

Evaluation of WD's Official Languages Action Plan 2000-2004

Final Report — May 2004

Prepared for:

Western Economic Diversification Canada

Prepared by:

Goss Gilroy Inc.
Management Consultants
Suite 900, 150 Metcalfe Street
Ottawa, ON K2P 1P1
Tel: (613) 230-5577
Fax: (613) 235-9592
E-mail: ggi@ggi.ca



GOSS GILROY INC.

Management Consultants
Conseillers en gestion

Table of Contents

- Executive Summaryi**
- 1.0 Introduction7**
 - 1.1 Context 7
 - 1.2 Evaluation Objectives..... 10
 - 1.3 Evaluation Scope 11
 - 1.4 Methodology 11
- 2.0 Evaluation Findings 12**
 - 2.1 Relevance of Action Plan Content 12
 - 2.2 Delivery and Design 15
 - 2.3 Success 21
 - 2.4 Accountability and Performance Monitoring..... 29
 - 2.5 Cost-Effectiveness 30
 - 2.6 Alternatives and Lessons Learned (Suggested by Respondents) 32
- 3.0 Conclusions36**
- 4.0 Recommendations39**
- Appendix A: Draft Logic Model**
- Appendix B: Recommendations From Previous Evaluation (1997)**

Executive Summary

A . Purpose and Methodology

WD shares the responsibility for meeting the requirements of the *Official Languages Act (OLA)*. WD's contribution to the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* is guided by a four-year Action Plan, which targets Part VII of the Act, particularly Section 41. The objectives of Section 41 are to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada; support and assist their development; and foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

WD has relied on unique partnerships with other federal departments, provincial governments and the community, to enhance community economic development opportunities within Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs). A key aspect of WD's Action Plan has consisted of introducing in 2001 Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs). The FEDOs offer a full range of business development services to the Francophone community throughout each province in Western Canada.

Objectives

This evaluation was initiated for two purposes. First, it is intended to meet accountability requirements to Canadian Heritage, who are responsible to report to Parliament under Section 42 of the Act. The second purpose is to provide timely, useful, relevant, and credible information on the continued relevance of the Action Plan. The objective of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, success and effectiveness, including strengths and weaknesses, of the implementation and outcomes of WD's Official Languages Action Plan.

Methodology

The evaluation was based on 30 key informant interviews with WD representatives, FEDO representatives, and stakeholders from other federal departments and the communities. Methodologies also included a documentation review and site visits in the four FEDOs. Fieldwork was conducted between September and November 2003.

B . Evaluation Findings

Relevance of Action Plan Content

Overall, evidence shows that the Action Plan was relevant. This partly stems from the consultations conducted with the communities. The creation of the FEDOs, in particular, is seen as very relevant as the CFDCs are not really meeting the specific needs of the Francophone communities.

Delivery and Design

Most observers agree that the Plan was implemented as planned, with minor but positive adjustments. Some challenges were encountered due to community expectations and turnover at WD.

FEDOs and WD are challenged by the fact that some community members perceive the FEDOs as being instrumental to other sections of the *Official Languages Act*, including those of Part IV. FEDO representatives also find that the WD coordinators' roles should be more clearly defined. WD coordinators are challenged by a heavy workload due to their coordinating activities as well as punctual translation and bilingual service delivery.

It is generally agreed that WD plays a pro-active role in collective federal department activities regarding Francophone communities. WD works with other Departments and governments.

Overall, respondents thought that the WD coordinators were able to prioritize issues and bring them to the *Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne*. Many agree that there were extensive consultations prior to the finalization of the Action Plan and that the plan was widely distributed. Representatives from three FEDOs said that their organizations were not consulted.

Success

Findings indicate that WD and their partners were most successful in producing, “Economic development projects providing concrete results for the Francophone communities receiving funding”, and “Better informed Francophone entrepreneurs.” However, they were less successful in providing, “More accessible funds to Francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs”. Only a limited number of loans have been

coordinated so far by the FEDOs.

The evaluation also shows that the Action plan has contributed to the strengthening of the relationship between WD and the Francophone communities. Challenges in achieving this include lack of awareness of FEDOs in the community and dispersion of Francophone communities across large distances.

A number of projects supported by the Action Plan are expected to produce long-term results. Examples of successful projects include the “Corridor touristique francophone de l’Ouest” (CTFO) and “La Maison du Bourgeois”. The objective of the Corridor touristique is to effectively promote the four Western Canadian provinces as tourist attractions for Francophone communities in Quebec, Western Canada and abroad. The project developed and coordinated promotional tools and events. Evidence shows that it has contributed to the increase in the number of Francophone tourists in selected sites in Western Canada.

In terms of assisting entrepreneurs, the evaluation findings show that the Action Plan has contributed to the development of better business skills and has better informed entrepreneurs. The FEDOs’ capacity to leverage other sources of funds is perceived as a very positive outcome for the OLMCs.

Accountability and Performance Monitoring

Opinions were mixed as to the effectiveness of performance monitoring. Most WD respondents felt that they received relevant and timely reports. However, there are mixed opinions about whether the objectives were measurable.

Cost-Effectiveness

Most respondents of this study felt that the WD investments as part of the Action Plan were cost-effective. Observers noted effective fund leveraging and some projects indicate extensive results considering the level of investments.

Alternatives

Theoretically, an alternative approach to FEDOs would be to have the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) assist WD in meeting Section 41 requirements. There is no evidence from this evaluation showing that the CFDCs could effectively play the role of the FEDOs.

C . Recommendations

Overall, results show that the Action Plan was generally implemented as planned and has been successful overall. This evaluation also shows that there is a need for FEDOs, that they bring significant benefits to the OLMCs, and that WD should continue to support their activities as well as special projects coordinated by them (and WD).

The following recommendations are suggested in light of the evaluation findings:

- For the next Action Plan, it is recommended that the roles and responsibilities of WD, the Coordinators and the FEDOs be clarified.
- A communication strategy should be developed to ensure that the roles of the FEDOs are understood with regards to the *OLA*.
- Considering take-up for the loans program, further research will need to be conducted to re-assess the needs of the Francophone businesses.
- There is evidence that the coordinators experience a heavy workload. WD should consider either increasing their allotted time to this role or determining ways of helping them accomplish their tasks in a more productive manner.
- Considering the visibility issue for the FEDOs, the next plan should incorporate specific actions to further promote the FEDOs and their services. These actions should also incorporate mechanisms to increase the visibility of the role of WD. Both FEDOs and WD should participate in this promotional effort.
- The next Action Plan should be more outcomes focussed and incorporate a performance monitoring framework. This would include a clear description of the FEDOs and their mandate, a logic model of the Action Plan, clear outcomes and objectives statements, and a performance measurement strategy. A logic model such as the one appended to this report would be helpful in guiding WD to determine key outcomes, performance indicators, and targets.
- Clear targets should be set for quantifiable indicators, such as the number of loans provided and jobs created.
- The measurement strategy should also involve a follow-up on previous projects to assess their long-term impacts and opportunities for renewal.

1.0 Introduction

This draft report presents the findings of an evaluation of WD's Action Plan for the Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* (2000-2004). This first section presents the background to this study, including a description of the origin of the Plan and the Action Plan itself, as well as an overview of the previous evaluation. Section 2.0 presents the findings. Section 3.0 presents the conclusions and recommendations. Remove on final copy

1.1 Context

Part of the Government of Canada's commitment to official languages includes support to the economic development of minority languages communities across Canada. With other departments, WD shares the responsibility for four parts of the *Official Languages Act (OLA)*:

- Part IV: Communications with and Services to the Public;
- Part V: Language of Work;
- Part VI: Participation of English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians; and
- Part VII: Advancement of English and French.

1.1.1 Section 41 of the *OLA*

WD's contribution to the implementation of the *Official Languages Act* is guided by a four-year Action Plan, which targets Part VII: Advancement of English and French, particularly Section 41. The objectives of this section of the Act are to:

- (a) enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development; and
- (b) foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

1.1.2 Overview of Action Plan

WD's Action Plan for the Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* outlines WD's commitment to fostering entrepreneurial, innovative, and sustainable Official Language Minority Communities (OLMCs) across Western Canada. WD has



relied on unique partnerships with other federal departments, provincial governments and the community, to enhance community economic development opportunities within OLMCs.

