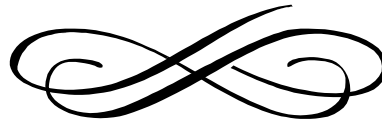


Western Economic Diversification Canada

**ACTION PLAN
2000/01 – 2003/04**

**IMPLEMENTATION
OF SECTION 41 OF THE
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT
For 2001 - 2002**



Canada

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PREAMBLE

Western Economic Diversification (WD) reiterates its commitment to the objectives of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* of:

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

In the last few years, WD has developed and implemented a strong Action Plan in response to its obligations under and commitment to Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. Through partnership and participation on numerous committees at the regional and national levels, WD has demonstrated its commitments to the Official Languages Minority Communities. In 2001-02, WD has made great strides in advancing the interests of western Francophones.

On April 18th, 2001, WD formally brought the Francophone Economic Development Organizations into the department's Western Canada Business Services Network. This event marked FEDOs' entry as one of the official service delivery partners of WD. Other service delivery organizations under the WCBSN include Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDC), Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs), Women's Enterprise Initiatives (WEIs) and WD's Client Services divisions. It was recognized through discussions with the Francophone communities in the West were looking for enhanced services in French equivalent to the level of service comparable to that being delivered to other clients of the WCBSN. In acknowledgement of this service delivery gap and in recognition of its commitment to the objectives of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, WD worked with western francophone communities to establish a provincial economic development organization in each region. These agencies presently provide, to the extent possible, a comparable type and level of service as WD's other service delivery network partners.

The 2000/01 – 2003/04 Action Plan builds on the success of previous years and is enriched by feedback from the community as well as the development of a long-term strategy. This strategy is a comprehensive and integrated approach to entrepreneurship and business development in western Canada's francophone communities.

WD's OLA team works in cooperation and in partnership with federal, provincial, municipal and community organizations to achieve our success. The OLA team consists of a Regional Coordinator from each province and a National Coordinator from the Headquarter Office, located in Edmonton.

We have made significant progress, but we are continually refining what we're doing and how we're doing it. Our present strategic direction is in the process of being reworked to integrate Francophone SME needs into our ongoing programming. By doing so, our approach will be included in the department's multi-year plan and budget dollars can be allotted accordingly. By continuing to work together, all western francophone communities will be able to participate fully in the economic, social and cultural potential of the West in the new millennium.

Summary
Action Plan 2000/01 – 2003/04
Reporting year 2001/02

Responsible Minister: **The Honourable Stephen Owen**
 Secretary of State (Western Economic Diversification) &
 (Indian and Northern Affairs Development)

Principal Measures Planned:

With a solid foundation, the 2000/01 – 2003/04 Action Plan builds on the successes of previous action plans. A leader in economic development in the western provinces, WD will continue to maintain close ties with key economic players throughout the region. Moreover, WD will continue to work closely with Francophone economic development organizations to support their development and that of their communities.

Over the next four years, WD will continue its collaboration with the western Canadian francophone communities. WD wishes to build on the strengths in the francophone communities in Western Canada and to develop, in partnership with the four Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs), a strategic and integrated francophone business development network. The FEDOs are now full members of WD's Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN). The FEDOs are 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 des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba.

We have strengthened our support to the operations of the four Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) in order to ensure that they are able to provide a full range of services vital to business development such as information, training, mentoring, counseling, and entrepreneurship promotion. We have also provided Special Economic Development Initiatives (SEDI) funds to the four FEDOs in the West. WD and the Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) will provide access to capital through micro-loan funds. The micro-loans are arranged through regional financial institutions to provide this service. The leverage from this type of arrangement could generate up to five times the investment fund availability in each province. In the 2001/02-year, all four FEDOs succeeded in negotiating agreements with a financial institution in their province.

In order to identify and address issues and opportunities of the West as a collaborative network, WD has also provided funding for the four years of this Action Plan to support Pan-Western initiatives as agreed upon by the four Francophone Economic Development Organizations and WD.

Our strategy is meant to be a comprehensive and integrative approach to entrepreneurship and business development in western Canada's francophone communities. It offers WD the flexibility to support existing francophone organizations in a way that allows them to maintain and strengthen their current operations; as well, it enhances the suite of products and services that they offer to francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs. It also provides new opportunities to access capital for Francophone entrepreneurs.

Our vision is to ensure the existence of a francophone economic development organization in each province, providing multi-year funding which allows for longer-term planning, to increasing the accountability of the francophone economic development organizations, to provide access to capital, to partner with WD's Service Delivery Network and to support economic development initiatives in priority sectors that are identified by the francophone communities themselves.

