

**CHILD CARE PILOT PROJECT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FROM MINORITY FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITIES**

A Child Care Pilot Project is being undertaken in five communities across Canada to gain new knowledge about the development of young francophone children in minority francophone communities. This pilot project is part of the Government of Canada's Action Plan for Official Languages.

The project will offer enriched child care services in French to young francophone children, and will evaluate the effects of those enriched services on their linguistic, cultural, and overall development.

Social Development Canada (SDC) invites minority francophone communities that are interested in participating in the pilot project and that meet the selection criteria to submit their application. Five communities will be selected to participate.

There are two steps in the application process. The first is to submit a letter of intent to determine if an interested francophone minority community is qualified to proceed to the second step of the application process. The deadline for receiving letters of intent is February 28, 2006, at 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. SDC will notify the qualifying communities and ask them to submit a proposal to participate in the pilot project. The deadline for receiving proposals is April 3, 2006, at 4:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. Letters of intent and proposals will not be considered if they are received after these deadlines, or if they are sent by email or facsimile. Send letters of intent and proposals to the following address:

Child Care Pilot Project
Knowledge and Research Directorate
Social Development Canada
3rd Floor, Tower B, Place Vanier
355 North River Road
Ottawa ON K1A 0L1

If you have any questions concerning this request for proposals, please send them by e-mail to knowledge_connaissances@sdc-dsc.gc.ca or contact Edith Duclos at (613) 957-6768.

BACKGROUND

All children deserve a good start in life, to be healthy, safe, and ready to learn. Research studies have shown that the first years of life are very important for the development and well-being of children because it is at this time that they acquire abilities and skills that will influence learning, behaviour and health throughout their lives. It is during these early years that children develop language skills and begin to form their identity. As well, parents have a major impact on the development of their children through their role as primary educator, and by their choices and behaviours during the first years of their children's lives.

Early, good-quality interventions for promoting children's development, including language skills and identity, during this critical period can bring benefits for children that can last throughout their lives. They can also have positive future implications for society associated with the economic participation of these children, and to their contributions to social and civic life.

Studies on the development of Francophone children in minority Francophone communities have shown that an increasing percentage of these children face special challenges when they arrive at a French-language school because they lack the skills needed to integrate properly. Research results have shown that there is a significant disparity between the language skills of Francophone children in minority Francophone communities relative to Anglophone children. Language skills are crucial to a child's readiness to learn and for having a good start in life. Early intervention that will give young Francophone children in minority Francophone communities the same chances of success, in French, as those enjoyed by other Canadian children is essential.

Research has been carried out to evaluate the effects of early intervention for young children and for disadvantaged children. However, nothing is known about the effects of early intervention on young Francophone children living in minority Francophone communities, notably the effects on the development of their language and identity.

The Child Care Pilot Project is a research initiative that has been designed to develop knowledge on the effects of enriched French-language child care services on the linguistic, cultural and overall development of children living in minority Francophone communities. The pilot project will offer enriched child care services in French to young Francophone children, and will evaluate the effects of those enriched services on their linguistic, cultural and overall development.

The pilot project is designed around the development of young Francophone children, and encourages parents to transmit their language and culture to their children, and communities to participate actively by, for example, using the information generated by the pilot project. By involving young children, families and communities, the pilot project supports minority Francophone communities that are proud of their identity and culture, and that are ready to participate fully in their own development.

The pilot project will generate new knowledge for minority Francophone communities that will add to that previously acquired on effective approaches in early childhood development, and will inform the development and delivery of child care services for young children in minority Francophone communities by identifying the interventions and family and community factors that influence language development, a sense of belonging and the development of positive results for the children.