A key aspect of WD's Action Plan has consisted of introducing in 2001 Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) into the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN). The FEDOs are independent, not-for-profit organizations in each western province, governed by volunteer boards of directors representative of the province, with a mandate for francophone community economic development with a particular focus on entrepreneurial development. They include La Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique, La Chambre économique de l'Alberta, Le Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan, and Le Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba.

The FEDOs offer a full range of business development services to the Francophone community throughout each province in Western Canada, including the provision of information, mentoring, marketing advice, business counseling, support in the area of community planning information, access to capital, and the promotion of special economic development initiatives on a province-wide basis, comparable to other WD partnership network members.

In addition, WD collaborates with other federal departments such as Canadian Heritage under the Interdepartmental Partnership for the Official Languages Communities (IPOLC) program to meet the needs of the French speaking population in the West. It also participates in official languages sub-committees of the Councils of Senior Federal Officials in addition to partnership committees, which include provincial representatives. WD also ensures a presence in the francophone business communities.



1.1.3 Previous Evaluation

In 1997, Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) commissioned Praxis Management Consultants to perform an internal evaluation of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the degree to which the Department has taken the necessary measures to achieve, in accordance with its mandate, the two objectives set out in Section 41 and, to determine what measures should be taken in order to fully meet its obligations under this part of the *Act*. (italics)

Key Findings

The results indicate solid improvement in the quality of WD's planning from 1995 to 1997. The overall adequacy rating having risen from 9.63 percent in 1995-1996 to 60.16 percent in 1997 indicated that WD was on the right track to making the correct adjustments in terms of planning, called for by the Commissioner in his Evaluation Report on the First Generation of Action Plans for the Implementation of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* of 1988.

Interviews with community stakeholders that follow the federal government's progress in implementing Part VII revealed their consensus of a gap between the content of an institution's Action Plan and an institution's desired results. The evaluation interviewees recognized that this gap occurred in the majority of federal institutions. However, when the WD's performance was examined, the gap between planning and implementation was considerably smaller than average. The high degree of convergence between WD's planning and its actions set it as a model for sister institutions.

According to results, the main strengths of WD's Action Plan include:

- Leadership in interdepartmental co-ordination at the national level;
- Important, *ad hoc* projects launched in co-operation with OLMCs;
- Co-operation with Canadian Heritage in administering the Canadian Identity Program;
- Providing appropriate information on WD programs to the communities;
- The evaluation and awareness raising process inherent in the application of the Evaluation Framework of Part VII.



Many recommendations were also included in the evaluation. These appear in Appendix B.

1.2 Evaluation Objectives

This evaluation was initiated for two purposes. First, it is intended to meet accountability requirements to Canadian Heritage, which requests that each Department Action Plan be evaluated upon its expiry. As such, the evaluation will identify and report on WD's success in achieving its objectives as stated in its Action Plan 2000-2004, and on the challenges, gaps, and future undertakings with regards to the implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*.

The second purpose of this evaluation is to provide timely, useful, relevant and credible information on the continued relevance of the department's implementation of the Official Languages Action Plan, Section 41. This information will guide WD's Official Languages Section 41 team, managers and other stakeholders in developing the Official Languages Action Plan, Section 41 for 2004-2008.

Evaluation questions addressed by this evaluation encompass the issues of relevance, success and effectiveness, including strengths and weaknesses, of the implementation and outcomes of WD's Official Languages Action Plan.

In particular, the evaluation covers the following questions:

- Were the goals and targets developed clear and measurable?
- Were the targets meaningful, realistic and attainable?
- Were the targets met? Why? Or why not?
- What were the outcomes and/or barriers?
- What were the contributions or partnerships contributing to Section 41 of the *OLA*?
- What has the department learned overall?
- What needs to be addressed in the Action Plan for 2004-2008?
- Were the resources employed to ensure the Plan's implementation the most appropriate and efficient?



1.3 Evaluation Scope

The scope of this evaluation is the following.

- In terms of timelines, this evaluation covers the lifespan of the Action plan, that is, between 2000 and 2004. However, the bulk of the evidence was collected in Fall 2003.
- The evaluation mostly relies on qualitative information. As presented below, the evidence was gathered through key informant interviews. Findings are therefore not necessarily representative of all views and great care was taken when the findings were analyzed/interpreted. Program documents were also reviewed.

1.4 Methodology

This evaluation was based on 30 key informant interviews with WD representatives, FEDO representatives, and stakeholders from other federal departments and the communities. Methodologies also included a documentation review and site visits in the four FEDOs. Fieldwork was conducted between September and November 2003.



2.0 Evaluation Findings

This second section presents the evaluation findings. They are presented in the following order:

- 2.1 Relevance of Action Plan Content
- 2.2 Delivery and Design
- 2.3 Success
- 2.4 Accountability and Performance Monitoring
- 2.5 Cost-Effectiveness
- 2.6 Alternatives and Lessons Learned

2.1 Relevance of Action Plan Content

A key issue in all program evaluations is related to relevance. In the context of this evaluation, relevance was addressed by asking interview respondents to what degree the content of the Action Plan was relevant for the communities and WD overall. Responses were the following.

WD Respondents

Overall, all WD respondents agree that the content of the Action Plan is relevant for the communities. A number of WD representatives noted that the Plan was based on extensive consultations with the communities. WD utilized Canadian Heritage's community consultations mechanisms to undertake this. This process ensured that the actions in the Plan are in tune with the priorities of the communities. The special projects, for example, are appreciated because they were suggested by the communities themselves. The “Corridor touristique francophone de l’Ouest” is one of those projects (see Case Study Box).

Case Study: Corridor touristique francophone de l'Ouest (CTFO)

The objective of the Corridor touristique francophone de l'Ouest (CTFO) is to effectively promote the four Western Canadian provinces as tourist attractions for Francophone communities in Quebec, Western Canada and abroad. The partners include the four FEDOs and WD.

Activities. The project included many activities such as trade shows and fairs in Quebec, a promotional campaign, a tourist guide, marketing kits and the distribution and circulation of these marketing tools across Quebec and Western Canada.

Impacts to Date. According to interview respondents, the four Western provinces benefited from the marketing initiatives undertaken by the CTFO. The global visibility was increased and the door was opened to potential tourists from Canada and abroad. According to a WD respondent, Francophone organizations estimate that the project contributed to a 20 percent increase of Quebec Tourists to Western provinces.

Challenge. Some respondents mentioned that communication between the FEDOs and the head office of the CTFO was at times challenging. One respondent mentioned that this has led to some duplication in marketing efforts in the past.

One WD respondent noted that the consultation process also changed Francophone community perceptions. Many community members and organizations focussed many of their developmental projects on culture. However, through the consultations, many communities realized that their culture needs a solid economic base to remain strong.

One respondent noted that the flexibility of the Plan ensures ongoing relevance of the Plan for the communities. However, despite this flexibility, it was mentioned that it was challenging to create a multi-year plan that can foresee the needs of a community.

One of the Action Plan's greatest achievements is the provision of four year core funding to the FEDOs and the inclusion of these organizations into WD's Western Canada Business Services Network.



All WD respondents agreed that the FEDOs are relevant in providing business services in French. However, one WD respondent noted that the FEDOs mandate is not exclusive to the *OLA* and Section 41. WD must be cautious not to impose on the FEDOs its mandate and obligations towards the *OLA*.

While most respondents agreed that the Plan is relevant for WD, one respondent explained that most of the work done by WD is with organizations (business, research, etc.) that work in English. French capacity development to meet service requests is less of a priority, even though “entrepreneurship is part of WD’s business lines and that Francophones are part of the entrepreneur community.”

Stakeholders

The stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation also agreed that the content of the Action Plan was relevant for the communities. One respondent noted that the Plan is not only a moral engagement, but also an Action Plan for investment, which is needed in western francophone communities.

The funding to FEDOs is also considered relevant. According to one stakeholder, the CDEM (Manitoba FEDO) offers direct access to WD's products and services and is contributing to a stronger francophone presence in the economy. The variety of initiatives under the plan, including the strategic agreements and networks are very relevant.

One stakeholder noted that the Action Plan is oriented towards the FEDOs, through which WD deals with to address the needs of Francophone communities. However, in doing this, WD tends to forget the other organizations and associations in the communities that are able and willing to contribute. In the stakeholder’s opinion, WD's responsibilities have been transferred to the FEDOs.