ACTION PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 41 OF THE *OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT*

Part 1: General Information

1. Identification of institution

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2. Brief description of the institution's mandate (include, if relevant, programs of interest to the official languages minority communities)

“Working with the West”, (Western Economic Diversification Canada, 2002)

Western Economic Diversification's (WD) mandate is defined in the Western Economic Diversification Act of 1988. The Act enables the Department to play an innovative and responsive role on behalf of the Government of Canada in providing western Canadians with policies, programs, and services that promote economic opportunities.

Through the Act, Western Economic Diversification is mandated to:

- Promote the development and diversification of the western Canadian economy;
- Coordinate federal economic activities in the West; and
- Reflect western Canadian interests in national decision-making.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD) strengthens the western economy through programs and services that inspire innovation, encourage entrepreneurship, build partnerships and provide sound economic research. WD administers Government of Canada programs in the four western provinces and advances western interests in national economic policy. Western Canadians are directly involved in determining priorities for development and deciding on the best use of resources. WD's strategic directions place a priority on investing in innovation, maintaining a broad network of support to entrepreneurs and strengthening partnerships with governments, industry, academic and business communities.

Innovation: The Future of the West

Western Canada is on the leading edge of technologies that hold great promise for a better quality of life today and a better future for the next generation. Through the development of knowledge-based industries, the West is shifting from a reliance on external resources to a belief in internal resourcefulness. WD is working to close the gap between the discovery of new ideas and processes and the marketing of new products and services. Investments in innovation are:

- strengthening the knowledge infrastructure in the West
- leveraging new funding to increase research and development

- accelerating the rate of technology commercialization
- supporting “innovation clusters” in key sectors of the western economy
- encouraging change to make organizations more productive and innovative

Innovation clusters include all the components needed to grow and sustain a knowledge-based industry – from research and development centres to manufacturing plants and related suppliers. This synergy stimulates innovative approaches to product design and competitive methods of marketing. The investment spurs growth and creates jobs locally while establishing a leadership position for the industry nationally and internationally. Innovation is a key driver of productivity and long-term economic growth.

Entrepreneurship: The Spirit of the West

Small businesses are the driving spirit behind nearly 80 per cent of new jobs in Canada and the West. To fuel this valuable source of economic growth, Western Economic Diversification supports the willingness of entrepreneurs to take risks, devise new products and services, and create jobs through their hard work. WD promotes business development and entrepreneurship by:

- providing value-added skills development, including seminars and workshops
- offering advisory services, including assessments and business plan reviews
- facilitating access to capital
- enhancing export readiness
- helping companies sell to government
- enabling companies to hire graduates for international marketing and advanced technology projects
- encouraging networking with other businesses to increase productivity and competitiveness.

Client Service Officers in seven regional WD offices are helping entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises grow and become successful in today’s global economy. Where appropriate, clients are also referred to WD’s network partners, financial institution partners and other governmental organizations for assistance.

Western Economic Diversification has established the **Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN)** to help entrepreneurs find what they need to establish a business or make it grow. Services range from marketing information and funding options to counselling and support. The network comprises over 100 points of service and includes WD offices and other partners.

Canada Business Service Centres (CBSCs) are managed through federal-provincial cooperative agreements that provide a single, seamless gateway to information for business. In Western Canada, these centres are part of WD’s service delivery network with hub offices located in Vancouver, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Winnipeg. The centres compile and maintain an extensive database of business and trade information from federal, provincial, municipal and non-government organizations in order to provide fast, accurate and comprehensive information on a wide variety of programs, services and regulations.

Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs) are volunteer-led, nonprofit organizations that take a grassroots approach to economic development. Their primary focus is job creation in areas outside major urban centres. The 90 CFDCs across the West deliver a variety of services that include strategic economic planning, technical and advisory services, loans to small and medium-sized enterprises, self-employment assistance programs, and employment programs aimed at youth and entrepreneurs with disabilities.

Women entrepreneurs are playing an increasingly important role in creating and operating small businesses across Canada. However, women face unique challenges and often begin their ventures with entirely different priorities than men have. Many encounter barriers and a lack of support. Western Economic Diversification helps to remove some of these barriers by supporting

Women's Enterprise Centres in each of the western provinces. These centres provide business advice and information, networking and mentoring specially designed for these clients

In April 2001, Western Economic Diversification welcomed **Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs)** to the Western Canada Business Service Network. FEDOs enhance the vitality of minority language communities in Western Canada and assist in their economic development. Support from WD enables these four provincial organizations to provide enhanced services to Francophones – including training, business and community economic development, access to capital, information services, marketing advice, networking and mentoring.

Partnerships: The Strength of the West

The strength of Western Canada comes from the spirit of cooperation that built communities and shaped the lives of the people within them. Today, the ability to cooperate is not just a community resource: it is an international necessity. Western Economic Diversification recognizes that opportunities available in the West are enhanced when connections to Canada and the rest of the world are strengthened. Organizations that cooperate and create partnerships will be the ones to succeed in the changing face and pace of a global economy.

