant challenges they were facing. Although it is important to recognize this is not the case for all clients receiving Ontario Works. From an integration perspective we heard it will be important to ensure other provincial employment and training programs that may be offered as part of an integrated solution would be beneficial to Ontario Works clients. For example, a client on Ontario Works who has never been employed would not necessarily receive the greatest value from a program like Second Career which is focused on individuals who have been laid off,

We also heard from participants that they would like to receive a copy of the findings from this engagement and would like to be involved in making changes and improvements. Some participants expressed concerns that findings from this phase of the project would be used to make changes to programs without further engagement.

To continue to build credibility with the sector we believe it will be very important to follow through with providing participants with a copy of the findings as well as with an opportunity to participate in future engagement.

## FINDINGS

This section presents what we heard during our engagement with Aboriginal people and employment/training service providers/ organizations. Findings have been organized as follows:

Category	Information Captured
<b>1. Client Profile</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents what we heard about the Aboriginal client profile and how their needs may differ (or be the same as) clients accessing mainstream employment and training programs.</li> <li>• Some of these findings are also captured in the client journey.</li> </ul>
<b>2. What Works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents what we heard about things service providers have found are helpful when delivering employment and training programs.</li> <li>• Some of these findings are also captured in the client journey.</li> </ul>
<b>3. Client Journey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents information about the client's journey through various stages of the employment and training system including: Access, Assessment, Pre-Employment, Training, Employment Services and Monitoring.</li> </ul>
<b>4. Program Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents what we heard about program design with a particular emphasis on program funding administration and performance measurement.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents what we heard about how organizations are currently collaborating and working together.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Regional Differences</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarizes findings about key regional differences.</li> <li>• Some of these differences are also captured in the client journey.</li> </ul>

Where applicable we have identified specific programs to which a particular comment applied and/ or specific considerations for subsets of the Aboriginal population (First Nations, Métis and Inuit).

However, there are only a few instances where we have been able to make these distinctions. This is because:

- Organizations were speaking in general about the programs they delivered, and many providers interviewed were only delivering the ASETS program
- The Inuit population in Ontario is very small and there was limited representation at the sessions
- Métis Nation of Ontario is the only organization we met with that had a specific focus on Métis people
- Most providers we spoke to serviced Aboriginal people as opposed to a sub-set of the population

In general we observed the following about the different populations:

- Inuit people represent a small number of people in Ontario, are concentrated in Ottawa and are a relatively new population to Ontario. However, many of their needs appear to be consistent with the Aboriginal population as a whole. Some specific considerations:
  - There is limited programming with a specific focus on Inuit people
  - Providers may be less aware of Inuit people and their culture
- Some of the considerations for First Nations people living on reserve were different from First Nations people living off reserve. Furthermore, there were differences between reserves closer to larger urban centers and in Southern Ontario when compared to reserves in Northern Ontario. These differences have been highlighted as part of regional considerations.

## 1. ABORIGINAL CLIENT PROFILE

We heard that there are many characteristics of the Aboriginal population that make them (and their employment and training needs) unique when compared to the general population. These differences included:

- Extreme remoteness and isolation of people living in Northern Ontario
- Ongoing challenges associated with poverty, negative experiences with government, and the lingering impacts of the residential school system
- Different learning needs (e.g. being more visual learners, potentially having more learning disabilities)
- A greater need for pre-employment and training supports like financial literacy, basic skills and literacy, problem solving etc.
- Different culture and world views (e.g. less likely to self-advocate, high family demands)

In recognition of some of these differences we heard that when designing employment and training programs for Aboriginal people it was critical to:

1. **Allow for flexibility in programming to incorporate culturally sensitive or safe activities.** Examples of some cultural programming we heard about included: career planning tools that incorporated the medicine wheel, the use of an elder in employment and training sessions, the inclusion of language and history courses in training curriculums, and the use of Aboriginal instructors.
2. **Provide for flexibility within funding allocations and program guidelines** to allow providers to address specific needs of the population being served. For example, Aboriginal people living in remote northern communities usually need to travel long distances or leave home to obtain training and employment. To help participants who are away from home for extended periods it is important to have flexibility within funding to pay for the higher travel costs and provide supports to help participants adjust to living in an urban centre (e.g. support groups, housing etc.)
3. **Ensure a “holistic” approach to program delivery** whereby participants can access various services (e.g. child care, transportation, housing, skills and basic literacy, customized educational

support and learning plans etc.). Providing a holistic approach allows clients to address some of the barriers they are facing that may not be directly related to employment and training, but are a critical to supporting them to become ready to enter into training and/ or employment OR helping them to succeed once they are enrolled in a training program or are employed.

Additional commentary about the implications of the Aboriginal Client Profile have been incorporated into findings in the Client Journey Section of this report.

### **Service Delivery Focused on Aboriginal People**

It was widely acknowledged that having organizations with a particular focus on Aboriginal people was critically important. It ensures staff have an understanding of Aboriginal culture and history, and programs and services are being delivered to incorporate culture and/ or have been adapted to meet some of the unique needs of Aboriginal people (e.g. provide for high travel costs, extra supports etc).

However, in some sessions participants expressed concerns about the idea of creating a separate service delivery model for employment and training programs focused on Aboriginal people (e.g. having a Second Career program for Aboriginal people and a Second Career program for the general population) and instead preferred that programming provide flexibility for service providers to make adjustments based on the needs of the population being serviced. It was felt by some that creating a separate delivery model was not always the best approach because:

- Aboriginal people might like to access mainstream services (like they do now if they wish) and/ or individuals who access mainstream services might prefer how services for Aboriginal people are delivered and therefore prefer to access services for Aboriginal people
- Creating a distinct delivery model could create further marginalization of Aboriginal people by continuing to separate them from the rest of society
- Aboriginal people are not a homogenous group so it is challenging to develop a “one size fits all” solution for Aboriginal people
- The regions where people live (rather than culture) potentially have greater implications on needs, service availability and cost of delivering services
- Some Aboriginal people do not wish to self-identify as being Aboriginal and therefore would be unable to access the services requiring them to identify as Aboriginal people

We also heard from some participants that there are some considerations impacting Aboriginal people that also impact the general population. For example, people in the general population also deal with poverty, have access to different levels of service depending on where they live, are required to complete application forms for employment and training services etc. When attempting to develop solutions there may be benefits to thinking about how everyone facing these challenges can be helped.

## 2. WHAT WORKS

This section highlights some of the many things that we heard were working or had been done to better meet the needs of clients. To ensure the information is as useful as possible we have attempted to provide specific examples while also protecting confidentiality of participants:

### *Collaboration*

There were many examples of organizations collaborating to meet the needs of their clients – we heard examples of how organizations had formed partnerships with providers focused on Aboriginal people as well as mainstream employment and training providers to better meet the needs of their clients. These findings are presented in more detail in the collaboration section.

We also heard examples of initiatives Aboriginal employment and training organizations have been involved in to better equip mainstream providers to meet the needs of Aboriginal people and/or to help Aboriginal people using mainstream services to succeed. For example:

- One organization developed and is providing training to mainstream providers to help mainstream providers better understand and meet the needs of Aboriginal clients
- One organization developed a booklet about programs for Aboriginal clients to put into mainstream Ontario Works offices. This was to increase Ontario Works staff awareness of programs and services available to Aboriginal people who may be using mainstream Ontario Works offices
- Creating partnerships with school boards that have allowed Aboriginal learners to obtain a recognized High School Diploma. Participants noted achieving a High School Diploma has been a source of pride for many learners
- Forming Aboriginal student centres in post-secondary institutions to provide advocacy/ support to students in mainstream institutions
- Some post-secondary institutions deliver programs off-campus in a venue that is more culturally comfortable for Aboriginal learners
- We heard from one focus group that Ontario Works “builds the foundation” so that a person can then be referred to ASETS programming

### *Cultural Content and Context*

Many organizations have developed cultural content that has been incorporated into their programming. Some examples:

- Incorporating an elder, Aboriginal language, and history into the training curriculum
- Using Aboriginal tools like a medicine wheel to help provide people with career counselling
- Programming that uses instructors who are certified teachers with extensive experience working with adults and Aboriginal people, and who also have a strong knowledge base regarding First Nations
- Programming that teaches traditional crafts

We also heard that employment and training programs that are tailored to Aboriginal people can be effective for other segments of the population. For example, it was noted in Toronto that organizations servicing Aboriginal people had seen an increase in the number of newcomers accessing their services.