FEDO Representatives

Overall, the respondents from the FEDOs also agree that the content was relevant. Many mentioned that a consultation process ensured the relevance of the plan. One respondent mentioned that the Action is pertinent considering that the CFDCs do not really fulfill the specific needs of the Francophone clientele, as do the FEDOs.

One respondent noted that while the Plan was relevant, it needs to reflect the fact that each FEDO is not equal and is at different developmental stages. Another respondent noted that the Plan was very general and that the take-up of some components was not significant. For example, most clients in BC are not looking for loans, according to the respondent.

2.2 Delivery and Design

The evaluation also assesses a number of delivery and design issues including the implementation of the Action Plan; the roles of the WD regional coordinators; the WD participation to the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (*Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne*¹); and the delivery of and consultation for the Action Plan.

2.2.1 Implementation

WD Respondents

Respondents were asked to what degree that the Plan was implemented as planned. Most respondents from WD agreed that the implementation was conducted as expected. One respondent explained this by the fact that the Secretary of State had made this a high priority. WD received good feedback from the communities during the implementation of the plan, according to a respondent.

One of the key dimensions of the Plan was the core funding to FEDOs. This was implemented as planned and respondents agree that this is a key instrument in providing business services to Francophones. It filled a void since the Department of Canadian Heritage's programs mostly focus on culture prior to WD's Action Plan.

¹ In 1997, the government of Canada and the Francophone and Acadian communities living in minority established the *Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne* (CNDRHFC) to develop links between them. The mandate of the committee is to promote economic development, entrepreneurship and new employment opportunities in francophone and Acadian communities outside Quebec. After establishing a Strategic Plan in 1999, the CNDRHFC implemented four co-ordinating groups on economic development and employability (*Regroupements de développement économique et d'employabilité*). The CNDRHFC's four priority sectors: rural development, the knowledge-based economy, the integration of youth in economic development, and tourism.

According to some respondents, a number of changes were made and new partners got involved during implementation. For example, the FEDOs were integrated and harmonized with PCH's Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities program (IPOLC). FEDOs were instrumental in identifying community needs and projects for that program. A WD respondent also noted that certain changes to the Plan were made to include a certain delegation of WD's responsibilities with regards to service delivery to business.

Stakeholders

Many stakeholders could not say to what degree the Plan was implemented as planned. Those who did generally agreed that the implementation was conducted as expected overall.

FEDO Respondents

Overall, FEDO representatives agree that the Plan was implemented as planned.

2.2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Coordinators

WD regional coordinators (1 per WD region) play a key delivery role in the Action Plan. The evaluation assessed this role by asking respondents 1) what should be the role of the coordinators; 2) are they playing this role; and 3) do they have adequate resources to play this role.

All Respondents

According to respondents, the regional coordinators are expected to play the following roles:

- Playing a champion and advocacy role within the Department;
- Communicating and explaining Section 41 to Department and communities;
- Spreading best practices within the Department;
- Playing a supporting role to the FEDOs;



- Being aware and sensitive to community needs; and
- Connecting/liaising role with the communities and other governments.

WD Respondents

One WD respondent noted that, although the Action Plan does not cover Part IV of the *Official Languages Act (OLA)* that deals with language of government communication and services, many community stakeholders expect that the FEDOs help meet that legal requirement. This confusion is sometimes challenging for the coordinators as they liaise with community members: the latter sometimes expect the FEDOs to play a role in the delivery of bilingual government services.

When asked about the support provided to the coordinators by WD, a majority of respondents agreed that the coordinators were supported in their roles. One respondent said that senior officers support the Plan and that this helps the coordinators. Some projects were extremely well supported, such as the Corridor touristique (“ADMs rant and rave about it”). Some offices are also actively supporting the coordinators, such as the Alberta Office, that gathers information and training materials in French on succession planning for rural businesses. Another example is the BC office that has helped develop an E-business CD ROM in French as a resource for francophone businesses.

According to a WD respondent, however, some of the department’s staff remain to be convinced that this WD responsibility (Section 41) is important, although attitudes are progressively changing. One respondent also thought that there is not enough leadership and support from senior management at the national level. Working in an organization that has limited bilingual capacity is also a challenge in itself.

FEDO Respondents

It was mentioned that the Coordinator's role should be clearly defined to ensure community commitment.

Two FEDO respondents mentioned how Coordinators are struggling with the heavy workload. A number of WD respondents confirm this. One WD respondent explained that the coordinators do not work full-time in this area and that their workload as

coordinators is actually higher than what it is supposed to be. Theoretically, 65 percent of their time is set aside for this role. Another WD respondent said that s/he responds to weekly inquiries either from the francophone community or internally to assist departmental staff in appropriate mechanisms to communicate with French language clients. Another WD respondent noted that *OLA* activities are blended in other projects, which makes it difficult to assess where *OLA*-time starts and ends. The respondent recommends that some *OLA* functions be integrated in WD job descriptions. More time would allow the Coordinators to be present in the Francophone communities and would help to promote a better understanding of Section 41.

Most of the FEDO respondents thought that the coordinators could benefit from more support. Apart from one representative, all said that senior members of WD could bring more support. One thought that the Department is not convinced of the importance of the FEDOs or of the Section 41 file.

2.2.3 Role of WD

As for WD, a number of federal Departments are expected to play a role in meeting the objectives set in Section 41 of the Act. These include the Department of Canadian Heritage, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), Health Canada, Justice Canada, Industry Canada and other organizations. Interview respondents were asked to what degree they thought WD has a continuous, proactive role in collective, federal department activities regarding Francophone communities of western Canada.

WD Respondents

Respondents from WD all agreed that WD works closely with other Departments, taking leadership on some projects. One respondent said that there are ongoing activities (“OLA was never off the agenda”). There are interdepartmental committees, regular conference calls, monthly and quarterly meetings, and collaborative projects. PCH (through the Interdepartmental Partnership for the Official Languages Communities program) and WD have collaborated on a dozen projects with Francophone communities. There are regular monthly and quarterly meetings. WD also works closely with FEDOs and federal departments to reduce duplications and increase collaboration. MOUs are signed with other federal departments. Information and services are also exchanged between departments.

Stakeholders

Most stakeholders agreed that WD plays a proactive role. One respondent mentioned WD’s participation in the *Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne*. However, in his view, the Department does not have a high profile and the influence of the Department lies mainly with the level of the individual that represents it.

FEDO Respondents

Representatives from two FEDOs agreed that WD plays a very proactive role with departments such as HRSD. Two other respondents, however, felt that WD has not been as proactive as expected. They said that WD, as well as other departments, could play a larger role in their province. Another mentioned that, although WD is an important partner among the federal departments, it could be more active in representing Western Canada community’s needs.

2.2.4 National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development

WD actively participates in the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development (*Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne*). Respondents were asked to what degree

WD coordinators have been able to prioritize issues and bring them to the Committee.

Only WD representatives provided answers to this question. Most respondents agreed that priorities areas have been identified (two mentioned these as been rural development, youth, knowledge-based industries and tourism). These are brought to the national table. In Manitoba, it is felt that the FEDO (CDEM) has had a huge impact on the priorities established at the national level. One respondent felt that the priorities are not always transferable/applicable to the regions. Another felt that the priorities are not really community based, contrary to some projects such as “Corridor touristique” and “Visions”.

2.2.5 Consultation and Delivery of Action Plan

Consultations were conducted to develop the Action Plan and the intention was that the Plan be communicated and distributed. Respondents were asked to what degree the Plan was provided to key stakeholders and feedback solicited.

WD Respondents

Most respondents agreed that consultations were conducted (“they made a real effort to involve key stakeholders and the community”). While it was impossible to consult every member of the community, the community leaders received the Action Plan before it was finalized. In B.C. the consultation process was a bit more problematic because they had to bring representatives of different groups together. Respondents said that this took a lot of time and relationship-building, but it was successful.

All WD respondents but one agreed that the Plan was widely distributed. The Plan was distributed through the Internet, copies were sent to senior officials and feedback was solicited according to respondents. One mentioned that copies were sent every year. Only one respondent felt that the Plan was not well distributed, at least at the beginning.