The Child Care Pilot Project has the following aims:

- To provide data and analyses concerning the effects of enriched child care services in French on the linguistic development and cultural identity of preschool Francophone children in

minority Francophone communities, and more particularly their knowledge and use of French, their knowledge of French culture and their sense of belonging to that culture;

- To provide data and analyses on the effects of enriched child care services in French on the readiness to learn of those children, including physical well-being and motor development, emotional health and approaches to new experiences, social knowledge and competence, and general knowledge and cognitive skills; and
- To increase knowledge of the socioeconomic, family, cultural and community factors that influence the development of young Francophone children living in minority Francophone communities.

BENEFITS FOR COMMUNITIES

Communities that participate in the pilot project will benefit in the following ways:

- from enriched child care services for the children and their families (see the section *Enriched Child Care Services* for more information) adapted to the needs of minority Francophone communities;
- from the documentation, materials and thematic resources (e.g., training manuals, teaching guides, books, compact discs, toys) related to the enriched child care services, and at no cost;
- from the ongoing training related to the enriched child care services;
- from the developmental outcomes and progress of their children; and
- from the research results on the effects of the enriched child care services on the linguistic, cultural and overall development of their children.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR THE PILOT PROJECT

The principles that guide the manner in which the pilot project is carried out are as follows:

- A key lever for promoting the development, and the linguistic and cultural vitality, of minority Francophone communities is to ensure that their children have a good start in life;
- Parents are the primary educators of their children. They need to be informed to be able to participate best in their children's learning;
- Children learn through play. Enriched child care services must draw inspiration from an approach to play activities in which the child learns while playing;
- Enriched child care services include services for children, parental support and participation, and a partnership between parents, child care providers, family literacy practitioners, and communities;

- Regional representation of minority Francophone communities is important;
- Interventions for children and their families must be as homogenous as possible so that the effects of a given intervention can be compared and analyzed; and
- Choices relating to the implementation and management of the pilot project must respect the integrity of the methodological framework while, at the same time, being respectful of the needs of the children, the families and the minority Francophone communities.

ENRICHED CHILD CARE SERVICES

SDC has established an advisory committee composed of representatives from the Commission nationale des parents francophones, the Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français, l'Alliance canadienne des responsables, des enseignantes et des enseignants en français langue maternelle, university researchers and SDC. The committee agreed that, in order to meet the needs of minority Francophone communities, the enriched child care services should include both child and family components, as well as training for those providing the enriched services.

The child component would be child care services for children in child care centres that would develop language skills in French (knowledge and use of the French language) and a sense of identity (awareness of and a sense of belonging to the Francophone culture, remembering that a number of children come from families of mixed culture and language and also have an Anglophone culture). These child care services should also have a francization component for children who need to acquire skills or improve their skills in French.

The family component would endeavour to foster parental participation in the child's learning. Such participation could take the form of keeping abreast of and supporting what the child learns at the child care centre, and through quality interactions with the child. To guide parents in this endeavour, family literacy services will be offered to the children and their parents in the form of workshops at which parents will receive advice, resources and training on how to encourage their children's learning, notably by exposing them to reading and writing.

For a given intervention to be evaluated in each community, enriched child care services must be the same and must be applied in the same way in each community. To implement the enriched child care services and to ensure that they are the same in each of the participating communities, it was necessary to identify a preschool program that would be used in child care centres and a family literacy model that would be offered to the children and their families.

SDC thus engaged experts to evaluate and recommend various French-language preschool programs used in Canada. The preschool program chosen to be delivered to the children for the duration of the pilot project is the *programme des prématernelles fransaskoises* offered to young Francophone children in Saskatchewan. This program meets the objectives of enriched child care services in that it was designed to address the francization needs of children in minority Francophone communities and contains activities for parents and specific features to promote the use of the French language. For further information on this program, please consult the

documentation available (in French) at the Internet site:
<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/francais/fransk/prematernelle/html/index.html>.