The reasons for this increase are unknown but it was thought it could be due to the proximity of these organizations to areas with high populations of newcomers or the ability to incorporate culturally sensitive or safe programming. In Sudbury we also heard that organizations had been told by mainstream clients that they appreciated the approach to service delivery taken by providers servicing Aboriginal people. Feedback suggests there may be things about how employment and training for Aboriginal people is delivered that could be incorporated into mainstream programming.

### *Strong Relationships with Clients*

People working in the employment and training sector are passionate, very dedicated and have a strong desire to help clients succeed. For example:

- We heard examples where clients first sought services from an organization five to ten years ago and were now in a position where they could work for the organization
- Organizations will seek out opportunities to continue to provide support for clients. In the words of one participant “there isn’t a 3 strikes and you’re out mentality”. Another told us “nobody is turned away”
- Providers seek to create mutually agreed upon action plans for clients
- We heard stories where clients had called their employment and training counsellor to provide them with a pep-talk before an interview or after a hard day at work. Providers will also sometimes attend job interviews with clients to provide encouragement
- Providers understand the barriers clients are facing and will work with them to arrive at a solution
- There is flexibility within programming that allows providers to customize services provided to meet the needs of clients

### *Employment Opportunities*

Many providers have come up with ways to help clients to obtain unpaid or low paid employment experience which clients can then use to help obtain paid employment. We also heard many examples of things organizations had done to try and create employment opportunities.

Examples of things that have been done to help provide clients with employment experience:

- Incorporating co-op placements into all programming which has been helpful in allowing people to obtain employment upon completion of the program
- Creating summer employment partnerships with companies so that when post-secondary education is complete students are employed with the company
- Creating volunteer opportunities within business or organizations on reserve that clients can use as a means for obtaining experience

Examples of things that have been done to help create employment opportunities:

- Organizations use positions within their own organization as a means for providing clients with a chance to obtain work experience
- Creative job creation initiatives such as:
  - The Homemaker program which provides clients with job shadowing opportunities to gain experience and prepare new workers for when the existing workforce retires

- Creating jobs when a community is preparing for an event (e.g. having workers prepare the grounds for a celebration, paint, work in the kitchen etc.)
- Requiring contractors that come into a community to put community members to work (e.g. contractors building houses are required to hire community members to allow them to gain work experience. This sometimes leads to employment in the future)
- Agreements between a community and organizations working on reserve that provide a number of benefits to the community including requirements to hire a certain number of workers from the community, or provide specific supports to Aboriginal people once they are employed (called Impact Benefit Agreements or IBAs)

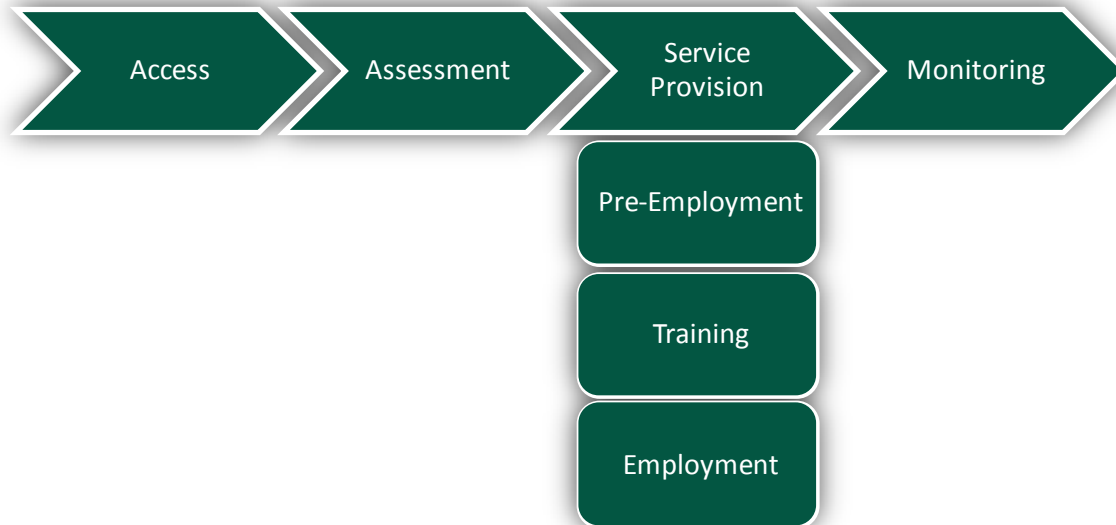
### *Other*

There were many other examples we heard of things that have been done to help ensure client success. For example:

- Providing resources (e.g. housing supports, travel allowances) to support people from remote communities transitioning to urban centres for training or employment
- Providing incentives to participate in programs (e.g. gift cards or a certificate of completion)
- Developing a common assessment tool to be used across programs, or amongst satellite access centres
- Developing programs to provide realistic job-previews and help people learn about opportunities in a particular industry
- Organizations offer evening programming so that clients can access services after hours
- The new ASETS agreement reduced the frequency of reporting and the new information system allows organizations to capture additional information about other services provided
- Organizations offer support groups so that clients who recently obtained employment, or are working to obtain employment can support each other through the process
- Many organizations also provide support to workers in recognition of the burn-out and “trauma transfer” that can occur from working with some of the clients they are servicing. This support can include staff retreats and additional training

### 3. THE CLIENT JOURNEY

Within this section we present information we heard related to the client journey which we have defined as encompassing everything that happens from the first point at which the client accesses a service provider (access) through to follow up that occurs after the client has received employment and training services (monitoring). The client journey is depicted in the diagram below:



For each of these categories: Access, Assessment, Pre-employment, Training, Employment and Monitoring we have included key themes that emerged, detailed commentary pertaining to what we heard about a particular theme (what we heard) as well as what we heard this means (suggested implications).

#### Access

This section presents what we heard about how clients access employment and training services as well as information about services that are available in a single site.

The following themes related to access emerged:

1. Consistency exists across providers around how clients hear about and access services
2. First point of contact is critical
3. Multi-services model is important
4. Many providers offer a full-suite of services, some providers are focused on one type of service/ program
5. Opportunities exist to clarify access points

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Consistency exists across providers around how clients hear about and access services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequently heard the same examples of how clients learn about services. Common examples included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social media (e.g. Facebook)</li> <li>Word of mouth</li> <li>Newsletters/ brochures</li> <li>Internet</li> <li>Referral from another organization</li> </ul> </li> <li>Many clients appear to walk-in to a provider's location to access services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>N/A</li> </ul>
<p><b>First point of contact is critical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accessing services takes courage <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many clients have had poor experiences with government and institutions before and therefore hesitate to seek services or provide information about themselves</li> <li>Clients may have recently moved to an urban centre from a reserve and are feeling overwhelmed by how different the city is from what they have always known (e.g. they are far away from family and friends, the city is noisy, they are required to maintain a house of their own etc.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients need to have a safe, understanding and culturally familiar point of first contact. This builds trust and encourages people who are insecure/ embarrassed to seek support. It also ensures that once they do seek the services they do not become discouraged and consider it to be another negative experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note: Having a safe, understanding and culturally familiar point of contact is also important during the assessment phase where a more detailed review of the client needs is conducted (see assessment section for more details)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Locating services in the community (on-reserve), delivering services in a culturally familiar way, and using organizations that are not seen to be part of an "institutionalized" setting is important</li> </ul>
<p><b>Multi-Service model is important</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients may seek services from a provider that the provider may not offer, or that may not meet the client's needs at that time. This could be because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The client thinks they need a particular service (like training) when instead the client requires help with life skills before he/she can succeed</li> <li>The client does not know what the provider offers and is looking for somewhere to obtain help</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having a variety of services housed within the same centre or available as part of a provider network is important to ensuring clients are able to obtain the services they require</li> <li>A "no-wrong window" mentality is important to ensuring that clients are not turned away</li> <li>Conducting a preliminary assessment (triage) to determine needs is important to ensuring clients are directed to the appropriate services more efficiently. For example, some clients are only seeking to use the internet and therefore don't need to see a counselor. With proper triage the client can access the internet right away</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Many providers offer a full suite of services, other providers are focused on one type of service/ program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many of the participants we spoke with worked in organizations that offered a variety of programs. Employment and training programs were just one type of program the organization was delivering. Examples of other programs included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addictions Counseling</li> <li>• Family Services</li> <li>• Health Care</li> <li>• Healthy Living</li> <li>• Housing</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Examples of organizations offering a full suite of services included community centres in urban settings as well as many First Nations communities</li> <li>• We also heard about organizations that had a particular focus on employment and training. Examples included the Aboriginal Institutes (on reserve) which are focused on training, learning centres which are focused on skills and basic literacy (usually in a urban setting), as well as other organizations with a particular focus on employment and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-service providers can benefit from the ability to share program resources across programs and can sometimes arrange for a more smooth transition across services</li> <li>• In Northern/ remote and smaller communities (especially on-reserve) there tend to be fewer service providers. It is therefore more likely that clients will access services from a multi-service provider</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities Exist to Clarify Access Points</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sometimes there are multiple organizations in the same geographic area delivering similar employment and training services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple access points can create confusion for clients as they are not always certain which organization to contact for service</li> <li>• Multiple access points can create duplication of work effort across organizations</li> </ul>

### Assessment

Comments in this section relate to what we heard about how service needs of clients are determined as well as application forms that are completed to enroll a client in a particular program (e.g. the application form for Skills and Basic Literacy, Employment Ontario etc.).