Stakeholders

The strong majority of stakeholders (among those who felt comfortable to answer)



agreed that the Action Plan was well distributed. One stakeholder said that PCH helped by providing a distribution list (interest groups, community groups, Commissioner of Official Languages). This helped ensure that the plans were disseminated to key stakeholders. The Plan was sent by email to key representatives who were asked to provide feedback on it. PCH, Industry Canada and WD have put the WD Action Plan on their respective web sites.

FEDO Representatives

FEDO representatives were also asked if they were aware of the consultations (even though the FEDO organizations did not yet have their designation when the preliminary versions of the Action Plan were distributed). Representatives from three of the FEDOs (Alberta, BC and Saskatchewan) said that their organizations (CEA, SDE and CCS) were not consulted. Manitoba representatives said their organization was consulted.

2.3 Success

This subsection presents the findings with respect to the success of the Action Plan in terms of rated achievements of targets and expected outcomes identified in the Action Plan, challenges and obstacles to expected outcomes achievement, and responsiveness and visibility of WD products and services. In the next subsection, the findings relevant to performance monitoring and reporting will be presented.

2.3.1 Rated Achievements of Targets and Expected Outcomes

All Respondents

Key informants were asked to rate the achievement of targets and expected outcomes identified in the Action Plan. Respondents were asked to rate on a 1 to 3 scale (not at all, in part, completely) the achievement of the following targets and expected outcomes identified in the Action Plan:

- Significantly strengthened relationship between WD and the Francophone communities;



- Provision of opportunities for WD to work with their communities on long-term issues;
- More accessible funds to Francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs;
- Economic development projects providing concrete results for the Francophone communities receiving funding;
- Better business skills among Francophone entrepreneurs;
- Better informed Francophone entrepreneurs; and
- Growth and increased numbers of Francophone entrepreneurs.

Exhibit 2.1 presents the average rating scores of all respondents and the average ratings given by WD respondents, other stakeholders and FEDO respondents.

Exhibit 2.1 Objective Achievement Ratings (1)

Targets and expected outcomes	Respondents			
	Overall average	WD	Stakeholders	FEDO
Significantly strengthened relationship between WD and the Francophone communities	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.3
Provision of opportunities for WD to work with their communities on long-term issues	2.2	2.1	2.5	2.1
More accessible funds to Francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs	2.1	2.4	2.1	1.7
Economic development projects providing concrete results for the Francophone communities receiving funding	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5
Better business skills among Francophone entrepreneurs	2.4	2.7	2.1	2.4
Better informed Francophone entrepreneurs	2.6	3	2.1	3
Growth and increased numbers of Francophone entrepreneurs	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.2

(1) Based on an average score of a 3 point scale, where 1= not achieved at all, 2= achieved in part, 3=completely achieved



Detailed Comments: Strengthening of The Relationship Between WD And The Francophone Communities

A large majority of key informants indicated that the significant strengthening of the relationship between WD and the Francophone communities had completely or partially been met. An equal number of key informants (nine) gave a rating of 2 and 3.

Two informants felt that this target had not been met at all with the remainder of the respondents indicating they did not know. The average ratings of all three groups were comparable although the ratings of FEDO respondents (2.3) were slightly lower as compared to WD and other stakeholders who rated, on average, the achievement of this outcome as 2.5.

Key informants cited a number of examples to support the achievement of this outcome. These include the creation of stronger Francophone organizations in British Columbia, the Saint-Laurent project, i.e., the Francophone Métis Interpretive Centre project in Saint-Laurent, delivery of workshops by WD partners, and the creation of FEDOs through stable funding. Some noted challenges to achieving this outcome were lack of awareness of FEDOs in the community and dispersion of Francophone communities across large distances.

Working on Long-Term Issues

Regarding the provision of opportunities for WD to work with their communities on long-term issues, the majority of key informants indicated that this result had been achieved in part or completely. On average, respondents rated the achievement of this objective 2.2. Other stakeholder respondents attributed a slightly higher rating (2.5) to the achievement of this result. WD and FEDO respondents each ranked, on average, the partial achievement of this outcome as 2.1. Reasons provided for achievement of this outcome include:

- The existence of multi-year projects with expected long-term and broad impacts;
- The coordinated marketing efforts of four provinces to attract Francophone tourists;
- Increased visibility of Francophone communities; and
- The provision of an improved economic basis for the Francophone culture.

Projects such as “Visions”, “Corridor touristique”, Saint-Laurent, Guichets uniques



and La Maison du Bourgeois (see Case Study box) were cited as good examples as they have expected long-term impacts.

Case Study: La Maison du Bourgeois

The main objective of this project was to build a four-season replica of a traditional house in Saint Boniface (Winnipeg) in order to support the Festival du Voyageur. Partners to this project include the federal, provincial and municipal governments.

Activities. La Maison du Bourgeois's main activities included the construction of the Maison, and the hall rental for community, corporate and government purposes allowing the Festival du Voyageur to increase the generated revenues and create long-term, year-round employment.

Impacts to Date. According to interview respondents, La Maison du Bourgeois has had many positive impacts on the francophone community of Saint-Boniface and Winnipeg as a whole. The most obvious is the tourist attraction resulting from La Maison du Bourgeois. Secondly, La Maison du Bourgeois has played an important role in the overall revitalization of Old Saint-Boniface. Other impacts include job creation, increase in traffic in Saint-Boniface and the businesses as well as an exposure for the French culture within the city of Winnipeg.

Challenge. La Maison du Bourgeois was initially challenged with obtaining financial support and uncovering the complex historical elements surrounding the building and the land.

Loan Program

To date, loan loss reserves have been established in all four FEDOs. The Manitoba FEDO also manages a loan investment fund. With respect to providing more accessible funds to Francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs, almost two-thirds of the key informants agreed that this result was being achieved completely or in part with an average rating of 2.1. FEDO respondents gave a lower average rating of 1.7 to the achievement of this outcome with six key informants noting that this objective was not being met at all.

The loan mechanism is successful in Manitoba where 25 loans have been processed so far. Uptake is problematic in other areas, where no loans have been processed to date. According to a key informant, the FEDOs in these areas have forwarded loan candidates to the financial institutions that deliver the loans. Most applications, however, have been turned down. Apparently, there was a misunderstanding between some FEDOs and the financial institutions about the type of loan that would be eligible. Three WD respondents also mentioned that some FEDO representatives did not fully understand the purpose of the program. As a result, some of the representatives did not encourage clients to use it.

Some key informants cited the following needs with regards to the loan program:

- Further analysis of situation to determine why the loan programs is under-utilized in some regions;
- Additional funding to keep up with demand in some areas;
- More flexibility in some loan programs; and
- Expand network of community partners.

Economic Development Projects

All key informants agreed that economic development projects had provided concrete results for Francophone communities at least in part or completely. More than half the respondents indicated that this result had been fully achieved. Average ratings (2.5 – 2.6) of all three groups of respondents were comparable. Respondents report that the biggest impact has been on the tourism sector with many informants citing tourism projects such as Corridor touristique as evidence of achievement. Sufficient numbers of people participating in seminars and coaching and new partnerships created with WD were also noted as evidence of achievement. One respondent pointed out that a survey should be conducted to more adequately measure the impact of the economic development projects.

Business Skills

The large majority of respondents agreed that better business skills among Francophone entrepreneurs had been achieved in part or completely, with an average rating of 2.4. Other stakeholder respondents assigned slightly lower rankings (2.1) to the achievement of this outcome. The evidence cited includes provision of workshops



such as “Penser Affaires – des ateliers à votre portée”, roundtable discussions, sufficient numbers of participants attending workshops in most cases and access to French resources and competent advisors. One project was specifically aimed at youth and was reported to be very successful (See Case Study of Je~Camp jeunes entrepreneurs). However, as one respondent pointed out, the longer- term impact of these activities and outputs are not yet known.

Case Study : Je ~ Camp jeunes entrepreneurs

The Camp “Je ~ Camp jeunes entrepreneurs” had many objectives, all of which were related to Youth. The first objective was to increase youth’s understanding of what a “business” is and what tools and experiences encompass a business, such as Business Plans. Secondly, the project aimed to help youth acquire basic knowledge to create a business with hands-on experience on how to start a business. The objective was also to expose youth to specific business opportunities in the fields of new technologies, innovation and e-commerce.