To encourage the continued success of the West, WD works to develop and strengthen partnerships with different levels of government, industry, universities, volunteer organizations and other interest groups.

Western Economic Partnership Agreements focus on strategic areas of interest to create new employment opportunities, support economic infrastructure and promote business development. Each partnership agreement promotes national economic policies and priorities while addressing the unique needs and opportunities of each province. WEPA investments promote:

- innovation and growth of knowledge-based sectors of the economy
- entrepreneurship among youth and Aboriginal people
- community economic development in urban, rural and northern areas
- tourism, trade and investment promotion.

Western Economic Diversification delivers the **Infrastructure Canada Program**, which leverages matching funds through partnerships with provincial and municipal governments. Municipalities play an important role in program design and the development of projects that address the most pressing local needs. The program focuses on projects that address “green” or environmentally friendly infrastructure such as water and wastewater systems, water management, solid waste management, recycling and improving the energy efficiency of facilities owned by municipal governments.

Through the **Urban Development and Communities in Transition** initiatives, Western Economic Diversification has been successful in cooperative approaches that bring together government, industry and community partners to address urban and community development issues. Agreements were tailored to reflect local needs and resources. WD has served as an effective partner in addressing issues such as economic adjustment, urban renewal, job creation among disadvantaged groups, skills development, support for innovation and the creation of new economic opportunities.

Economic Research and Advocacy: The Value of the West

Economic Research

The first step in developing new policies and initiatives for western Canadians is understanding the region's needs, aspirations and opportunities. WD sponsors a select number of research projects that lead to better information in critical areas such as opportunities in medical research, start-up and growth trends in small business, research infrastructure capacity, urban growth

challenges, and broad economic and social trends. WD usually funds these research initiatives in partnership with provincial governments, academic institutions, think tanks and private sector donors.

Advocacy

Once an understanding of a key issue is achieved, WD often undertakes advocacy activities to ensure western needs are taken into account in national policy decisions. Advocacy activities can involve working with stakeholders to achieve the synergy necessary for collective action. Advocacy can also involve making sure western firms benefit from Government of Canada procurement contracts. Though competition is rigorous and the requirements often complex, WD makes sure that western bidders know about opportunities to compete for contracts.

3. Officers responsible (senior official, national and regional coordinators)

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4. Period covered by Action Plan

The Action Plan covers the period from April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2004. The activities and achievements in this report covers the period of April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002.

Part 2: Identification of Community Needs

5. Means used to identify needs of official-language minority communities at national and regional levels

In order to continue to be responsive to and meet the needs of the Francophone minority communities of western Canada and to develop a coordinated and integrated approach for the delivery of government programs targeted at these communities, WD personnel participate in regular consultations with Francophone organizations and work with Francophone Economic Development Organizations in each of the four western provinces. In addition, the national and regional coordinators participate in a number of interdepartmental committees at the federal and provincial levels.

The departmental national coordinator is a member of the National Committee for Canadian Francophonie Human Resources Development that is composed of representatives from federal government departments and francophone communities. The Committee is an important consultative mechanism for both groups to identify their respective needs and to develop a strategic approach to meeting their needs. In the 2001-02 year, a new Memorandum of Understanding is being negotiated to extend this partnership between the federal government and the Official Languages Minority Communities. In this manner, WD cooperates with the Francophone communities of Canada and with other federal departments that have an economic development mandate or a human resources development mandate.

At the regional level, WD has helped establish and brought into the Western Canada Business Services Network, the four provincial Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs): 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 des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba. In working together, WD and the FEDOs provide a wide range of services to francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs.

There is also frequent contact on an ongoing basis between the regional OLA coordinators and Francophone community representatives to discuss specific needs and the status of individual initiatives. These leaders in the Francophone communities share with us concerns, needs, desires and expectations with regard to our Department and the advancement of the official languages minority communities.

6. Needs identified at national and regional levels

- Need to build on existing partnerships with Francophone economic development organizations such as 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 des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba;
- Need to access funding for Francophone-owned SMEs and Francophone organizations involved in economic development, in sectors such as tourism, rural development, the knowledge-based economy and the integration of youth in economic development;
- Need to support Francophone entrepreneurs and to develop francophone SMEs in the four western regions;
- Need for a self-directed approach to economic development on the part of the official language minority communities (OLMCs), whereby the communities identify their needs

and priorities, with the role of the federal departments being that of facilitator to help them achieve their goals wherever and whenever possible;

- Need for cooperation between federal departments and coordination of federal programs and initiatives targeted at OLMCs. This will ensure the greatest visibility of federal programs within the communities and provide the best return on the funds invested.