The following themes related to assessment emerged:

1. No standard assessment or service plan
2. Assessments are time consuming and sensitive
3. Assessments are critical to ensuring success
4. Program applications are cumbersome to complete
5. Eligibility criteria for programs/ services differs and is applied differently

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>No standard assessment or service plan</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no common assessment used by all providers for determining the employment and training support requirements that clients have</li> <li>• While there are standardized service plans or participation agreements for specific programs (such as Ontario Works) there is not a standardized service plan that can be used by all providers across the province to record all the needs that clients have and the services they will require</li> <li>• We heard examples of individual providers who had developed or were developing their own common assessment to track the services to be provided to a client as the client moved through the organization and/ or to/from other service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients can be transitioned from provider to provider or worker to worker with limited continuity of programming</li> <li>• The same information must be collected from clients as they access different services</li> <li>• Clients may receive duplicate services from different providers</li> <li>• Assessments for services under the same program may differ (e.g. how one organization conducts an assessment of skills and basic literacy needs may be different from another organization)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessments are time consuming and sensitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It takes time for clients to open up and talk about their needs, especially because needs are often complex and sensitive (e.g. clients could be dealing with abuse, substance abuse, have a mistrust of the system, have been exposed to the residential school system etc.)</li> <li>• In smaller communities (can be a reserve or small town) it can be hard to conduct a proper assessment as “everyone knows everyone” and clients may not feel comfortable opening up about their needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessments should be completed in private (not by the receptionist out in the open)</li> <li>• Assessments should be completed by someone who has the appropriate skills and training to build rapport, ask the right questions, and has an understanding of the challenges Aboriginal people have faced (e.g. understands the culture, the trauma of the residential school system etc.)</li> <li>• Workers require training to conduct proper assessments. This includes training (or knowledge) of Aboriginal culture and history</li> <li>• Assessments are time consuming to complete and sometimes must be completed over multiple sittings</li> <li>• In smaller communities it can be helpful to have someone outside the community available to conduct the assessment to protect confidentiality</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assessments are critical to ensuring success</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients may come to a service provider seeking a particular type of service, however through appropriate assessment it may become clear that the services the client requires are different (e.g. a client may arrive at the provider seeking training but may not have the required literacy or time management skills to succeed in the training program)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring appropriate assessment is critical to ensuring success. Improper assessment can result in the client not receiving the services they actually need. This can result in failure (e.g. a client dropping out of a training program, not showing up for a job) which leads to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wasted program resources (e.g. the tuition payment is lost because the client has dropped out)</li> <li>• The client feeling like they have “failed”</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
	<p>again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The client being ineligible to receive the service for a period of time</li> <li>• An employer who may be hesitant to hire candidates referred by a particular agency if past candidates have not succeeded</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program applications are cumbersome to complete</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applications for government programs require providers to collect a lot of information about the clients, some of which is sensitive</li> <li>• Some of the questions asked on applications are not seen as being able to yield accurate information. For example we heard that the Employment Ontario application form asks clients to rate services but it was felt by providers that this would not yield accurate information because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients may not want to provide a true response for fear of the implications</li> <li>• Clients have not used the service yet and therefore do not know if the service is actually helpful</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clients can be deterred from returning because they do not want to provide required information and/ or felt uncomfortable with the way it was collected</li> <li>• Clients with short-attention spans (which many clients have) can find it challenging to sit through the application process and applications must be completed over multiple sessions</li> <li>• Many clients do not have the skills required to complete the applications and therefore the provider must complete the application for them</li> <li>• Many clients do not understand the applications and therefore providers must spend time trying to explain the application form to clients</li> </ul>
<p><b>Eligibility criteria for programs differs</b> Services or programs have different eligibility criteria (e.g. criteria to participate in Skills and Basic Literacy may be different from participation requirements for Employment Ontario)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some programs have long waiting periods or actions a client must have taken before they are eligible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all clients qualify for certain services and therefore alternative sources of funding must be identified to meet their needs</li> <li>• Some services or programs are more applicable to Aboriginal people than others (e.g. we heard Second Career was less applicable, particularly for clients receiving Ontario Works given many of the clients accessing Ontario Works haven't had a "First Career")</li> <li>• Eligibility criteria can prevent clients from accessing programs/services until they have been unemployed for a certain amount of time. This is seen to be problematic as it limits access to services and further detracts from a client's well-being. It was suggested it would be better to provide access to programs and services immediately</li> <li>• Given all the different eligibility criteria it can be difficult for providers to determine when a client will qualify for a particular program</li> </ul>

## Pre-Employment

Comments in this section relate to what we heard about services provided to help prepare clients to address barriers that are preventing them from succeeding in training programs and/ or employment. Some of these services may be considered part of employment and training, others (such as addictions counseling, housing, and health services) would go beyond employment and training. Furthermore, some of the pre-employment supports identified may need to continue once a client is enrolled in training and/ or is employed (e.g. child care).

Examples of pre-employment services include:

- Life-skills such as financial management and planning, problem solving, coping with stress/ adversity etc.
- Literacy and Basic Skills
- Referrals to financial resources or help to address other barriers that are preventing clients from participating in training or employment – such as not having a driver's license, having a criminal record, finding child care or housing, etc.

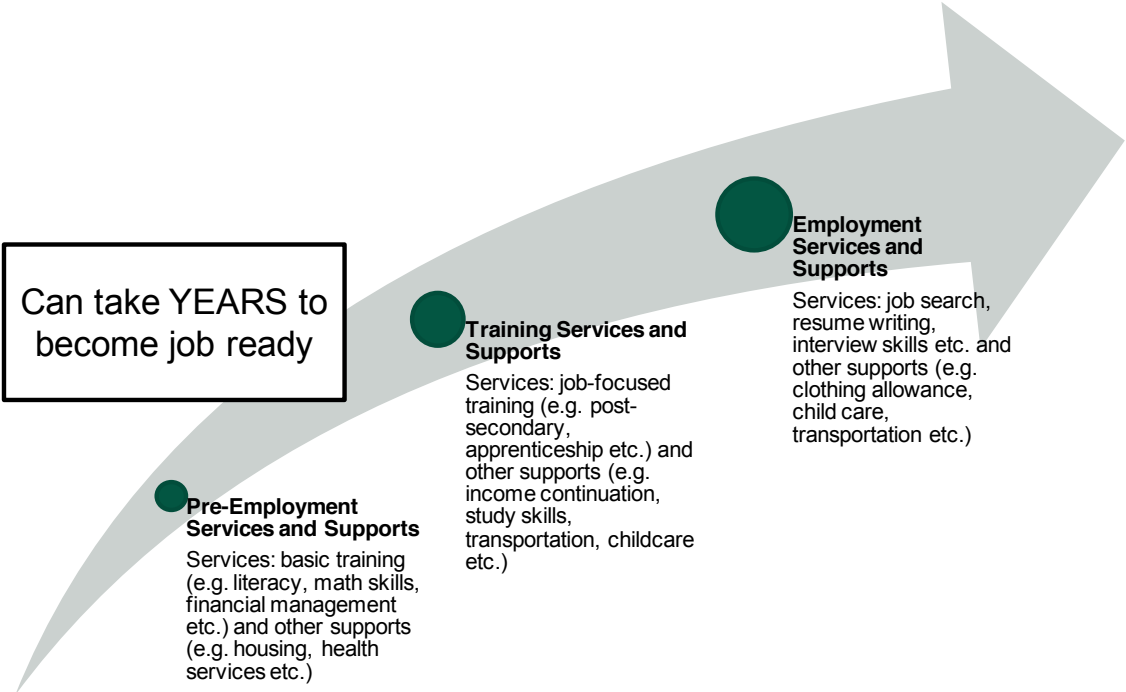
The following themes related to pre-employment services emerged:

1. High demand, critical component
2. Time consuming, do not produce immediate results

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>High demand, critical component</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal clients are dealing with complex barriers (e.g. addiction, poor education, effects of residential schools etc.) that hinder their ability to participate in employment and/ or training to prepare them for employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing pre-employment supports is vital to ensuring successful participation in employment and/ or training</li> <li>• Many skills that are seen as a given in broader employment and training cannot be considered a given for Aboriginal people (e.g. knowledge of how to manage a budget or rent a house)</li> <li>• A holistic approach (where pre-employment services are included as part of employment and training programs) is important to ensuring that all of the complex needs of Aboriginal people are met</li> </ul>
<p><b>Time consuming, do not produce immediate results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-employment supports do not produce "quick wins" or results that are easy to measure (like a job or completed training program. See diagram below)</li> <li>• Participants felt there was less recognition and/or focus on pre-employment supports/ services because these programs/ services do not produce immediate, tangible results (such as employment)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How "success" is defined/ measured needs to be different. For example, for some clients, attending a session for two days is a big accomplishment</li> <li>• Providers would like to see formal recognition of pre-employment services</li> <li>• Project/ agreement lengths are not long enough to get clients to where they need to be because pre-employment activities often take a long time to produce results (i.e. years as opposed to months) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants experience pressure to provide services that produce tangible results, even</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



What We Heard	Suggested Implications
	<p>when these services may not produce the most beneficial long-term results for a client. For example, one participant noted they were encouraged to bring in a cash register to train people how to work in retail. While this may lead to a job in the short-term it was not something many clients were interested in/ aspired to, nor would it result in a high paying job that would help them to break the cycle of poverty</p>



## Training

Comments in this section relate to what we heard about training services. This includes services that provide clients with training required to achieve employment (Training Services) as well as supports required to enable clients to succeed in training (Training Supports).

Examples of Training Services include:

- GED or high school diploma programs
- Certification programs (e.g. EZ truck license, WHMIS training, forklift operator)
- Apprenticeship programs
- College Diplomas
- University Degrees

Examples of Training Supports include:

- Child care
- Income continuation
- Transportation
- Study skills, individual learning plans

The following themes related to training emerged:

1. Unique learner profile
2. Poor secondary school completion rates
3. Opportunities to improve apprenticeships
4. Gaps between training and employment
5. Variety of training programs
6. Limited infrastructure
7. Regional differences

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Unique learner profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many Aboriginal clients are returning to school after having been out of school for several years</li> <li>• Many clients have children and families</li> <li>• Many Aboriginal people learn differently (e.g. are more visual, or hesitate to hand in assessments that they think may contain mistakes)</li> <li>• Aboriginal people can often have undiagnosed learning disabilities or a known learning disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing supports to help Aboriginal learners to address these unique requirements is critical. Examples of support services we heard were important included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with learning to balance school/family commitments</li> <li>• Customized curriculums that incorporate different learning techniques</li> <li>• Individualized learning plans and support</li> <li>• Cultural components within the curriculum such as language, history of Aboriginal people etc.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ability to leave home to participate in a training program may be hindered given family commitments. Bringing training to communities</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
	<p>is important</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taking time off work to participate in training is not always feasible (given family commitments and financial obligations)</li> <li>• Training can be more expensive to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-secondary institutions require students to have insurance. When students have dependants, the cost of the insurance is higher</li> <li>• Learners have housing and family commitments and therefore require income continuation to participate in training</li> <li>• Learners may require customized learning plans and specialized support</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Poor secondary school completion rates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary school completion rates among Aboriginal people continue to be behind the general population</li> <li>• Some participants told us there seemed to be a preference among learners to receive a high school Diploma as opposed to the GED</li> <li>• A learners decision to enroll and then successfully complete high school can be a source of pride. Many learners who complete a diploma will continue with further education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a high demand for GED or high school Diploma programs, especially Diploma programs</li> <li>• Aboriginal learners require specialized supports to be successful within the mainstream education system (e.g. someone who can support them, specialized learning accommodations such as writing a test in a quiet room, someone to help identify possible learning disabilities, tools to help address learning disabilities like a special computer)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities to improve apprenticeships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lot of focus on apprenticeships and the trades yet the current program does not always work in an Aboriginal context because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The learner profile (see above) is unique</li> <li>• There are limited apprenticeship opportunities on reserve</li> <li>• Employers on reserve are small and therefore do not have the ability to meet all of the program requirements (such as providing required training, or meeting the 1:1 ratio of apprentice to trainer)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Obtaining employment in a trade often requires a person to join the “trade union” representing that particular trade. Employers seeking qualified trades people will then hire people from the “trade union”. This creates employment challenges because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Without income it can be challenging for Aboriginal people to pay the union dues</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to their unique learning profile some Aboriginal learners struggle to successfully complete standardized apprenticeship tests required for trade certification. These learners are therefore unable to obtain their trade certification, despite having completed all other requirements of the apprenticeship program</li> <li>• Flexibility within the program is important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard an example where the First Nations community was able to work with the Ministry to allow an on-reserve employer to take on more than one apprentice</li> <li>• Heard examples where employment and training organizations covered union dues</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p>required to join the trade union. However, until they have joined the trade union their ability to obtain employment in their trade is limited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We also heard that sometimes preference for jobs is given to long standing union members (or their family members) which can be a barrier for Aboriginal people as many are new to the union and/ or do not have any family members in the union</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Gaps between training and employment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients do not always understand the type of job that the training they are requesting will lead to (e.g. clients requesting truck driver training do not know what working as a truck driver is like)</li> <li>Clients may finish training and struggle to find work because they do not have work experience</li> <li>With some exceptions there was limited consideration given to whether the training being provided would lead to employment. Exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heard about an Aboriginal Institute that collects information about jobs required for on-reserve employers and the surrounding community and then runs training programs to address this need. The same programs are usually not offered year over year (until demand for a job that a particular type of training is offered for returns)</li> <li>Some organizations encourage participants to review information about job availability in the area</li> </ul> </li> <li>Perception that some students, particularly youth, have unrealistic expectations about what type of employment will be available once training has been completed. Two examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students expect there will be a job for them once training is complete</li> <li>Students expect they will be qualified for a high paying job with a lot of responsibility right away</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients may finish the training, start a job and then decide they don't like the job they are in, then quit</li> <li>Providing realistic job previews and ensuring clients understand where training will lead before enrolling the clients is important. An example of a realistic job preview program was the "Trade Sampler Program" operated by the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Board of Ontario</li> <li>Incorporating co-ops or work placements in training programs is beneficial. Examples we heard about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing clients with opportunities to work in the service provider's organization</li> <li>Creating volunteer opportunities in businesses on reserve</li> <li>Aboriginal Institutes that include co-op in their programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Variety of training programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A variety of training programs are being offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities exist to share programs across the province to build on success and limit duplication of work effort to develop programs</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p>by providers Examples of training programs provided include: literacy, life skills, cultural training, trade specific etc.</p>	<p>that have already been developed</p>
<p><b>Using external service providers can be expensive and is not always effective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sending students to private colleges or certificate granting organizations tends to be more costly than an organization or community offering the training themselves</li> <li>• Advertising by private colleges and certificate granting organizations can lead to a number of requests from clients for tuition funding for programs offered by these schools. However, the certificate is not always recognized or does not translate into helping the client to obtain employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to examine and develop a better way for using private colleges effectively</li> </ul>
<p><b>Limited infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of physical infrastructure on reserve (e.g. buildings)</li> <li>• There are not enough computers on –reserve to support on-line learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finding a place to deliver training programs on reserve is difficult</li> <li>• Training may need to be held off reserve which increases the cost of delivery and is more disruptive to the learners (especially if learners are in remote regions and need to leave home for extended periods of time)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional differences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional differences are especially relevant when considering training delivery. The region where training is delivered has implications for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation and travel</li> <li>• Availability/ frequency of training</li> <li>• Relevant training topics</li> <li>• Likelihood that training will translate into employment</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Transportation considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Reserve - there is no public transit and some people do not have a drivers license so must rely on friends or relatives to drive. This can be a barrier to participating in training offered off-reserve</li> <li>• Rural locations – public transit is limited and does not always run during a time when the person needs to get to a training program</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Availability/ frequency of training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery in northern and remote regions, particularly on reserve is especially</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Costs of delivering training programs can be high, especially in the north</li> <li>• Training programs must provide for transportation and in some cases living expenses, especially in the north</li> <li>• Clients in remote communities face more barriers to obtaining training. It is disruptive if they must leave home, especially because many have a family</li> <li>• Training need to incorporate financial support (e.g. money to travel home, housing allowance) and support networks (e.g. opportunities to talk to people in the same situation, access to organizations in the community where clients are living during training, staff to provide encouragement or help clients obtain required supports/ services). This helps participants living outside of their community to succeed as it can be challenging and isolating</li> <li>• Training programs may not directly lead to employment but can still help people to better themselves and their community (e.g. chainsaw training was offered to people in one of the northern communities. This did not lead to</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p>challenging because populations are small and far from everything. Participants are often required to travel to obtain training (sometimes to another reserve, sometimes to an urban centre if there are not enough participants or an instructor who is willing to work in a remote community for the duration of the training)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant training topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant training depends on the employment needs of the region (e.g. in some regions there is more focus on mining which would be less relevant in a place like Toronto)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Training leading to employment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On Reserve (particularly in Northern settings) there might not be employment opportunities to train people for</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>direct employment but prepared participants to help with maintenance around the community)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional differences impact the training required to obtain employment (e.g. one region could have a need for heavy equipment operator training, another may require welding training)</li> <li>• Entrepreneurial training may be especially relevant in communities/ regions where employment opportunities are limited</li> </ul>