SDC also engaged experts to evaluate and recommend French-language family literacy models. The Ontario model *Des livres dans mon baluchon* was chosen to be delivered to the parents and children. This model meets the objectives of enriched child care services in that it takes into account the special characteristics of minority communities and helps parents understand the overall development of their children and enables them to follow their children's progress in all areas of development. For further information on this model, please consult the documentation available (in French) at the Internet site:
<http://www.coindela famille.ca/outils/resource.asp?id=441>.

The committee has recognized that best practices in the field of early childhood development and family literacy show that training is key for obtaining positive results. Enriched child care services thus include training on the preschool program and on the family literacy model for both child care providers and family literacy practitioners.

In addition, for the delivery of the child care services in child care centres and the family literacy services, documentation, material and thematic resources (such as training manuals, teaching guides, books, compact discs and toys) will be provided to the communities, at no cost, and the communities will be able to keep them after the pilot project ends.

SCOPE OF THE PILOT PROJECT

Description

The pilot project is a demonstration project based on a random assignment research methodology. In other words, the children participating in the study will be randomly divided into a program group of children who will receive the intervention and a control group of children who will not receive the intervention. The control group will serve as a point of comparison for evaluating the effects of the intervention on the program group. For this pilot project, the intervention consists of the enriched child care services defined in the previous section.

Five minority Francophone communities will be selected to participate in the pilot project. In each community, 40 three-year-old Francophone children will be selected and placed at random in one of two groups: 20 children will be part of the program group and will receive the enriched child care services in French in existing child care centres; and 20 children will be part of the control group and will continue to receive the child care services they normally receive.

For the purposes of the pilot project and consistent with section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, a Francophone child is defined to be the child of a parent "ayant droit"; in other words, a child i) one of whose parents' first language learned and still understood is French; or ii) one of whose parents has received their primary school instruction in Canada in French; or iii) one of whose siblings has received or is receiving primary or secondary school instruction in French in Canada. The pilot project is thus addressed to all children eligible to

attend French-language schools, and not only to children who already speak French or who are presently attending a French-language child care centre.

Children participating in the pilot project must be representative of all the Francophone children in their community and reflect their reality in which they live (e.g., some have an Anglophone parent, some do not speak, or speak little, French at home). This implies that if, for example, 50 per cent of the children in the community have an Anglophone parent, then 50 per cent of the children participating in the pilot project should have an Anglophone parent.

Moreover, the pilot project is addressed to children who are three years old before January 1, 2007. In other words, the children participating in the pilot project must be between 2 years and 8 months of age and 3 years and 8 months of age when delivery of the enriched child care services begins in September 2006.

Each community must have a minimum of 40 three-year-old Francophone children. Parents must consent to participate throughout the duration of the pilot project and to allow their child to be a potential participant in the pilot project, throughout its duration, before the children are randomly selected. There will be a round of selection to assign the children to the program and control groups. If the number of three-year-old children in the community is greater than 40, there will be a second round to select a larger number of children, so that information on them and on their families can be collected in order to develop a portrait of the community. Parents must be informed and must understand that their child could be part of the program group, the control group or might not be selected in the second round.

Moreover, by giving their consent, parents agree to allow their child to be tested to evaluate his or her linguistic and cultural knowledge and overall development; to participate in surveys on their family and socioeconomic status (see *Research activities* section); and, for parents of children in the program group, to take part in family literacy workshops, and to put family literacy activities into practice and to discuss them.

Implementation of the pilot project in the communities, which will include random selection of the children and training for child care providers and family literacy practitioners, will begin in the Spring of 2006. The child component of the enriched child care services is scheduled to start in September 2006 and will run until the end of September 2007. The family literacy workshops will commence in the Fall of 2006 and will consist of about 12 three-hour sessions that take place once every week or every two weeks.

The period of time during which the enriched child care services will be offered could be extended by one year in order to better capture the effects of those services on the linguistic and cultural development of the children. This could require a commitment on the part of the children, the parents and the communities to participate longer in the pilot project. A decision in this regard will be taken in mid-2006.