Part 3: Action Plan Contents

The contents of the Action Plan have been prepared in Table format and are included on the following pages.

WESTERN ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION – ACTION PLAN 2000/01 – 2003/04

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Principal measures proposed	Proposed Outcome(s)	Status
<p>Provide core funding to a maximum of \$500,000 per year from 2000/01 to 2003/04 to each provincial Francophone economic development organization.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly strengthen the relationship between WD and the francophone economic development organizations. • Provides francophone economic development organizations with opportunities to work with their communities on longer-term issues. • Provides opportunities to improve recruitment of board members (volunteers) and top quality staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective April 2001: WD is contributing \$6 million over three years for the operation of four Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) to help strengthen economic opportunities for francophone businesses. There is one FEDO in each of the four western provinces with a provincial Francophone economic development mandate. • WD's contribution allows these organizations to provide enhanced services to Francophones, including training, business development, counselling, and marketing opportunities. They will subsequently reach a larger number of individuals interested in further developing francophone business and community opportunities. • The four FEDOs are: 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 • In addition to the operational funding for the FEDOs, as part of the Francophone Strategy that Special Economic Development Initiative funds (\$200,000 per region each year until 2003/04) be available for projects submitted for community development for the purposes of advancing Section 41. These projects are in collaboration and consultations with the communities. • The FEDOs have been diligent in ensuring they have the right compliment of economic development officers and regional representation from the geographic regions to the offices and the Boards served.
<p>Provide funding to a maximum of \$400,000 to establish a leveraged loan fund model in each region to be</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger and more accessible pool of funds available to francophone entrepreneurs of Western Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreements are in place for all four regions to administer the loan loss reserve fund of \$400,000 per region to leverage up to \$2 million per region worth of small business loans.

<p>administered in accordance with parameters developed jointly with WD. In so doing, there will be due regard for any cash management restraints on WD funds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs in Western Canada will have access to business and loan services in French. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saskatchewan partners with Paige Credit Union • BC partners with Van City Credit Union • Manitoba partners with the Business Development Bank of Canada. • Alberta partners with the Beaumont Credit Union.
<p>Provide funding to a maximum of \$200,000 per year per region from 2000/01 to 2003/04 for Special Economic Development Initiatives (SEDI).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worthwhile economic development projects that provide concrete results for the francophone communities of western Canada receive funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Economic Development Initiatives (SEDI) funds were announced in 2001-02. Each FEDO will have access to a maximum \$200,000 per year until 2003-04. Among the projects approved to date were: • Lac La Biche/Plamondon Francophone Heritage Tourism Project, CentrAlta Heritage Tourism Project, and Peace River/Smoky River Francophone Heritage Tourism Project. • WD-Manitoba, an incubator and mentorship initiative - \$535, 000 - was approved under SEDI for 2001/2002-2003/2004. In 2001/2002 a project to develop self-directed tourism guides - \$50,000 was approved under the SEDI Fund.
<p>Continue to participate actively in the Official Languages Sub-Committee of the Council of Senior Federal Officials (where these exist) and in any other like organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The interests of the department and of the francophone community will be represented. • WD staff is current on activities and plans which have or could have an impact on the francophone communities of Western Canada. • WD will have a continuous, proactive role on collective, federal department decisions regarding the francophone communities of Western Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manitoba region continues to contribute to the local sub-committee and participated in discussions to launch the single window initiatives. (In April 2002 the first Bilingual Centre represented by the three levels of government was launched in Saint-Boniface.) • BC also active actively participates in the local subcommittee and has used this forum to introduce the new partners, the FEDOs, to the sub-committees. • Saskatchewan region has regularly attended the OLA subcommittee meetings and has identified a representative to attend all meetings in the coming year. • Alberta is strengthening its involvement with the local group through continuous dialogue with stakeholders and interdepartmental efforts. • Whether in formal meeting settings or on informal one-on-one meetings, each of the regions has maintained dialogue and worked collaboratively with partner stakeholders and departments regarding activities and initiatives to benefit the Francophone community.
<p>In addition to ongoing dialogue with the francophone communities, participate in formal consultation meetings between the francophone</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD Regional coordinators are aware of and sensitive to ongoing issues with the francophone communities of Western Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Coordinator and the regional coordinators continue to work very closely with the four provincial Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs), ensuring that agreements and their transition into the WD Service Delivery