## Employment

Comments in this section relate to what we heard about employment services. This includes services that provide clients supports required to achieve employment (Employment Supports) as well as information we heard about the labour market.

Examples of Employment Services include:

- Resume writing and interview skills
- Job search
- Job placement and connection

Examples of Employment Supports include:

- Child care
- Transportation
- Support groups
- Clothing allowances
- Payment of union dues to allow people to join a trade union

The following themes related to employment emerged:

1. Aboriginal people have some unique needs
2. Many employment service providers
3. Regional differences

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Aboriginal people have some unique needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many participants felt that racism and/ or discrimination was still a barrier facing Aboriginal people both in terms of obtaining a job (because people don't want to hire Aboriginal people) and in terms of how Aboriginal people were treated once they have a job (e.g. other employees may deliberately make their jobs more difficult)</li> <li>• Some participants expressed concerns about programs that force employers to hire a certain number of Aboriginal people as this does not always create a positive environment</li> <li>• Some Aboriginal people, especially those in northern or remote communities have never had a job and/ or have limited exposure to a role model who has (e.g. a family member) because entire generations have been on social assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Important to build relationships with employers and provide information to help them to understand the benefits of working with Aboriginal people</li> <li>• Important to have an employer who is supportive and willing to help Aboriginal people succeed. For example, we heard about an employer who noted there were issues with how other workers were treating Aboriginal workers. The employer intervened and put a stop to the behavior</li> <li>• Important for employers to have an understanding of Aboriginal people and their realities to help ensure the employment relationship is successful (e.g. understanding of family commitments that many Aboriginal people have)</li> <li>• Providing support is important. Examples include: helping clients realize employment is an option, providing clients with mentors who they can seek guidance from about how to cope</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
	with challenges encountered in an employment setting. While this may sound obvious, it was noted someone who has never been exposed to a parent or family member who has been employed will have limited to no experience with what employment entails and/ or how to cope with adversity that can be encountered in an employment setting
<p><b>Many employment service providers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In some places, particularly urban settings there are a large number of employment service providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It can be challenging for employers to know which provider they should call to access potential employees. This can result in missed employment opportunities for clients</li> </ul>
<p><b>Regional Differences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional differences are especially relevant when considering employment. Where in the province the person lives has implications for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The types of jobs available (e.g. in Ottawa many jobs are bilingual, in Sudbury there is a heavy focus on mining and industry)</li> <li>The number of jobs (e.g. some regions are economically depressed and there are very few jobs, particularly in northern and isolated reserves)</li> <li>Awareness of/ familiarity with employers or jobs that might be available outside of the reserve</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations of success may need to be different – if there are no jobs available, obtaining employment should not be a measure of success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Might need a greater focus on developing and starting businesses</li> </ul> </li> <li>To obtain employment in some regions participants need to leave home. In a remote on-reserve setting this is usually for a longer period of time and it may therefore require the participant to maintain two properties (one on reserve, one where they are working). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is more costly, more complicated and more isolating. A person who does this may need additional support (emotional and financial)</li> <li>It can take a long time to ensure someone is ready for this type of challenge</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Monitoring

Comments in this section relate to what we heard about monitoring activities. This includes. There was limited commentary about monitoring (how organizations keep in touch with, and seek feedback from participants; however, the following two points emerged consistently.

- Organizations tend to use surveys as a means for collecting feedback from participants
- Engaging in ongoing monitoring (e.g. following up after 3 and 6 months) is challenging because clients lose touch/ can be a transient population. Furthermore, providers may encounter more immediate work demands that distract them from monitoring activities. One participant noted that providing cell phones with pre-paid minutes was a good way to keep in touch with clients



## 4. PROGRAM DESIGN – FUNDING AND METRICS

This section presents what we heard about program design with a particular emphasis on program funding and performance measurement as a number of comments we heard about programs were related to funding and measurement.

### Funding

The following themes related to how funding is provided emerged:

1. Many funding restrictions
2. Multiple funders
3. Constant funding pressure

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Many funding restrictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are numerous restrictions on what program funding can be used for (e.g. expenses that can be covered)</li> <li>• Organizations may be required to attach funding when referring a client to another service provider</li> <li>• Issuing funds to social assistance clients for training may impact their eligibility and/or the amount of income assistance they receive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for required capital investments such as training facilities, and computers/laptops etc. is inadequate</li> <li>• Organizations may need to identify alternative sources of funding to cover costs that cannot be covered as part of program funding but are essential to client success (e.g. paying for child care)</li> <li>• Organizations are not always able to spend funding because not enough people are seeking the service that the money has been earmarked for, yet there are other people who are not able to obtain service because funding for the requested service has been depleted</li> <li>• Organizations are not always encouraged to work together because working together can require one provider to transfer funds to another provider</li> <li>• Clients may be deterred from participating in a training program if they are concerned about or misunderstand the impact that the training funds received will have on their eligibility for Ontario Works/Ontario Disability Support Program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Multiple funders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers receive funding from a variety of sources including the federal government (primarily through the ASETS program) as well as the provincial government (through various ministries depending on the scope of services/ programs offered by the providers)</li> <li>• Granting organizations and private donations also represent a source of funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When organizations deliver a number of programs, with funding from multiple sources, there can be more flexibility to identify funding that can be used to meet the needs of clients (e.g. pay for supports clients require that might not be an eligible expense in one program but are covered in another)</li> <li>• Organizations delivering multiple programs have more flexibility to share employees</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
	across programs
<p><b>Constant funding pressure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many participants noted that the level of program funding was insufficient and has not increased in many years</li> <li>Funding is not always tied to volumes or demand (e.g. providers may be experiencing additional demand for programs/ services but because funding is not linked to volumes additional funding is not available)</li> <li>Providers experience constant uncertainty about where funding for the next year will come from because funding is recalibrated yearly and/ or providers must apply for grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations are not able to offer certain programs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations experience difficulty planning ahead in terms of program offerings and/ or required staffing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Metrics

The following themes related to metrics and performance measurement emerged:

1. Too much reporting
2. Not capturing the right things

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Too much reporting</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many participants expressed concerns about the increasing “reporting burden”. Providers of the Skills and Basic Literacy program appeared to be experiencing some of the highest reporting burden <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants receiving ASETS funding noted that quarterly reporting was replaced with annual reporting but that the annual reporting has become very cumbersome and is ultimately more work than quarterly reporting</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations are frustrated</li> <li>Organizations are finding it challenging to keep up with all the reporting and feel that reporting comes at the cost of serving clients</li> <li>Some organizations have needed to hire additional administrative support to handle reporting. Other organizations feel they are “caving” under the demands of the reporting</li> <li>We heard that some smaller organizations have closed due to an inability to keep up with reporting requirements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Not capturing the right things</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appears to be a heavy focus on metrics that measure the number of people who completed a training program and/ or the number of people who were employed</li> <li>Concerns the metrics are not measuring the right things <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of a training program and/ or obtaining employment is not seen to be the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations are frustrated</li> <li>Organizations would like the opportunity to be involved in helping to develop the metrics that will be used</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p>only measures of success. Often there are a number of services and supports that need to be provided before training or employment is possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are many factors beyond the control of providers that impact success (e.g. if a participant is in an abusive relationship that deteriorates he/she may not be able to complete a training program. Providers have no control over this)</li> <li>• The provincial tracking system does not capture the additional work to prepare clients for training and/or to become employment ready <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New ASETS database allows providers to capture a variety of other services that were provided to a client that may not be directly connected to employment and training</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reporting periods are not long enough to capture successes. Clients are facing complex challenges and it can take a long time for them to be ready to enter into employment or training. Success cannot be measured in months. It takes years</li> <li>• Tracking down clients after they have finished with the program to collect metrics is challenging</li> <li>• Challenging to know what success should be attributed to (e.g. a new business might not succeed but the person could use what they learned from that business to successfully start another business)</li> </ul>	

## 5. COLLABORATION

This section presents additional information about how organizations are working together as well as what we heard about additional opportunities to improve collaboration.

We heard many excellent examples of how organizations and service providers were working together to provide services to their clients. For example, organizations with a specific focus on Aboriginal people are working with each other as well as mainstream service providers.

Collaboration is occurring across various providers (e.g. between First Nations communities, Employment Ontario, Friendship Centres, schools and school boards, employers, municipal Ontario Works delivery offices, not-for-profits, LBS organizations etc).

Some examples of how organizations are working together included:

- Working together to develop a common assessment tool that can be used for assessing the needs of clients for multiple programs and services
- Regularly scheduled information sharing meetings between service providers in a particular region Involving other organizations on the provider's board
- Shared programming, resources or space

The following themes related to collaboration emerged:

1. Formal collaboration networks
2. Informal collaboration networks
3. Working to improve collaboration with mainstream providers
4. Barriers to collaboration
5. Regional considerations

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p><b>Formal collaboration networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of formal collaboration networks we heard about were primarily at the federal level               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASETS program appears to have formal tables comprised of agreement holders. Tables are used for communication between the federal government and providers as well as across providers. Note: while ASETS is a new program it is essentially a replacement of a previous Federal program. It therefore has a well established delivery network (e.g. agreement holders who flow funding to the LDMs)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Examples of formal collaboration networks at the provincial level we heard about included:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association --a professional association</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to make use of existing tables to seek input and communicate with providers</li> <li>• Opportunity to make use of existing networks to deliver provincial programs (as opposed to creating new organizations which are costly, time consuming to establish, and can result in duplication of effort)</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<p>made up of First Nations Ontario Works administrators across Ontario</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Institutes Consortium (for the Aboriginal Institutes)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Informal collaboration networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of self-initiated collaboration networks where providers, usually in a particular region, meet to discuss programs and services</li> <li>• Diverse groups of organizations collaborating (e.g. school boards, high schools, employers). For example, we heard about collaboration with a school board to offer a high school Diploma program. We also heard about collaboration with high schools to arrange for special work spaces or accommodations for Aboriginal students attending mainstream high schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires one organization to take initiative to set it up and provide funding which can sometimes prevent collaboration from occurring</li> <li>• Excludes providers in other part of the province</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working to improve collaboration with mainstream providers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some organizations have provided training to help mainstream organizations understand some of the unique considerations when servicing Aboriginal people, as well as specialized programming that is available for Aboriginal people</li> <li>• Varying levels of success and engagement with mainstream providers. Depends on individual personalities at the organizations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heard during one focus group that Ontario Works delivery agents (off reserve) are working well with Ontario Works delivery agents (on reserve) to support the transfer of services when people move to/ from reserve</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Varying levels of referral and collaboration (some organizations are more likely to refer than others)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training enables mainstream providers to better meet the needs of Aboriginal people and is therefore seen to be helpful and well received</li> </ul>
<p><b>Barriers to Collaboration</b></p> <p>Participants noted the following as barriers to collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal time or resources dedicated to ensuring collaboration happens</li> <li>• IT systems are not integrated (e.g. a client on Ontario Works moving from a reserve to an urban centre has files on different systems)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to develop a system where information about various service providers can be accessed (e.g. web portal)</li> <li>• Opportunity to identify ways to improve information flow</li> <li>• Opportunity to create and provide funding to support more formal collaboration networks</li> </ul>

What We Heard	Suggested Implications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not knowing or being aware of other organizations and/ or the services they provide</li> <li>• Privacy considerations that prevent agencies from sharing client information</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Regional Considerations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration can be more challenging in remote northern communities because of large distances between providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>

**Federal versus Provincial Programming**

During the engagement MNP did not specifically ask participants to identify “gaps” in federal programming that could be supplemented with provincial programming or funding. However, one thing we did consistently hear participants refer to was “funded” versus “non-funded” ASETS services. Some examples of funding gaps that we heard about (which could have also been related to provincially funded programs) included:

- Limited funding for infrastructure required to deliver training on reserve (e.g. funding to build buildings on reserve)
- Limited funding for technology and learning supports required to respond to unique learner profiles (e.g. lap tops so that students can complete school work, specialized software to help students with learning disabilities to complete school work)

We also heard from a number of participants that their organization would be interested in delivering provincial programming.

## 6. REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

During the engagement one of the primary differences in needs was related to regions in the province where services were being provided. The table below summarizes some of the key regional differences that emerged.

		Location			
		Remote Northern Reserves	Northern Ontario (including those living on-reserve)	Southern Ontario (including those living on-reserve)	Major Service Location (Thunder Bay, Toronto, Ottawa, London etc.)
Client Journey	Access	Typically living on-reserve. Single service for provider (almost exclusively Ontario Works based), Capacity of service providers limited, Service providers have other duties and are not solely focused on E & T	There are more service providers but this is still limited to some degree. The service providers appear to have a high degree of capacity and commitment. They take on a holistic approach, not just focused on E&T.	Most towns and reserves located in southern Ontario are driving distance to a major urban centre. As a result there tend to be more services clients can access. On-reserve, many clients would access services from a multi-service agency located in the community. One challenge can be the transition from using services on-reserve to using services in an urban centre because there is limited integration or coordination.	There tend to be multiple service providers. Some offer a single window approach to services (e.g. Friendship Centres, Community Centres) and others are more focused on a particular type of service (e.g. Employment). While more services tend to be available the challenge for clients and providers is understanding how to work together and what services should be accessed from where.
	Assessment	Assessments performed are very basic. Referrals are extremely limited (purely based on availability). Capacity of individuals to perform assessments could be very low. Limited evidence of any significant plan development.	More detailed intake and assessment process performed than in remote communities. More of a plan development than in remote communities. Friendship centres were able to provide most of the services needed by clients. More referrals taking place than in remote communities due to more service providers available.	More opportunities for referral given availability of services. Some reserves in southern Ontario also appeared to have more services on-reserve would could provide more opportunities for referral but also introduce complexity for service continuity. Some examples of multiple service providers located on reserve.	Many opportunities for referral
	Pre-Employment Services	Extremely high level of pre-employment service needs. This condition is coupled with little to no ability to acquire these skills at present.	Extremely high level of pre-employment service needs, however, there is increased (some limitations) accessibility to pre-employment services.	Varying levels of need for pre-employment services. Ontario Works clients tend to have high needs for pre-employment services and we heard that many would not be ready for or qualify for some of the other provincial employment and training programs	Varying levels of need for pre-employment services. Ontario Works clients tend to have high needs for pre-employment services and we heard that many would not be ready for or qualify for some of the other provincial employment and training programs. In major service locations there are also organizations who are specifically dedicated to providing pre-employment services (like the Skills and Basic Literacy program).
	Training Services	Virtually all training services are external and require major alterations of life for the participant, coupled with a variety of additional challenges to living outside their community. Any localized training has a variety of issues from facilities to technologies to cost etc.	Virtually all training services are external to communities and require alterations of life for the participant, coupled with a variety of additional challenges to living outside their community. Localized training still has a variety of issues from facilities to technologies to cost etc. however, not as significant as remote communities.	Some opportunities of offer training in communities and/ or participants can leave the reserve to access training opportunities with less disruption (e.g. Can drive to/ from training on a daily basis. Assuming they can drive). Tend to be more types of training available given closer proximity to larger populations. Participants living in rural communities are still challenged to attend training given limitations with public transit.	Many types of training available. Less disruptive for participants to participate as training is available in the city where they reside. There tends to be more access to public transit meaning transportation is less of a consideration.
	Employment Services	Extremely high unemployment rates, very limited employers, there is a need for advanced skill sets but there are systemic barriers to obtaining and implementing. The employment supports services are virtually non-existent. There are limited opportunities and the job market functions in a completely different manor. There were samples of creative and successful approaches (chain saw training and home care worker) to training and employment creation (this appears highly dependant on the individuals involved).	There is a considerably greater job availability. There is a varying degree of skill sets required which can accommodate this client group better however, there are still hurdles to seeing clients into the job market (job histories, potential misconceptions, lack of understanding of Aboriginal communities etc). Increased employment services but still limited. There is a considerably greater access to the job market. Requirements for programs to succeed are based on pre-development and capacity building.	Generally more employment opportunities, especially for those who are willing to leave the reserve. Tends to be less disruptive as people can in the words of one participant "leave the reserve in the morning, drive to work in the city and be home in time for dinner". Transportation can still be a barrier to obtaining employment.	Typically have access to many employment opportunities. More likely to have access to public transportation, and in general there are less barriers to obtaining employment.
Monitoring:	Very basic measurements for short periods of time, very difficult client group to track and communicate with.	Measurements still need to be qualitative over quantitative. There is a far greater tracking and knowledge of the clients going forward.	Some monitoring occurring in accordance with requirements set out by the program.	Some monitoring occurring in accordance with requirements set out by the program. Potentially more challenging to keep track of clients as there are many providers clients could be accessing.	