Research activities

It is important to assess whether the enriched child care services in French have had an impact on the children's outcomes. Therefore, there will be direct evaluations of the children and various

data collection activities: surveys of parents as well as surveys of key community representatives.

To evaluate the effects of the enriched child care services on the children's linguistic, cultural and overall development, there will be evaluations of the children in the program and control groups at regular intervals, and their aggregated results will be compared. The children will be evaluated on their knowledge and use of French, their knowledge of and identification with Francophone culture, and their readiness to learn. Only the children in the program and control groups will be evaluated.

Moreover, to understand the influence of socioeconomic, family, cultural and community factors on the children's outcomes, the parents of the children in the program and control groups will participate in at least two surveys:

The first survey, conducted at the time delivery of the enriched child care services begins, will provide a portrait of the children and families living in the communities. To produce a more complete and statistically more reliable portrait, the parents of the children selected in the second round will also be questioned. Although these children will not receive the enriched child care services and their development will not be evaluated, the contribution of their parents in the first survey is very important, because it will allow more complete information to be gathered on the circumstances of families living in minority Francophone communities.

A second survey will be conducted at the end of the pilot project to gather information from the parents of the children in the program and control groups on any changes in socioeconomic and family factors that may have influenced the development of their children.

The information gathered in these surveys will pertain to, for example, family background, socioeconomic status, linguistic profile, use of French in the home and in the community, cultural resources and practices, and family literacy.

Finally, at the time delivery of the enriched child care services begins, a survey will be conducted with key representatives of the participating communities in order to obtain information on such topics as community history, community literacy, cultural resources and practices, and Francophone community organizations.

All personal information collected will be kept confidential and will be used exclusively for statistical purposes.

Operational structure

The Knowledge and Research Directorate of Social Development Canada has overall responsibility for all aspects of the pilot project. However, as previously indicated, an advisory committee has been created. Its role is to provide advice on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the pilot project.

SDC is in the process of hiring a research firm, which will be responsible for managing the pilot project (and is referred to in this document as the “project manager”); in other words, the firm will be responsible for setting up and managing the pilot project in each of the communities and will also be responsible for such research activities as data gathering and analysis (direct evaluations of the children and surveys) and the writing of research reports. The project manager will hire a community coordinator for each of the participating communities (see the *Criteria* section).

An organizational chart that describes the key participants in the pilot project in each community is included in Annex C for information.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROJECT MANAGER

To ensure that the role of SDC, or of the project manager acting for SDC, is known and is clearly defined, SDC undertakes to:

- provide the documentation, training and resources for the preschool program to be delivered to the children in the program group;
- provide the documentation, training and resources for the family literacy model to be delivered to the children and parents of the program group;
- organize and pay for the family literacy workshops (salaries of family literacy practitioners and documentation associated with the model);
- draw up, assisted by the community, a list of three-year-old Francophone children in each community and randomly assign them to the program and control groups;
- assisted by the community, communicate with the parents of the three-year-old Francophone children to inform them about the pilot project, its methodology and the way it will be carried out;
- pay for the professional services provided and the expenses incurred (e.g., travel, materials, equipment) by the community coordinator for the pilot project in each of the communities;
- pay the expenses (e.g., travel) incurred by the champions for the pilot project in each of the communities; and
- carry out, and pay for, data collection and analysis, and the writing of the research reports.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMUNITIES

To ensure that the role of the community is known and clearly defined, the following is a list of the responsibilities that the community must assume:

- The community must provide an existing and appropriate place for the delivery of the enriched child care services, pay the associated costs (rent, insurance, employee salaries), and obtain the licences required to operate the child care services;

- The community must provide the staff that will provide the child care services;
- The community must provide the materials, such as the furnishings required for the child care services;
- The community, or the program group parents, must pay the child care fees and other costs (e.g., meals, transportation) associated with the child care services of the program group;
- The key stakeholders identified in this request for proposals (the champion, the association of community partners in early childhood development, and the applicant organization) must establish mechanisms for ongoing communication and hold regular meetings with the community coordinator and the project manager;
- The community, assisted by the project manager, must draw up a list of three-year-old Francophone children living in the community; and
- The community must assist the project manager in communicating with the parents of the three-year-old Francophone children to inform them of the pilot project, and of its methodology and its implementation.