<p>community and federal departments/agencies on the implementation of Section 41 of the OLA, in annual general meetings of key representative organizations, and consult with provincial counterparts on a regular basis.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD coordinators can ensure that WD programs and services are responsive to and meet the needs identified. • WD coordinators, working closely with the four provincial economic development organizations, are able to strategically prioritise issues and bring them to the table of the Comité nationale de développement de ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne (CNDRHFC) to ensure maximum effectiveness of both WD and regional representatives in influencing the decisions of the Comité. 	<p>Network operates smoothly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Coordinator represented WD and actively participates in numerous comité national and national coordinator meetings throughout the year. • National coordinator has been in continuous contact with department of Canadian Heritage for the finalization of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities (IPOLC) program. Other discussions along the year took place to discuss the nature and the eligibility of projects being submitted. • The MOU was successfully signed in January 2002. • The National Coordinator has also been actively participating in activities involving the general activities, strategic planning and consultations with le comité national in the development of a new five-year MOU (2002 – 2007). • The Manitoba region attended meetings of la Chambre de commerce francophone de Saint-Boniface, the Société franco-manitobaine and the Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba. • Saskatchewan region participated in the consultation meetings between the Francophone community and federal departments at the Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise (ACF) in March of 2002. • Alberta region has participated in the inter-ministerial meetings with various provincial francophone community groups and has attended the Board meetings, Annual General Meetings, planning sessions and special event of La Chambre économique de l'Alberta. The region also started a Network Partners conference call on a monthly basis to provide a forum for information sharing between all WCBSN partners including La Chambre économique de l'Alberta. • The Alberta Regional Coordinator has successfully negotiated matching funds through the Interdepartmental Partnerships with the Official Languages Communities (IPOLC) through Canadian Heritage. The WD funds used to leverage the matched funds were from the Francophone Strategy's Special Economic Development Initiatives (SEDI). • BC region participated in annual meetings of francophone associations and representatives such as Le regroupement des
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		<p>gens d'affaires de Victoria in Victoria, the Société de développement économique de la Colombie britannique (SDECB) Vancouver and other meetings with different francophone organisations. Participated in the elaboration of federal organizations with an economic mandate on OLA Partnership.</p>
<p>Work with Network Partners, including the provincial Francophone economic development organizations, to deliver small business seminars to francophone clients (topics and frequency to be determined as requested by the community).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development needs and small business training initiatives will be identified through direct consultation with the local OLMC partners in the four regions. • Training sessions in French will be delivered to francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD will continue to identify economic development needs in the next fiscal year in consultations with the FEDOs and the OLMC. Identified needs are addressed through conference sponsorships, project development, participation in activities and events with the communities, and the enhanced services through the FEDOs. • BC made available and gave presentations to senior secondary French immersion students on entrepreneurship. Presentation to staff of the Canada BC Business Services on the SDECB services and meeting with WEI on possible partnership with SDECB. • In Manitoba, training sessions were offered in 2001-2002 with the partnership coordinated by WD: Pensez Affaires! Des ateliers à votre portée <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Présentation orale efficace , October 17 in Saint-Boniface 2) Comment faire affaire avec le gouvernement fédéral? - October 24 in Saint-Boniface 3) Gestion financière 1, October 25 in Saint-Boniface 4) Gestion financière 2, November 8 in Saint-Boniface 5) Comment prévenir et surmonter les obstacles juridiques touchant la petite entreprise, November 14 in Saint-Boniface 6) Stratégies de ressources humaines pour les petites entreprises, November 22 in Saint-Boniface 7) Est-ce qu'un site web ou le commerce électronique s'applique à moi?, November 29 in Saint-Boniface 8) Est-ce que le commerce électronique s'applique à Moi ? February 2 in Winnipeg. • Saskatchewan plans to deliver some seminars in French and will work with the Economic Development Officer (EDO) from the Conseil coopérative de la Saskatchewan in 2002/03 • In Alberta region, the following training and information sessions were offered: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) WD worked with La Chambre économique de l'Alberta and the Lakeland Community Development Corporation to deliver an E-business seminar in Plamondon, October, 2001 2) WD partnered with La Chambre économique de l'Alberta to deliver a business development seminar for Artisans "Un