## CONCLUSION

In summary, we heard the Aboriginal population differs from the general population in some respects due to factors such as extreme remoteness and isolation, ongoing challenges with poverty, negative experiences with government and the residential school system, as well as a different culture and world views.

In designing employment and training programs for Aboriginal people, the most successful programs:

- Ensure a “holistic” approach to program delivery whereby participants can access various services that may or may not be directly connected to employment and training (e.g. child care, transportation, housing, skills and basic literacy, addiction support etc.)
- Incorporate culturally sensitive or safe activities
- Provide flexibility within funding allocations and program guidelines to allow providers to address specific needs of the population being served (e.g. providers can allocate money to child care or incorporate cultural programming)

More specifically, we also heard that the following must be considered to ensure that employment and training programs meet the needs of Aboriginal people:

### Access

Ensuring a culturally familiar point of contact is critical to success. Seeking support requires courage and often clients seeking services have had a poor experience with service providers or government. If clients do not feel welcomed or supported when they decide to seek services, the opportunity to help them is lost.

### Assessment

Conducting a proper assessment of a client’s needs is critical to ensuring the client receives the appropriate services. We heard that a proper assessment takes time to complete, and that the person conducting the assessment requires the appropriate skills and training to build rapport and understand what the client’s true needs are. Skills and knowledge can include cultural awareness and an understanding of the challenges that Aboriginal people have experienced.

### Pre-Employment

Pre-employment services are a critical and high demand component of employment and training services for Aboriginal people. Examples of pre-employment services include: financial management, basic literacy, and access to additional support or resources to help find housing.

Skills or experience (such as experience renting an apartment, or exposure to someone who has had a job) that are assumed in mainstream employment and training may not be present for Aboriginal people.



### Training

When delivering training for Aboriginal people we heard it is important to consider that the profile of the Aboriginal learner differs from mainstream learners. Many are mature students, learn differently, or could have learning disabilities. Providing support (such as customized curriculums, help with study skills etc.) is vital to ensuring success. Furthermore, because secondary completion levels tend to be below the general population there is also a greater demand for GED or high school Diploma programs. We also heard that a lack of infrastructure on reserve limits opportunities to provide training on reserve and often requires transportation to be provided as part of offering a training program. In addition, there are significant regional considerations when delivering training programs. In northern and remote regions, participants must often leave the reserve, which can be highly disruptive. People in this situation require support to help them to succeed in an urban centre (e.g. housing, support groups). There also tend to be more training programs that participants can access in southern Ontario and large urban centres.

### Employment

Unique considerations for delivering employment services to Aboriginal people include: hesitation to hire Aboriginal people in some communities, and limited role models in some cases (e.g. generations where people have been on social assistance). Regional considerations also factor into employment services. For example, people located close to large urban centres generally have more employment opportunities, and obtaining employment off the reserve tends to be less disruptive to their lives. In remote, particularly northern communities, there tend to be fewer opportunities and people must leave home for extended periods of time to work.

### Monitoring

There was limited discussion about monitoring. However, we did hear that engaging in ongoing monitoring of clients can be challenging, given that the population tends to be transient and organizations may be preoccupied with more immediate work demands.

### **Program Design – Funding and Metrics**

We heard from participants that there are many restrictions on how funding can be used, that there are multiple sources of funding, and that there is constant funding pressure.

Participants also expressed concerns that there was too much reporting, and that metrics were not capturing the right things. This is a source of frustration and some participants feel heavy reporting requirements are taking away from helping clients.

### **Collaboration**

We heard many examples of how organizations were collaborating formally (through established networks such as ASETS) or informally through self-initiated groups in a region or city. This included collaboration across Aboriginal service providers as well as with mainstream providers.

We also heard about some of the barriers to collaboration between providers which included: no formal time or resources being allocated to collaboration, lack of integration across IT systems, privacy

considerations, and the requirement for funding to flow with the person, which discourages referral between agencies/ providers.

### **Regional Considerations**

The region where a person lives tends to have the greatest influence on needs and service availability. Servicing clients in northern remote regions is costly, many clients are required to leave the community to seek services and employment opportunities tend to be limited. In the south, clients tend to have improved access to service (even when living on reserve) since many are within driving distance to an urban centre.

In summary, the engagement provided an opportunity to build a solid understanding of the current employment and training landscape for Aboriginal people in Ontario. This understanding positions the Ministry well for future engagement.

## APPENDIX A – LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTED

- Barrie Native Friendship Centre
- Georgian Bay Native Friendship Centre
- Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
- Huronia Area Aboriginal Management Board
- Nbaakaawin Kwe: Native Women's Learning Centre
- Ontario Aboriginal Youth Council
- Ogemawahj Tribal Council
- Peterborough Native learning program
- Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre
- Wasauksing Learning Centre
- Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business AND Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Suppliers Council
- Chiefs of Ontario
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Ministry of Community and Social Services ODSP Branch and Social Assistance and Municipal Operations (SAMO) Branch
- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
- Aamjiwnaang First Nation (formerly Chippewas of Sarnia)
- Caldwell First Nation
- CanAm Indian Friendship Centre of Windsor
- Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
- Kettle & Stony Point First Nation
- London District Chiefs Council
- Moravian of the Thames (167)
- Munsee-Delaware Nation
- N'Amerind Friendship Centre
- Nokee Kwe
- Walpole Island First Nation
- Ningwakwe Learning Press
- Historic Saugeen Métis
- Ontario Aboriginal Literacy Coalition
- Anishinabeg Outreach Employment and Training Inc.
- Fort Erie Indian Friendship Centre
- Grand River Employment and Training Inc.
- Hamilton Regional Indian Centre
- Katkwenyes Literacy: Basic Skills Program
- Mississaugas of the New Credit
- Niagara Regional Native Centre
- Ogwehoweh Skills and Trades Training Centre
- Six Nations Polytechnic Inc.
- Batchewana Employment and Training
- Naadmaadwiuk LDM
- Niin Sakaan Literacy Program
- Ontario Aboriginal Youth Council
- Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre
- Thessalon First Nation
- Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association (ONWAA)
- Anishinabek Nation (Union of ON Indians)
- Garden River First Nation
- Gezhtoojig Employment & Training
- Independent First Nations (Wabaseemoong)
- Mnidoo Mnising Employment & Training Services
- Nipissing First Nation
- North Bay Indian Friendship Centre
- North Shore Tribal Council - Mamaweswen
- N'Swakamok Friendship Centre
- Ontario Native Education Counselling Association (ONECA)
- Sagamok Development Corporation
- Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve
- Ininew Friendship Centre
- Waubetek Business Development Corporation
- Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI)
- Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute (KTEI) - M'Chigeeng
- Mushkegowuk Employment & Training Services
- Timmins Native Friendship Centre (also has literacy program)
- Wabun Tribal Council (Mamo-Nuskomitowin)