In addition, the community should encourage communications and partnerships in the field of early childhood development, both within and outside of its community, to make use of the results of the pilot project.

CRITERIA

To ensure the success of the pilot project, SDC has identified the following requirements that communities need to meet.

1. Not-for-profit organization

The applicant organization, which is the organization responsible for submitting its community's application, must be a not-for-profit organization and carry out activities in the field of early childhood development in minority Francophone communities.

2. Local community

The applicant organization must represent a local community.

For the purposes of the pilot project, a community is local if it is contained in a particular geographic area whose limits are known to the residents. The geography of the community is continuous and contiguous. Residents of the area share a feeling of belonging and identify with at least part of the geographic community. For example, parents go to places where they meet people socially (such as parks), are members of social groups (such as community sports teams for their children) and/or have ties to social institutions (such as the school attended by their children and the school board).

The community may be a portion of a larger community, such as one finds in cities (e.g., Orleans in Ottawa). In this sense, one can speak of a “community within a community”. A community may also be an extended region in which many localities are linked by geography. In this case, one may speak of a “group of communities.”

3. Number of children

In each community proposed for the pilot project, there must be at least 40 three-year-old Francophone children.

The applicant organization must provide an estimate of the number of three-year-old Francophone children in its community (Francophone children are defined for purposes of the pilot project as children of a parent *ayant droit* and not only children for whom French is their mother tongue). This number must be greater than or equal to 40 in order to consider the community’s application. The applicant organization does not have to provide a list of the names of the children who could participate in the pilot project. This list will be drawn up by the community and the project manager after the communities have been selected.

The applicant organization must also provide a description of the linguistic profile of the three-year-old Francophone children in its community. This profile could include information on mother tongue, the language spoken at home, etc.

Because specific information on the number and linguistic profile of three-year-old Francophone children may not be readily available, the applicant organization might draw on information for all preschool children in their community to obtain an estimate. In this respect, communities may wish to use Census data compiled by region and by province that is available (in French) from the internet site of the Commission nationale des parents francophones:

http://cnpf.ca/index.cfm??Repertoire_No=-1007459830&Voir=publi_liste&Categorie_No=754&Menu=0.

4. Stakeholders

SDC has identified key stakeholders that must exist within a community involved in the pilot project: a community coordinator; an association of community partners in early childhood development; and a champion.

Community coordinator

The applicant organization must identify potential candidates to fill the position of community coordinator.

The community coordinator is hired by the project manager. The coordinator serves as the main point of contact in the community and is responsible for supervising all aspects of the implementation of the pilot project in the community. The coordinator shall establish regular and complete mechanisms for ongoing communication.

The community coordinator works full-time to perform many duties, including the following: helping with data collection; making sure that parents and children participate; and making sure

that the community infrastructure are adequate and appropriate. The community coordinator must thus possess a variety of skills, including sound leadership abilities, knowledge of research and community development, excellent French-language communications skills (oral, written, and by e-mail), and a knowledge of the Francophone community.

Association of community partners in early childhood development

The applicant organization must show that there is a group of community partners in the proposed community that focuses on issues in early childhood development.

The association must be an existing association, must have experience in the field of early childhood development and must have carried out significant projects on a collaborative basis. The association should be comprised of a broad range of players in various sectors of activity (such as health, education and literacy).

Champion

The applicant organization must identify a champion in the proposed community.

The champion is defined as an organization or individual that plays a leadership role in arousing interest and promoting the participation of the members of the community for the duration of the pilot project.