In addition to WD, partners to this project include the CCS, Communications Canada, Industry Canada, Saskatchewan Provincial Government, Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDC) and Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes (SAIC).

Activities. Activities for this project consisted mostly of workshops and conferences with guest speakers among community business leaders. Topics covered general business practises, more specifically the areas of e-commerce as this is of great interest to younger potential businessmen and women.

Impacts to Date. According to project representatives, the projects had a significant impact, as it was successful in educating the participants and heightening their awareness of owning a business as a real career option. This project also allowed youth to develop a variety of relevant tools and skills. The community, governments and agencies also exposed the participants to a wide range of services and information available to businesses.

Challenges. This project had two specific challenges; the recruitment of participants and the financial support needed to undertake the project. Both of which were



successfully resolved.

Better Informed Entrepreneurs

The majority of respondents agreed that the Action Plan contributed to better-informed Francophone entrepreneurs. While WD and FEDO respondents were unanimous in indicating full achievement of this outcome, other stakeholders were more likely to agree that this outcome had been partially achieved with average ratings of 2.1. One stakeholder respondent cites the need for WD to build credibility with other Departments and Ministries to more fully achieve this outcome.

Growth and Increased Numbers of Entrepreneurs

In terms of growth and increased numbers of Francophone entrepreneurs, all respondents agreed that this had been achieved completely or to some extent. Ratings between the three groups of respondents were comparable. Some respondents report an increase of Francophone start-up and family-owned businesses. Two stakeholder respondents noted that the “Incubateur” program has contributed towards an increase in the number of Francophone entrepreneurs and has created an economic culture with Francophone youths. One WD respondent notes that additional statistics need to be gathered in this area.

2.3.2 Challenges/Obstacles

Respondents were asked to relate the challenges and obstacles encountered to reach the targets and outcomes. These responses are itemized below:

- ***Geographic Barriers.*** This was the most commonly cited challenge. Respondents noted the difficulties of covering larger territories and distances to effectively reach small and dispersed populations of Francophones. FEDOs have a 1-800 number to help address this issue.
- ***French Translation.*** Some respondents noted the challenges with the lack of readily available French documentation and high costs associated with translation of French documents and materials.



- ***Building Credibility of FEDOs.*** Some WD and FEDO respondents noted the challenge, particularly in the initial stages, of developing credibility of the FEDO within the community and with other WD partners. The recognition of FEDOs as an equal partner within the WD structure has helped to address this challenge.
- ***Regional Variations.*** Each province experiences some different challenges given noted differences in political climate, educational infrastructures, variations in demand for products and services², strength and number of existing Francophone community associations and high coordinator turnover in some regions.
- ***Low priority.*** Some respondents noted the low priority given to the Action Plan particularly among some WD staff. Respondents note, however, that senior management is generally supportive of the Action Plan and the FEDOs.

Other challenges cited include the difficulties in providing comparable services in French given the strong competition of similar English products and services. One WD respondent also noted that there is a misconception among some stakeholders that the Action Plan covers Part IV of the *Official Languages Act*. The main purpose of Part IV is to ensure that federal institutions implement measures that allow Canadians to choose to receive services in English or in French in specified federal institutions.

2.3.3 Other Outcomes

When asked what other outcomes were achieved as a result of the Action Plan, the two most commonly cited responses are:

- The creation and fostering of partnerships and networks; and
- Increased ability of FEDOs to leverage other sources of funds.

Partnerships were fostered and created between WD and other federal departments (e.g., increased MOUs with other departments), with other provincial governments (e.g., partnerships with Tourism BC and BC Trades). In addition, the establishment

² For example, the Manitoba FEDO reports an increase in demand for its products and services.

of the FEDOs has resulted in a network between the four Western provinces. It has also strengthened the FEDOs by recognizing them as an equal and important partner within WD's organizational structure. The core funding received by WD has allowed the FEDOs to leverage other funds; for example, from RDEE, Agriculture Canada and with the IPOLC agreements.

2.3.4 Responsiveness and Visibility of WD Products and Services

Over three-quarters of the respondents agree that WD products and services are responsive to the needs of Francophone entrepreneurs. Some respondents, however, felt that the community development work was more relevant and there was mixed responses as to the success of the loan program. "The loan program does not seem to be working and we need to find out why."

Some respondents expressed different opinions as to whether priority needs were being addressed. One respondent indicated that the focus on tourism, SME development and computer networking all address priority needs of the Francophone community. A WD respondent indicated that there are gaps in services/products with regards to export, technology, innovation and e-commerce.

Respondents agree that WD products and services were promoted to Francophone communities. Most of the promotional activities are delivered by the FEDOs through the use of workshops, economic forums, and newsletters. The services are also promoted through Francophone networks, the involvement of the regional coordinator in the community, local newspapers and French media and a bilingual web site. Some respondents indicate that businesses, rather than the general public, are specifically targeted for promotion. Some FEDO respondents also promote their services and products through WD's partners.

2.4 Accountability and Performance Monitoring

One of the key issues addressed by this evaluation is accountability and performance monitoring. Respondents were asked if the Reports provided by the FEDOs to WD allow the latter to meet accountability requirements. Quarterly reports, which include a progress report, are sent to WD's executive committee. Coordinators also report to the ADM on their activities while FEDOs report to the regional office.



WD Respondents

Most WD respondents report that they receive relevant and timely reports on the progress of the Action Plan. The strategic projects are monitored through quarterly reports where recipients assess their objective achievement. There are also annual reports and annual updates. There are regular discussions about the Action Plan activities at the executive committee level. Some respondents suggest that the Annual Report needs to better emphasize regional information and that the information should be sent directly to all the coordinators.

FEDO Representatives and Stakeholders

There were mixed opinions as to whether the progress reports of the Action Plan are made available to the community. A number of FEDO and stakeholder respondents indicated that they did not know if the progress report was disseminated to the community. One respondent noted that the Action Plan is available on the website through “Accès Ouest.” Another FEDO respondent noted that their economic plan which is reflective of the Action Plan is made available to the community.

When asked whether the goals and targets developed in the Action Plan were clear and measurable, the majority of respondents agree that the goals are clear. There are mixed opinions as to whether the goals and targets are measurable. The majority of respondents agreed that the targets were meaningful and attainable, although one respondent expressed difficulty in attaining some of the targets in the absence of a full-time coordinator. According to another respondent, projects undertaken like the “Guichets uniques” (single-window delivery access projects) demonstrate the attainability of the goals and targets.

2.5 Cost-Effectiveness

The majority of WD and FEDO respondents agreed that the WD investments in Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* projects were cost-effective.³ Some respondents indicate that the FEDO service delivery structure is more cost-effective

³ However, most of the stakeholder respondents felt that they did not have sufficient information to answer this question.



than direct delivery of these products and services by the government. WD respondents report good returns on investment and effective leveraging of funds as reasons for cost-effectiveness. One FEDO respondent indicated that it is difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness in the second year of start-up. As mentioned earlier, some FEDO respondents reported significant increases in tourism from Quebec (20-30 percent increases) as a result of a single project. Some respondents (both WD and other stakeholders) pointed out that the FEDOs provide substantial efforts and effectively leverage other resources.

Level of Resources

When asked if the level of resources employed were appropriate to ensure the Action Plan's implementation, just over half of the respondents indicated that they were appropriate. Some respondents note that effective leveraging and the significant impact of small amounts of funding on small communities ensure that the level of resources is appropriate. Some WD, stakeholder and FEDO respondents note that there are insufficient human resources to support the realisation of all objectives. Other respondents note that additional resources were needed to meet increased demands and to cover increased cost (e.g., inflation). One respondent also noted that increased resources are needed to meet client demands in dispersed rural areas.

Relevance of Investment

The majority of WD and FEDO respondents indicate that the dollars were well spent. The return on investments for the majority of projects is reported to be good. Respondents note that returns on investment have been high for community development projects, in particular tourism projects. Only a few exceptions to this were noted. For example, the Francophone Business Directory was cited as one project that was not cost-effective. Some respondents state that the loans program is underutilized in some regions.