		<p><i>commerce à soi... en un tour de main!"</i> March 25,2002</p> <p>3) Selling to Government seminar is being slated for the 2002-2003 fiscal year.</p>
<p>WD-Manitoba will participate actively in the Single-Window Initiative, a cooperative effort between the Province of Manitoba and the federal government.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Six joint government service centres will be established in urban and rural communities having a high concentration of Francophones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manitoba met its obligations. The first Bilingual Service Centre, le Centre La Verendrye opened in St. Boniface in 2001/02. Planning is currently underway to open a Centre in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes and another in Saint-Pierre-Jolys.
<p>WD Manitoba will provide \$300,000 -- from its Western Economic Partnership Agreement (WEPA) with the Province of Manitoba – toward the \$1.3 million construction of a Maison du Bourgeois .</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An interpretative/reception facility, within the Festival du Voyageur's Fort Gibraltar, will shift the operation of Fort Gibraltar from a seasonal basis to a year round operation, further enhancing the job creation impacts of this project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manitoba has met its obligations. The Maison du Bourgeois was constructed in 2001/02.
<p>WD Manitoba will provide \$180,000 over three years (i.e. 1998-99, 1999-00 and 2000-01) for the Rues Principales initiative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This project will revitalize the small business sector along Provencher Boulevard in Saint-Boniface and transform the business area into an identifiable francophone centre appealing to shoppers and tourists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WD-MB supported the project from 1998 to March 31 2001. Development Corporation CDC Riel, which receives funding from WD, currently manages Rues Principales. Entreprises Saint-Boniface another community driven initiative in the area of Community Economic Development, will also be managed by CDC Riel.

NATIONAL OR PAN WESTERN INITIATIVES

Principal measures proposed	Proposed Outcome(s)	Status
<p>Integrate the four Francophone economic development organizations in the West (i.e. Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique [SDECB], Chambre économique de l'Alberta [CÉA], Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan [CCS], Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba [CDÉM]) into WD's Western Service Delivery Network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Francophone economic development organizations will benefit from improved access to information, networking opportunities, and partnerships. Francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs will have better services from WD and its Network Partners because of the link to a francophone development organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The announcement was made in the new fiscal year on April 18th. The Francophone Economic Development Organizations are now official members of WD's Service Network. Core funding of \$6 million has been approved to support the FEDOs over the next three years. Additional initiatives were made available to the FEDOs as partners of WD: Partners On-Line (POL), Community Economic Development Opportunities (CEDO), and the Marketing and Visibility Initiative (MVI). The Manitoba FEDO obtained funding for POL while funding for MVI and CEDO initiatives were funded in 2001/02. Saskatchewan FEDO applied for POL and MVI. Both were implemented in 2001/02.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD BC provided POL and MVI for their FEDO for 2001/02. • WD Alberta worked with their FEDO, La Chambre économique de l'Alberta, to successfully implement CEDO, MVI and POL in 2001/02.
<p>Enhance the relationship between the Western Canada Business Service Network partners and the provincial Francophone economic development organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network partners provide better service to francophone entrepreneurs by referring them to the francophone economic development organization of their respective regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On April 18, 2001, the Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification announced the Government of Canada through WD would be contributing \$6 million over three years for the creation of four Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) to help strengthen economic opportunities for francophone businesses. There will be one FEDO in each of the four western provinces. This announcement formalized the inclusion of the Francophone Economic Development Organizations in the Western Canada Business Service Network. • To supplement and enhance WD and the other WCBSN partners' services, the FEDOs will be offering counselling, mentoring, training and access to capital. • Throughout the 2001-02 year, the FEDOs and the other network members in all regions have worked collaboratively to create referral protocols. In doing so, WD is ensuring through their partners that Francophone clients receive equal access to programs, services, counselling, mentorship, training and access to capital.
<p>Continue to provide funding (e.g. last year of a three-year initiative) for the establishment and operations of Le Corridor touristique francophone de l'Ouest - a partnership involving the four western francophone economic development organizations - whose mandate is the development and marketing of a pan-western francophone tourism action plan based on the "tourism corridors" concept and eventually linked to a pan-Canadian Route de la francophonie.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western Canada's francophone communities and tourism related businesses are linked into a corridor touristique francophone that is marketed to francophone tourists from Quebec, the Maritimes, France and the United States. • Increased tourism to Western Canada's Francophone communities and attractions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding of \$558,132 was approved to support this initiative over a period of three years ending March 31, 2001. However, the project had been extended into 2001-2002 to complete the initial phase of the project with existing approved funding.
<p>WD will support financially (amounts to be determined) and participate actively in various economic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A better educated and informed francophone entrepreneur. • Business deals are made between 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saskatchewan: WD sponsored and had a booth at Le Forum économique in February 2002 in Gravelbourg. • WD supported financially, through the SDECB, a French event on