5. Resources

The applicant organization must demonstrate that the community has the infrastructure (locations for delivery of both the child care and family literacy services) and materials (tables, chairs, crayons, toys, etc.) to deliver the enriched child care services throughout the duration of the pilot project, and the personnel required to deliver the child care services in child care centres, and that these resources meet provincial regulations. For this purpose, the applicant organization must partner with existing not-for-profit child care centres in order to use their infrastructure, materials and/or personnel for the pilot project for delivery of the child care services.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

There are two steps to be followed in applying to participate in the pilot project: i) submission of a letter of intent; and ii) submission of a proposal by those communities that meet certain mandatory criteria (see Annex A). SDC will review letters of intent to determine if communities meet the mandatory criteria, will notify applicant organizations that their communities qualify and request that they submit a full proposal, and will provide qualifying applicant organizations with the criteria that will be used to evaluate their proposals.

Step 1 – Letter of intent (no more than 15 pages)

A template for a letter of intent is included in Annex B. The applicant organization's letter of intent should be based on this template.

In its letter of intent the applicant organization must:

- indicate its understanding of the pilot project;
- provide the reasons why the community wishes to take part in it;
- outline the community's strategy for encouraging and supporting all players (e.g., participation of parents and children throughout the pilot project, whether in the program or control group, or in surveys);
- outline the community's strategy for identifying all Francophone children in the community who are eligible to participate in the pilot project (e.g., the children who speak English but who have one parent *ayant droit*);
- identify the strengths of, and challenges for, the community, and outline the community's strategy for successfully participating in the pilot project; and
- identify the longer-term benefits from participating in the pilot project (e.g., knowledge on the effects of the enriched services, new partners and networks) and how information generated and experience acquired will be used (e.g., promotion of child care services in French).

Furthermore, with its letter of intent, the application organization must provide the following information:

- its name (including any abbreviations); mailing address and postal code; telephone number (including area code); facsimile number (including area code); e-mail address; Internet site; name, title and coordinates (including e-mail address) of the contact person for the application; mailing address of contact person (if different); business number and corporation number;
- a description of its mandate, aim and objectives;
- proof of its status as a not-for-profit organization, such as letters patent or a charter;
- a description of the community: its socio-economic character, its rural or urban character, the characteristics of its population (number and proportion of Francophones), etc. The applicant organization can use different sources of information to describe its community, notably the statistical data by community that are available on the internet site of Statistics Canada: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/Profil01/CP01/Index.cfm?Lang=E> ;
- a map showing the territory of the proposed community;
- a description of the three-year-old Francophone children in the community: an estimate of their number and their linguistic profile (mother tongue, language spoken at home, etc.);
- a description of the association of community partners in early childhood development: number of years the association has been in existence, its stability over time, and a description of the groups that comprise it;

- identification of a champion and description of his/her role in the community: his/her name, number of years of involvement in the community, relationship between the champion and the community; and
- identification of a not-for-profit child care centre(s) that is willing to participate, and to provide the necessary personnel and resources: a letter of support from the not-for-profit child care centre(s) that is interested in, and that has the necessary personnel and resources for, participating for the duration of the pilot project.

Step 2 – Proposal

Applicant organizations whose community qualifies will submit a full proposal to SDC for evaluation as part of the second step of the application process (some of the required information is also required in the letter of intent; the applicant organization will need to repeat the information to ensure that all of the required elements have been provided, but it can add further information if it so wishes). Applicant organizations that do not submit a proposal will have their applications rejected.

Applicant organizations will need to provide the following documentation.