Suggestion to improve cost-effectiveness include:

- The creation of additional partnerships and the identification of additional sources of funding from other levels of government and/or from the private sector;
- A "top-off" or additional resources for FEDOs recording increases in clients;



- Increased promotion of WD, particularly with respect to “success stories”
- An increase in human resources to allow for full-time coordinators and to increase the number of coordinators in rural areas; and
- Improve administration of special projects.

2.6 Alternatives and Lessons Learned (Suggested by Respondents)

Finally, respondents were asked to suggest alternatives and lessons learned. The following suggestions were made.

Alternatives to FEDOs?

Respondents were asked if alternatives to FEDOs should be considered to help WD meet Section 41 requirements. They were unanimous in saying that FEDOs play an effective role in WD’s delivery of the Action Plan. They report that FEDOs are in a better position to serve the Francophone communities because they are involved and are sensitive to that community. The FEDOs are reported to be effective in community outreach and community capacity building. A stakeholder mentioned that the FEDOs can effectively play a role in helping communities become self-sufficient compared with traditional interventions of the federal government “which typically make communities dependent on their services.”

A number of respondents point out that the Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) would not be able to deliver the products and services as effectively as the FEDOs given the small number of Francophones and their geographic dispersion. The CFDCs are based in specific communities and would have difficulties serving small, dispersed, Francophone communities. The FEDOs are in a good position to network with local agents and they act as effective intermediaries between the local clients and WD. Some respondents note that the fact that the FEDOs are an integral part of WD and its network is beneficial to WD and to the FEDOs.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Action Plan



Although respondents are generally of the view that the Action Plan is on track in terms of its implementation and achievement of expected results, they had a number of comments with respect to lessons learned through the implementation of the Action Plan.

Some WD, stakeholder and FEDO respondents indicate that the Plan needs to emphasize the importance of collaborations and partnerships. One WD respondent stated that the roles and responsibilities of the FEDOs and WD are not always clear, particularly with respect to accountability for special projects. A FEDO respondent reports that the partnership between the FEDOs and WD should include a short, medium and long-term vision. In addition, WD should help to ensure the involvement of the larger economic community. A WD respondent noted that more needs to be accomplished with respect to the sensitivity of the *Official Languages Act* within WD. The “RICLOM” (Réseau interministériel des Coordonnateurs des langues officielles du MB, Manitoba Interdepartmental Network of Official Language Coordinators) has identified some means to address this problem.

Moreover, the FEDOs should be adequately consulted for input to ensure that the Plan is more results-based and practical. One stakeholder respondent cited the need to more systematically report and share best practices with all stakeholders.

2004-2008 Action Plan

Respondents had a number of suggestions with respect to the 2004-2008 Action Plan. These are categorized according to the following: Building on past successes; flexible approach; increased promotion and education; resources; reporting requirements; and new directions.

- ***Building on Past Experiences.*** A number of respondents emphasized that the 2004-2008 Action Plan should expand its focus, but still continue to build on past experiences and successes. “The issues of youth and tourism targeted by the first Plan are still relevant.” While some respondents point out that partnerships need to be fostered and expanded (e.g., WD could consult more with federal partners and include other stakeholders such as “academics”), the Plan should continue to build on the networks and partnerships established during the previous plan. “Although we should build on our partnerships, there is a need for a more

integrated approach with other target departments for a pan-Canadian perspective.”

- ***Flexible Approach.*** Some WD respondents cite the need for a flexible plan that takes into account the different realities, different structures and different stages of development of Francophone communities and different communities’ regional needs. The Plan could also be more flexible to allow for integration of other projects that are currently outside the scope of the present Action Plan. Flexibility is also needed to accommodate the communities changing needs.
- ***Increased Promotion and Education.*** Some respondents cited the need for more promotion and distribution of the Plan to the FEDOs and to the community at large. In addition, there is a need for more promotion and marketing of the services provided by WD and the FEDOs. *OLA* communication guidelines could be developed. In addition the Anglophone majority could be sensitized to the importance and relevance of linguistic duality. There also needs to be some additional investment in sensitizing WD employees to the importance of their commitment and responsibilities in implementing Section 41.
- ***Adequate Funds.*** Some stakeholder and FEDO respondents noted that adequate financial and human resources are needed to support the FEDOs. In Manitoba, there are insufficient funds to support the loans program. Some respondents cite workload issues with respect to insufficient human resources to cover large geographic areas. One WD respondent questioned whether the present resourcing levels would meet the FEDOs’ longer-term needs.
- ***Reporting Requirements.*** Some WD and FEDO respondents report the need for more meaningful and clear measures for FEDO to report on the success of implementing the Action Plan. On the other hand, WD and FEDO respondents state that the reporting requirements are demanding and overly complex. Future efforts should be made to clarify and simplify this process.
- In addition, other respondents mentioned that more comparable and consistent measures across FEDOs and other similar organizations are needed. A more precise definition of Francophone community is needed to better target activities.

- ***New Directions.*** Some respondents noted that the Action Plan could include some new directions. These include:
 - Increased focus on the international market;
 - Women entrepreneurship;
 - Consideration of the aging population with respect to economic development; and
 - Internet and e-commerce.



3.0 Conclusions

The following key findings were derived from this evaluation study.

Relevance of Action Plan Content

- Overall, evidence shows that the Action Plan was relevant. This partly stems from the consultations conducted with the communities. The creation of the FEDOs, in particular, is seen as very relevant as the CFDCs are not really meeting the specific needs of the Francophone communities as do the FEDOs.

Delivery and Design

- Most observers agree that overall, the Plan was implemented as planned, with minor but positive adjustments. Some challenges were encountered due to community expectations and turnover at WD.
- FEDOs and WD are challenged by the fact that some community members perceive the FEDOs as being instrumental to other sections of the *Official Languages Act*, including those of Part IV. FEDO representatives also find that the WD coordinators roles should be more clearly defined.
- WD coordinators are challenged by a heavy workload.
- Respondents generally agree that WD plays a pro-active role in collective federal department activities regarding Francophone communities. WD works with other Departments and governments. Some FEDO representatives thought, however, that WD could play a more pro-active role.
- Overall, respondents thought that the WD coordinators were able to prioritize issues and bring them to the *Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne*.
- Many agree that there were extensive consultations prior to the finalization of the Action Plan and that the plan was widely distributed. However, representatives from three FEDOs said that their organizations were not consulted.

Success

- Findings suggest that WD and their partners were most successful in producing “Economic development projects providing concrete results for the Francophone communities receiving funding”, and “Better informed Francophone entrepreneurs”. However, they were less successful in providing “More accessible funds to Francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs”.
- A large majority of key informants indicated that the significant strengthening of the relationship between WD and the Francophone communities had completely or partially been met. Some noted challenges in achieving this outcome included lack of awareness of FEDOs in the community and dispersion of Francophone communities across large distances.
- A number of projects are expected to produce long-term results, such as the “Corridor touristique francophone de l’Ouest” and “La Maison du Bourgeois”.
- The loan mechanisms raise a number of issues. Take-up appears to be excellent in Manitoba. However, take-up for the loan program in other areas is lower than expected.
- All key informants agreed that economic development projects had provided concrete results for Francophone communities at least in part or completely.
- Respondents agree that the Action Plan has contributed to the development of better business skills and has better informed entrepreneurs.
- The FEDO’s capacity to leverage other sources of funds is perceived has a very positive outcome for the MOLCs.
- A number of barriers and challenges, unfortunately, remain to fully achieve the objectives of the Action Plan including geographical barriers, translation, building the credibility of the FEDOs, and regional variations.

Accountability and Performance Monitoring

- Opinions were mixed as to the effectiveness of performance monitoring. Most WD respondents felt that they receive relevant and timely reports. However, there are mixed opinions about whether the objectives were measurable.

Cost-Effectiveness

- Most respondents felt that the WD investments were cost-effective. Observers note effective fund leveraging. Some projects indicate extensive results.

Alternatives and Lessons Learned

- There is no evidence that the CFDCs could play the role of the FEDOs.
- Recommendations for the next Action Plan include extensive consultations (with the FEDOs) prior to the adoption of the Plan; special emphasis on partnerships and collaborations; and increased communications. Other suggestions include ensuring a flexible approach (to ensure regional relevance); increased promotion; and clear measures for reporting success.