<p>development and entrepreneurship events (for example the Forum économique des gens d'affaires francophones du Canada and the Mondiale de l'entrepreneuriat jeunesse).</p>	<p>francophone entrepreneurs, SMEs and others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of francophone entrepreneurs across western Canada. 	<p>the impact of September 11th.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alberta: WD took part in the Rendez-vous de la Francophonie events in Edmonton in March of 2002. They also took part, ensuring bilingual support and promoting opportunities for Francophones in the In-Reach Rendez-Vous, an Edmonton located procurement event facilitated by WD. • Alberta region also financially supported "Affaires 2001" and "Les rencontres professionnelles de l'Ouest". • Each of these events were all instrumental in bringing together SMEs and service providers to inform on business practices, programs, services available, and provided excellent networking opportunities.
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INTERDEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION		
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Principal measures proposed	Proposed Outcome(s)	Status
<p>Continue our active membership on the <i>Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne</i>, whose mandate is to influence the policies, programs and services of the nine federal partners so that they foster the development and enhance the vitality of the OLMCs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies, programs and priorities that are established by the Comité will reflect western interests. • Cost-sharing opportunities will be pursued and funded. • Pan-Western and/or regional initiatives that reflect at least one of the four priority areas of development identified by the Comité, i.e. tourism, the knowledge-based economy, rural development, and youth entrepreneurship will be given priority consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD continues to be active on this comité. The 2001/02-year is a transition year as le comité seeks a new multi-year MOU with federal departments. The National Coordinator is a member of the strategic planning working group to develop the new strategic plan and frameworks for le comité national and to address new initiatives to advance Section 41. • WD supported the four sector working groups of the Committee this year through participation on the Strategic Planning committee for drafting the principles, visions, mandates, roles, activities and operational plans for the new MOU through HRDC. • Continuation of work plan development for each of the sectoral tables were undertaken and are slated to be completed for 2001/02 in time for the new MOU to be signed. • Initial discussions are also underway to develop a Team Canada Francophonie with target markets in French speaking countries. The National Coordinator, with a trade background, has been requested to be on that working group as well.
<p>WD staff will work with the Council of Senior Federal Officials in each western province to develop collaboration mechanisms such as memoranda of understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strategic and proactive approach will be developed and implemented to address the challenges facing Western Canadian Francophone communities in their development efforts and identify 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The governments of Canada & Manitoba established an agreement with the Francophone community in 2000. • Alberta has had a tripartite agreement in place since 1999. • On November 30, 2001 WD Saskatchewan and other federal government departments entered into an MOU with the

<p>adapted to the circumstances in each province.</p>	<p>opportunities for collaboration that will contribute to the advancement of these communities.</p>	<p>Francophone community and the Province. The purpose of the MOU is to establish a framework for continuing cooperation between Canada, Saskatchewan and the Fransaskois community in facilitating economic and human resource development. WD is also part of the joint committee established to implement the MOU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC is to verify whether one could be established. • In January 2002, WD and Canadian Heritage finalized the 3-year MOU for the Interdepartmental Partnerships with the Official Languages Communities (IPOLC), using Alberta regional projects to fuel the first submissions towards the approval of the agreement.
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COMMUNICATIONS		
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Principal measures proposed	Proposed Outcome(s)	Status
<p>WD's Action Plan will be posted on its web site (www.wd.gc.ca), and will be distributed in hard copy to minority official language groups and associations in western Canada, as well as to selected national groups. The Action Plan will also be provided to the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Treasury Board Secretariat, the Privy Council Office, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages, the Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne and federal economic departments/agencies and all other relevant organizations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Plan is provided to key stakeholders in a timely fashion. • Feedback will be actively solicited from key stakeholders in order to respond to changing demands, needs or priorities and adjust our actions accordingly. • After reading the document, key stakeholders will identify areas of common interest and collaborative arrangements could be developed, thereby maximizing the use and impact of limited resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the WD OLA Action plan is posted on the WD website. The updates and accomplishments will also be posted in both official languages. • Hard copies will be provided to stakeholders. • WD and the Service Delivery Network continue to be diligent. WD has ensured that consultations and feedback were received from the Service Network Partners.
<p>Ensure that all federal government informational/reference material available to entrepreneurs and SMEs through WD's Western Canada Business Service Network are</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information material, reference material and media material is produced and available in both official languages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Website development team, Communications team, and all divisions work diligently to ensure that all materials electronic and paper based for public consumption are available in both official languages. The Website development team continues to ensure that French and English versions of the plan are up to date.