- To show that it is a not-for-profit organization that conducts activities in the field of early childhood development for minority Francophones, the applicant organization will need to ensure its proposal includes proof of its status as a not-for-profit organization, such as letters patent or a charter, along with proof of its organization’s mandate, such as a copy of its official mission statement.
- To show that its community is a local community, the applicant organization will need to include in its proposal a map indicating the perimeter surrounding the community proposed for the purposes of the pilot project.
- To show that there are potential candidates for filling the position of community coordinator, the applicant organization must include in its proposal documents attesting to the fact that the candidates for the position of community coordinator are experienced, such as the name of the person or persons being considered as candidates, a description of their skills and qualifications, and the likelihood that these individuals would accept the position of community coordinator for the pilot project.
- To demonstrate the existence of an association of community partners in early childhood development in the proposed community, the applicant organization will need to include in its proposal a list of the organizations represented in the association, other documents attesting to its social role (e.g., mission statement, recent minutes, documentation proving the existence of previous projects), and a letter of support from the association describing its achievements and recent projects.
- To establish the existence of a champion, the applicant organization must include in its proposal the name of the champion, documentation attesting to the champion’s leadership

role, and a letter from the champion attesting to his or her support for the community's application under the pilot project.

- To show that there is a minimum of 40 three-year-old Francophone children in the proposed community, the applicant organization will need to ensure that its proposal includes documents that reflect its estimation of the number of children.
- To show that the community has the infrastructure, materials and personnel needed to ensure the delivery of the enriched child care services throughout the pilot project, and that these resources comply with provincial regulations, the applicant organization must include in its proposal documents attesting to the existence of infrastructure for the entire duration of the pilot project (e.g., lease or letter attesting to the use of space); the existence of materials, with a list of furnishings already in place or in the process of being purchased; and the existence and availability of personnel (e.g., child care providers), with a list of the names of the individuals and a description of their qualifications, skills and experience. The applicant organization will also need to include in its proposal a letter of support from each not-for-profit child care centre taking part in the pilot project attesting to their willingness to participate and to their ability to provide the necessary resources, along with a description of the resources they will provide.

In addition to the required documentation, the applicant organization will need to provide the following information:

- a) A description, in written form, of the community and its key partners, including:
 - a description of the applicant organization: its mandate, aim and objectives; its experience with government projects and/or similar projects associated with early childhood development, its leadership role within the community; and its relationship with the key partners;
 - a description of the local community: a map describing the territory; information (e.g., community newspaper, publicity concerning cultural activities or events) that demonstrates the ways in which the ties that bind the residents transcend mere geographical boundaries (sense of belonging, cultural identity); and a statement describing the nature of the community (e.g., a community within a larger community, a group of communities);
 - a description of the community: socioeconomic character, rural versus urban character, population characteristics (e.g., number and percentage of Francophones);
 - a description of the champion: the number of years of experience or involvement in the community; the role that the champion has played in projects relating to early childhood development; examples of the champion's recent successes;
 - a description of the association of community partners in early childhood development: the number of years the association has existed and its stability over time, a description of

the groups of which it is comprised, the type of projects in which the association has participated, examples of the association's recent successes;

- a description of the associated child care centres: number of years in existence, reasons they wish to participate in the pilot project, number and age of children they accept, services offered (e.g., full time or part time, language of service);
 - a description of the community coordinators: the qualifications and skills of the potential candidates; the interest and availability of each candidate; the relationship between the potential coordinators and the community; and the role they have played in other community projects;
 - a description of the children of the community in terms of socioeconomic diversity, language spoken in the home, attendance at French-language schools, participation in child care services, and information relating to their readiness to learn; and
 - a description of the strengths (e.g., qualified personnel) and challenges (e.g., need for material resources) of the community and/or key partners in terms of carrying out the pilot project successfully, and the measures planned to overcome these challenges.
- b) The applicant organization may add any other information that it deems relevant concerning the community and the key partners.
- c) The applicant organization must show, in a written document, how the community is prepared to participate in the pilot project and what benefits it will derive from it.