4.0 Recommendations

Overall, results show that the Action Plan was generally implemented as planned and has been successful overall. *In particular, this evaluation has shown that there is a need for FEDOs, that they bring significant benefits to the OLMCs, and that WD should continue to support their activities as well as special projects coordinated by them (and WD).*

In the consultant's opinion, WD could not have addressed the thirty-six recommendations contained in the previous evaluation (see Appendix B for list). However, a number of actions have addressed key recommendations. In funding the FEDOs, equipping them with loan funds, and in supporting a number of successful projects such as the "Corridor touristique francophone de l'Ouest", "La Maison du Bourgeois" and "Visions", WD has addressed some of the key recommendations, including Recommendation 13 (which encouraged WD to create loan funds and identify innovative approaches to promote economic diversification). There was also a very successful effort in partnering with other departments and governments for special projects, which addressed Recommendation 19. Finally, Recommendation 22 (which proposed the creation of targeted loan funds) was also addressed, although the effectiveness of the funding mechanisms needs to be further demonstrated.

Many of the measures contained in the Action Plan can still be considered as being in their implementation phase, especially the loan mechanisms for the entrepreneurs. The following recommendations are therefore proposed to improve these and other measures in the Action Plan:

- **Communication Strategy.** A communication strategy should be developed to ensure that the roles of WD and of the FEDOs are understood with regards to the *OLA*. A communication strategy should also be devised to increase the visibility of the FEDOs and their services.
- **Update The Needs Analysis For The Loans Program.** Although there is not enough evidence in this evaluation to assess the effectiveness of the Loans program, results indicate that there is not enough take-up of the program in some



regions and that the effectiveness in other areas is not optimal. Further research will need to be conducted, including a regional needs analysis to assess various means of addressing the financial and service needs of Francophone businesses. In some areas, alternative investment programs may be considered (e.g., non-commercial projects, training, etc).

- **Coordinator support.** There is evidence that the coordinators experience a heavy workload. This results from their coordinating activities as well as other *OLA* tasks such as urgent translation/bilingual services. WD should consider either increasing their allotted time to this role or determining ways of helping them accomplish their tasks in a more productive manner.

Next Action Plan

- **Clarify Roles.** For the next Action Plan, it is recommended that the roles and responsibilities of WD, the Coordinators and the FEDOs be clarified.
- **Promotional Activities.** Considering the visibility issue for WD and the FEDOs as partners, the next plan should incorporate specific actions to further promote the Department, the FEDOs and their services. Both FEDOs and WD should participate in this promotional effort.
- **Results-Based Plan and Incorporation of Monitoring Strategy.** The consultant considers that overall, WD's strategy to meet Section 41 is on its final implementation phase. The next Action Plan should now be more outcomes focussed and incorporate a performance monitoring framework. This would include a clear description of the FEDOs and their mandate, a logic model of the Action Plan, clear outcomes and objectives statements, and a performance measurement strategy. A logic model such as the one appended to this report would be helpful in guiding WD to determine key outcomes, performance indicators and targets.
- Clear targets should be set for quantifiable indicators, such as number of loans provided and jobs created. These should be set based on the history of loan activities for each FEDO.



- Performance monitoring is key in demonstrating the effectiveness of the Action plan. New projects should be assessed according to specific and overall Action Plan objectives. The measurement strategy should also involve a follow-up on previous projects to assess their long-term impacts and opportunities for renewal.

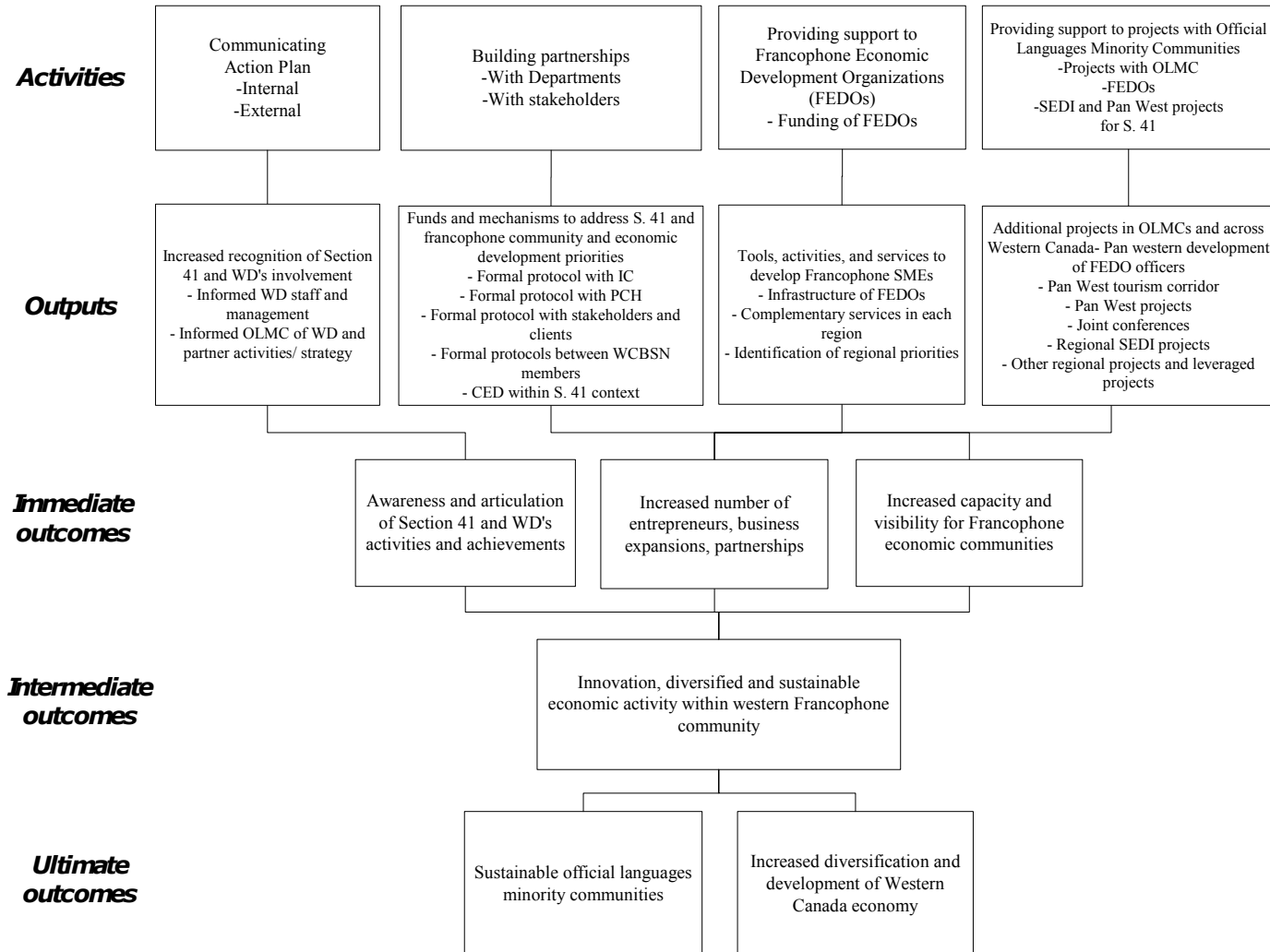
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Appendix A: Draft Logic Model



Draft Logic Model for Action Plan



Appendix B: Recommendations From Previous Evaluation (1997)

The previous evaluation included a number of recommendations for the future. They included the following:

1. It is recommended that WD make the necessary adjustments to its planning to address the deficiencies noted above and institute adequate planning to achieve its share of Part VII objectives.
2. It is recommended that WD devise and carry out, in its next Action Plan, a special implementation strategy to achieve the second objective in Section 41, -- fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.
3. It is recommended that Human Resources Directorate devise and carry out an integrated training strategy to ensure that executives, managers and professionals have an in-depth understanding of the scope of Part VII and of the issues involved in its implementation, of the problematic of the economic development of western Canadian MOLCs, of their business potential and of the consequences of the above on the way in which they should carry out their mandates.
4. It is recommended that, in addition to its training strategy, WD take the necessary measures with respect to its decision-making processes to ensure that all personnel understand that Part VII is part and parcel of the Department's regular operations, including its reporting procedures, and that its implementation, in addition to being important, is "everybody's business".
5. It is recommended that WD integrate into its Awards and Recognition Program measures to value, support and give impetus to the implementation of Part VII. This principle should be specifically included in the Program selection criteria.
6. It is recommended that WD examine its policies, programs and financial services --structure, target client groups, methods of service delivery, eligibility criteria, etc. - -bearing in mind the diversity of the situations in which official language minority communities in Western Canada find themselves, in order to ensure that these communities obtain the full benefits required by Section 41.