- Bimose Tribal Council
- Fort Frances Adult Literacy Program
- Grand Council of Treaty #3
- Independent First Nations (Shoal Lake 39)
- Kenamatewin Native Learning Centre
- Min-O-Qwe-Ke-Ga-Bwe'in Social Services (7 First Nations) w/ Kenora Chiefs Advisory
- Kenora Anishinaabe Kweg - Northern Region
- NeChee Friendship Centre
- Red Lake Friendship Centre
- Shooniyaa Wa-Bitoong Training and Employment Centre
- Women's Council - Saakaate House
- Wiinisidotam Adult Literacy Program
- United Native Friendship Centre
- Seven Generations Education Institute
- Independent First Nations Alliance
- Keewaytinook Okimakanak / Northern Chiefs Council
- Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre
- Shibogama First Nations Council
- Sioux Lookout Area Management Board
- Sunset Women's Aboriginal Circle
- Windigo First Nations Council
- Ontario Coalition of Aboriginal People, Sioux Hudson Literacy Council
- Anishinabek Employment Training Services
- Anishnawbe Skills Development Program
- Fort William First Nation
- Literacy Northwest
- Long Lake #58
- Matawa First Nations Management Inc. (Matawa Tribal Council)
- Nishnawbe Aski Nation
- Northern Nishnawbe Aski Education Council
- Red Sky Métis Independent Nation
- M'Chigeeng First Nation / Whitesand First Nation
- Thunderbird Friendship Centre
- Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre
- Ontario Aboriginal Youth Council
- Ontario Aboriginal Youth Council
- Aroland First Nation
- Constance Lake First Nation
- Eabamatoong First Nation
- Marten Falls First Nation
- Ginoogaming First Nation
- Matawa First Nations (Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment & Training Services)
- Matawa First Nations (Ring of Fire Alliance)
- Mishkeegogamaang First Nation
- Neskantaga First Nation
- Nibinamik First Nation
- Webequie First Nation
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Oshki-Pimache-o-win Education and Training Institute
- Chiefs of Ontario - Youth Council
- Confederation College including Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC) and Ring of Fire
- Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
- Noront Resources Ltd. (Ring of Fire Alliance)
- Aboriginal Labour Force Development Circle
- Akwesasne Area Management Board
- Algonquins of Pikwanagan
- Kagita Mikam Aboriginal Training & Services
- Minwaashin Lodge - Aboriginal Women's Support Center
- National Association of Friendship Centres
- Odawa Native Friendship Centre
- Ontario Aboriginal Youth Council
- Tungasuvvingat Inuit
- Indian Agricultural Program of Ontario
- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development (Federal Gov't)
- Congress of Aboriginal Peoples
- First Nations Technical Institute
- HRSDC (Federal Gov't)
- Iohahiiio Adult Education Centre - Akwesasne Mohawk Territory
- Aboriginal Human Resource Council
- Academic Group #1 (Aboriginal Focus) - Michael Mendelson (Caledon Institute of Social Policy) and Hayden King

- Academic Group #2 (Labour Market Focus)  
- Arthur Sweetman, Jeffrey Smith and  
Morley Gunderson (youth)
- GoldCorp, Inc
- Hydro One
- Mississuagas of New Credit First Nation
- De Beers
- TransCanada Pipelines
- Aboriginal Education Office, MTCU

## APPENDIX B - LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Mnídoo Minising Employment & Training
2. Gezhetojig Employment and Training
3. Wiky Ontario Works
4. Sagamok LDM
5. North Shore Tribal Council (NSTC)
6. Peterborough Native Learning Program
7. Niagara Peninsula Area Mgt Board
8. Lake Erie Native Friendship Center
9. Hamilton Regional Indian Friendship Center
10. GREAT
11. Niagara Regional Native Center
12. SN Achievement Center (LBS)
13. Kagita Mikam Employment and Training
14. Huronia Aboriginal Area Management Board
15. Mississaugas of New Credit
16. Batchewana Employment and Training
17. Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians
18. CanAm Indian Friendship Centre of Windsor
19. Chippewas of the Thames First Nation
20. Four Winds Business and Training Centre/ Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation
21. London District Chiefs Council
22. Moravian of the Thames/ Stepping Stones
23. Walpole Island First Nation
24. Tungasuvvingat Inuit
25. Akwesasne Area Management Board
26. Minwaashin Lodge
27. Algonquins of Pikwanagan
28. Miziwe Biik
29. Toronto Council Fire
30. Grey Bruce Native Friendship Centre
31. Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
32. Métis Nation of Ontario
33. Eabametoong First Nation
34. Mishkeegogamang First Nation
35. Neskantaga First Nation
36. Longlake #58 First Nation
37. Literacy Northwest
38. Anishinabek Employment Training Services
39. Kenamatewin Native Learning Centre
40. United Native Friendship Centre
41. Bimose Tribal Council
42. Shooniyaa Wa-Bitoong Training and Employment Centre
43. NeChee Friendship Centre
44. Red Lake Friendship Centre
45. Nishnawbe-Gamik Friendship Centre
46. Professor Jeffrey Smith
47. Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities Aboriginal Education Office
48. Ontario Native Welfare Administrators Association (ONWAA)
49. Sioux Hudson Literacy Council
50. Confederation College, including Indigenous Peoples Education Circle (IPEC) and Ring of Fire
51. Noront Resources Ltd. (Ring of Fire Alliance)
52. Ministry of Community and Social Services ODSP Branch and Social Assistance and Municipal Operations (SAMO) Branch
53. Six Nations Polytechnic Inc.
54. Ontario Native Literacy Coalition
55. First Nations Technical Institute
56. Iohahiiio Adult Education Centre - Akwesasne Mohawk
57. Aboriginal Human Resource Council
58. Professor Michael Mendelson
59. Anishinabek Educational Institute (AEI) / Union of Ontario Indians
60. Wabun Tribal Council (Mamo-Nuskomitowin)
61. Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund
62. Ginoogaming First Nation

## **APPENDIX C – LIST OF QUESTIONS USED**

### **Roles / Responsibilities**

- Tell us about your organization and your role within the employment and training system?
- How are these roles and responsibilities similar to or different from other organizations’?
- How are the programs/services you deliver funded? (For example, provincial government, federal government, municipal government, donations, clients, other)

### **Employment and Training Needs**

- Which employment and training programs/services do your clients have the greatest need for?
- How are employment and training needs of Aboriginal people different from those of non-Aboriginal peoples’?
- How do Aboriginal employment and training needs differ across regions and communities?

### **Program Design**

- What are the key objectives and benefits of the employment and training programs/services you deliver?
- What works/ doesn't work well for delivering employment and training programs/services?
  - How are your programs/services accessed by clients?
  - What employment and training programs/services need to be grouped together or combined in order to improve service, if any (e.g. job search with basic literacy)?
- How do you work with other Aboriginal employment and training programs/providers?
- How do you work with non-Aboriginal organizations on employment and training programs/services?
- How do you assess client eligibility/suitability for your employment and training programs/services? How are needs of employers considered in this assessment?
- How do you measure the performance of your programs?

### **Improvement Opportunities (Only interview participants were asked questions about improvement opportunities)**

- What are the strengths/ areas for improvement pertaining to:

- Programs/services that are available to various populations (e.g. on- and off-reserve populations, urban and rural, Métis, Inuit, First Nations, remote communities, clients with disabilities)
- How Aboriginal people access employment and training programs/services
- How organizations work together
- How programs/services are funded
- How eligibility for programs/services is determined
- How Aboriginal client needs are assessed
- How performance is measured
- Meeting the needs of employers and future labour market requirements
- What are some innovative programs/services/practices you have seen related to employment and training?





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