EVALUATION PROCESS

SDC staff will identify qualifying communities on the basis of the information contained in the letters of intent. Each letter of intent will be judged on the five mandatory criteria and all other information provided will be reviewed. If the letter of intent doesn't meet these criteria, the application will be rejected. Candidates will be informed in writing whether or not they qualify for the second round of the application process; qualifying communities will also be notified by telephone or e-mail to expedite the process.

For the final selection of communities, SDC will conduct an internal evaluation of the proposals on the basis of predetermined criteria that will be forwarded to qualifying communities after their letters of intent have been reviewed. SDC will also carry out an external evaluation of the proposals by asking stakeholders to assess the extent to which the community concerned is prepared to take part in the pilot project, to make the efforts required to help ensure its success, and to complete the pilot project.

SDC will combine the results of the internal and external evaluations in order to do a final ranking and will make final recommendations. SDC will try to get communities in various regions and provinces to participate. Candidates will be informed in writing whether or not their proposal has been accepted.

ANNEX A – Evaluation criteria for the letter of intent

Mandatory criteria: These five criteria must be met in order that the community qualify to submit a full proposal
The estimated number of three-year-old Francophone children is equal to or over 40.
There is an association of community partners in early childhood development.
The applicant organization is a not-for-profit organization.
An existing not-for-profit child care centre(s) is willing and able to participate, and to provide the necessary resources.
There is a champion.

ANNEX B – Template for the letter of intent

Letter of Intent for the Child Care Pilot Project [no more than 15 pages]

- Name of proposed community:
- Province:

Information on the community's participation in the pilot project

In its letter of intent the applicant organization must:

- indicate its understanding of the pilot project;
- provide the reasons why the community wishes to take part in it;
- outline the community's strategy for encouraging and supporting all players (e.g., participation of parents and children throughout the pilot project, whether in the program or control group, or in surveys);
- outline the community's strategy for identifying all Francophone children in the community who are eligible to participate in the pilot project (e.g., the children who speak English but who have one parent *ayant droit*);
- identify the strengths of, and challenges for, the community, and outline the community's strategy for successfully participating in the pilot project; and
- identify the longer-term benefits from participating in the pilot project (e.g., knowledge on the effects of the enriched services, new partners and networks) and how information generated and experience acquired will be used (e.g., promotion of child care services in French).

Information on the applicant organization

- Name of applicant organization:
- Acronym:
- Mailing address and postal code:
- Area code and telephone number:
- Area code and facsimile number:
- E-mail address:
- Internet site:

- Name and title of the contact person for the application:
- E-mail address of the contact person:
- Mailing address of the contact person:
- Business number:
- Corporation number:

Description of applicant organization

- Mandate of organization:
- Aim:
- Objectives:
- Proof of its status as a not-for-profit organization:

Description of the community

- Socio-economic characteristics of the community, its rural or urban character:
- Characteristics of the population (e.g., number and proportion of Francophones):
- A map showing the territory of the proposed community:

Description of the three-year-old Francophone children in the community

- Estimate of the number of three-year-old Francophone children:
- Linguistic profile of the children:

Description of the association of community partners in early childhood development

- Name of association:
- Names of organizations in the association:
- Description of organizations (e.g., their field of activity, their target population, etc.):
- The number of years the association has existed and its stability over time:

Identification and description of a champion

- Name of champion:

- The number of years of involvement in the community:
- Relationship between the champion and the community:

Identification of a not-for-profit child care centre(s)

- Letter of support:

ANNEX C – Organization chart for a community

The Child Care Pilot Project delivers enriched child care services to children and their parents, and collects information to assess child development outcomes from children, parents, and key community representatives. Five community actors assist in implementing the pilot project in each community: the applicant organization, the association of community partners in early childhood development, the champion, the providers of the child care services, and the family literacy practitioners. The community coordinator, nominated by the community and engaged by the project manager, is the principal liaison between the project manager and the five actors within each community. The project manager acts on behalf of Social Development Canada in implementing the Child Care Pilot Project in each community.