7. It is recommended that the implementation of Part VII be included explicitly in the performance evaluation criteria for WD executives and for other staff who have been assigned responsibility for implementing this Part.

8. It is recommended that WD integrate the main points of its commitment to achieve the objectives of Section 41 into its Report on Plans and Priorities, tabled in Parliament in the spring, and the key results of its efforts into its Departmental Performance Report, tabled in Parliament in the autumn.

9. It is recommended that WD, via its participation in the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development, step up its collaborative efforts with federal institutions with economic responsibilities, at the provincial and national levels, and that, jointly with economic actors in MOLCs, it actively support the mapping out of an economic development strategy for the communities on a provincial scale, with the participation of provincial governments and co-operative and private financial institutions.

10. It is recommended that WD add a permanent analyst position at Executive Services Branch; this person should have expertise not only in the implementation of Part VII but also in economic development. His or her mandate would include improving the Department's Part VII implementation strategy, supporting the deputy minister and the assistant deputy ministers and all of the Department's executive level functions to foster coordinated action as well as liaising with the regional coordinators responsible for supporting implementation in their respective provinces.

11. It is recommended that each of the four regional offices take the necessary measures to ensure the permanent coordination of Part VII implementation; the regions should also assign knowledgeable resources in each core area, namely Client Services and Policy and Programs. These employees must have expertise in the implementation of Part VII, economic development and WD program delivery.

12. It is recommended that specific criteria be developed to determine CFDCs' access to funds ear-marked for MOLCs, including an agreement with the MOLC's economic development agency on action priorities and implementation processes.

13. It is recommended that WD:

- a) take measures to enable it to deal effectively with MOLC economic development in each province, including stimulating and supporting the creation of an economic development agency, where necessary; WD should work with these in true partnership to help devise and carry out an appropriate community economic development strategy, which should identify innovative action approaches to promote western economic diversification, just as WD does for CFDCs and WECs;
- b) transfer an adequate operating budget to each agency;
- c) create a loan fund for SMEs, of appropriate size and type, for each of the four regions, and delegate management of this fund to the provincial community economic development agency, once predetermined criteria have been satisfied, such as representativity, organisational stability and development of an economic development strategy;
- d) ensure that these four new partners are organisationally and electronically linked to the WD Service Delivery Network.

14. It is recommended that WD develop, jointly with CBSCs and the federal institutions concerned, a model for the implementation of Part VII that is commensurate with the CBSCs' particular mandate. In the delivery of appropriate services to MOLCs, the provincial community economic development agencies mentioned above could serve as key partners to the CBSCs.

15. It is recommended that WD:

- a) support MOLC efforts to find innovative ways to identify and further develop scientific and academic expertise that could contribute the most to their economic development. Among other things, these approaches should assist MOLCs in getting plugged into knowledge-based and exporting industries more extensively;
- b) mandate the branch responsible for policy development to acquire a specific analysis and design capacity in order to integrate Part VII imperatives into its policy and program development and analysis processes.

16. WD is currently in the process of revamping its data gathering and processing systems for information related to its client base. It is recommended that WD take advantage of this process to rectify these deficiencies, including acquiring the necessary means to track its Francophone clients, their successes and the progress in the economic development of their community.

17. It is recommended that WD, jointly with MOLC economic development agencies, work with other federal institutions involved in economic development,

particularly Industry Canada, to design and implement mechanisms to identify MOLC businesses. For instance, the merits of using patent and trademark registry offices or corporation registry offices for this purpose should be studied.

18. When the time comes to update the MOLC economic profiles based on 1996 census data, it is recommended that WD make the economic profiles more complete, user-friendly, and relevant to the fundamentals of a community economic development strategy at the provincial level.

19. To better support the development of common economic development strategies on a provincial basis, it is recommended that WD seek out the co-operation of other federal institutions with economic responsibilities, with a view to giving MOLCs the support they need to draw up detailed economic profiles at the sub-regional level so as to support the informed development of viable economic development strategies.

20. It is recommended that WD, in partnership with MOLC economic development agencies, take steps to enhance its strategy to achieve a greater level of visibility and active presence in these communities by, among other things, making more extensive use of MOLC-based news outlets.

21. It is recommended that WD conduct polling in the near future to determine how well MOLCs know the Department, its mandate and services.

22. It is recommended that WD explore ways and means of creating targeted loan funds designed specifically for MOLCs and jointly administered with the network of credit unions, with the involvement, if necessary, of the Federation des caisses populaires Desjardins. Moreover, WD must review its current agreements with the financial institutions to ensure a better access by MOLC businesses to these targeted loan funds.

23. It is recommended that WD undertake an analysis of ways and means of integrating the underlying principles of Part VII into federal-provincial initiatives in order to ensure that MOLCs are not left out of the equation.

24. It is recommended that WD examine, as soon as possible, ways of compensating for MOLCs' noted weaknesses and supporting the development of their cultural, social and economic infrastructures under the auspices of the Canadian Infrastructure Works program, in co-operation with its provincial partners.

25. It is recommended that WD continue this process, as it anticipated doing in its Action Plan, and do a follow-up, jointly with PWGSC, to determine the number of companies from MOLCs that have in fact become federal suppliers and to identify, among this number, those that subsequently became suppliers to other levels of governments.
26. It is recommended that WD begin preliminary discussions with its provincial counterparts with a view to establishing an ongoing dialogue and collaboration aimed at maximizing the communities' capacity for autonomous economic development.
27. It is recommended that WD initiate a process of joint action with Industry Canada, Canadian Heritage, Treasury Board, Statistics Canada, the Auditor General and the other federal institutions with economic responsibilities to define economic vitality indicators, in consultation with the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and MOLCs, and develop appropriate data gathering and processing tools. This approach has the advantage of drawing on the expertise of each of these federal institutions, resulting in superior quality, efficiently designed indicators at a minimal cost to each partner (rather than having to constantly re-invent the wheel). As this initiative involves the Canadian Government as a whole, a central agency such as Treasury Board, for example, would be the ideal institution to co-ordinate this cost-sharing endeavour.
28. It is recommended that WD call upon Canadian Heritage to organize a co-ordinating meeting of federal institutions to formulate approaches, strategies and various means to achieve the Section 41 objective of fostering the full recognition and use of French and English in Canadian society.
29. It is recommended that WD propose to Science and Technology at Industry Canada and to the Canadian Foundation for Innovation to examine the state of expertise and research within MOLCs and determine, in consultation with existing institutions in MOLCs, the most effective ways to assist them in the development of their capacities in the scientific, technical and research fields, especially in the cutting-edge sectors of the new economy.
30. It is recommended that WD's four regional offices map out an appropriate regional strategy, featuring a package of specific initiatives for their province, for enhancing the economic development of their Francophone community while securing the active co-operation both of their MOLC and of their partner institutions.
31. It is recommended that the contracts between WD and the CBSCs and WECs be modified to ensure that a sufficient number of representatives of MOLCs sit on their

boards of directors and that these organisations develop and implement an appropriate strategy to ensure the implementation of Part VII.

32. It is recommended that the BC regional office begin consultations and initiate a discussion on applying Section 41 to the Targeted Business Services sector in order to develop an appropriate department-wide strategic plan.

33. It is recommended that the Alberta regional office begin consultations and initiate a discussion on implementing Section 41 in the Strategic Initiatives sector in order to develop an appropriate department-wide strategic plan.

34. It is recommended that the Saskatchewan regional office develop a client-tracking system for francophone clients, which will contribute to determining and analysing the scale and the impact on the MOLCs of WD's action. This strategy must include an appropriate data collection and processing system.

35. It is recommended that the Manitoba regional office begin consultations and initiate thinking on implementing Section 41 in the Capital Services sector in order to prepare an appropriate strategic plan for WD in this regard, including the creation of appropriate financing mechanisms.

36. It is recommended that the region study the undesirable effects that the Targeted Loan Fund agreements concluded with banking institutions can have on credit unions' assets and, by extension, on the economic vitality of MOLCs.