<p>developed, produced and simultaneously available in both official languages, regardless of medium (e.g. printed matter or electronic mode).</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD Communications Marketing and Consultations branch has been diligently writing the new business plan with the targeted products to be launched in the 2001-02 and 2002-03 years. Such materials are “Working with the West” a publication about the work of WD, new booth backdrops, and brochures regarding WD programs and services.
<p>WD will compile a list of key francophone organizations and media, including a database of western francophone stakeholders, for special mailings of interest to the francophone community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information that is of interest or of importance to key stakeholders, entrepreneurs and SMEs will be sent out in a timely fashion, thereby allowing them to have accurate and timely information that could affect their business decisions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Section 41 Coordinators continue to work with their Regional Communications units, where appropriate, and with francophone economic development organizations to establish and maintain the mailing lists. • Alberta has established a list of key Francophone organizations. It remains a regional priority to keep this list up to date. The region will integrate the updated list into the Client Information System (CIS) for greater access.
<p>Media advertising of WD products/services/ events will include western Canadian Francophone media. Special regional initiatives will be encouraged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD products, services, training, seminars and economic opportunities are made known to Francophones in western Canada. • Francophone media receive advertising revenues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Francophone community raised interest and participation in WD events. The FEDOs announcement was made on April 18th. Advertising was made available to all the major newspapers in the West including francophone media. • ACCESS West magazine from WD highlighted the FEDOs in the July – August edition. Bulletin 41-42 highlighted the FEDOs in their June 2001 issue. • ACCESS West featured an article regarding the Francophone Loan Fund between La Chambre économique de l’Alberta and the Beaumont Credit Union. The article was published in the Alberta supplement of the October – December 2001 edition. • A number of Bulletin 41-42 highlighted the work done in the West with the Francophone community over the 2001-2002 year. • WD-Manitoba advertised all training workshops offered in the French language in La Liberté French language weekly. • WD-MB participated in two radio interviews with CKSB Radio-Canada, one to promote the delivery of French language workshops, the other to promote the Government of Canada Info Fair. • In Saskatchewan WD has advertised in L’Eau Vive newspaper for La Fête Fransaskoise, Le Forum Economique, La Semaine de Francophonie, and Small Business Week. WD Saskatchewan also places ads in Le Partenaire, a newsletter issued by the FEDO and the Fransaskois Internet Directory. • Alberta Communications will advertise in French publications on if

		<p>appropriate. They advertise WD events/products/services in Le Franco and Le Chinook. Alberta region also had placements in francophone publications such as Le Franco Annuaire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In BC, WD advertised in the main written publication: L'Express du Pacifique, through the email lists of the francophone economic org. "SDECB" and with Radio-Canada. WD, with the participation of the FEDO and the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, created 4 publications entitled "Solutions pour les petites entreprises" series.
<p>Use radios communautaires francophones to inform francophone listeners about WD programs and activities (e.g. arrange for the Secretary of State for Western Economic Diversification and departmental officials to be interviewed).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD products, services, training, seminars and economic opportunities are made known to francophones in western Canada. • Entrepreneurship is promoted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All News Releases are distributed to the French media simultaneously with English versions, generating coverage in print, electronic, radio, and television medias. • WD-Manitoba hosts a weekly radio program: C'est de vos affaires ! on the community radio station Envol 91FM. In 2000-2001 and 2001-2002, the radio program featured information on WD programs and services as well as services provided by the Women's Enterprise Centre, the Canada Manitoba Business Service Centre, the Business Development Centre and Manitoba's FEDO, le Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues. The program has also featured 34 entrepreneurs in various sectors of the economy. In 2001-2002 WD sponsored the program and purchased advertising to promote the Pensez Affaires ! workshops
<p>WD will maintain a bank of "success stories" relating to francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs, for use in speeches, MP householder mailings, and other information products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A bank of "success stories" will be available for quick reference of communications personnel and regional coordinators. • WD will be able to provide quick examples of the success of WD policies and actions to all interested parties (media, public, government etc.) with regard to OLA commitments across Western Canada. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal spreadsheets on the shared directory keep track of the projects that were completed. These projects were specifically targeting the needs of Francophone communities. • A BEST stories binder of SMEs is kept. Stories from WD and from FEDOs are available describing the success stories of clients. • In Alberta, the FEDO has been requested to provide any success stories to WD to supplement the existing stories kept by WD Communications.
<p>WD will make available for publication in regional French language community newspapers at least one success story per year, relating to WD activity in implementing Section 41 of the OLA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one article per year will appear in each French language weekly in western Canada and will feature a successful francophone entrepreneur or SME. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACCESS West is provided to all media in Western Canada. Media and publications are encouraged to request usage of articles where appropriate. • Each region will endeavour to cover a success story in the French language media in 2001-2002 by working more closely with the FEDOs.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Saskatchewan the FEDO issues a newsletter called “Le Partenaire” which profiles several success stories. The latest edition in April 2002 included Bourgault Industries Ltd. and Shanigan’s Coffee and Dessert Bar. • WD Saskatchewan will be establishing a best practices binder and will be reviewing its database to accumulate success stories under Section 41 of the OLA. • In BC, our SDECB partner publishes their own publications and also published main events in newspaper • Through our FEDO partner BC received success stories through “La Capsule économique”, A major success story was a BC winner in tourism for the Lauriers de la PME competition (coverage in newspaper, National Committee for Canadian Francophonie and Capsule économique).
<p>WD will submit at least one success story per year, and selected “snippets” throughout the year, to the Department of Canadian Heritage (DCH) for inclusion in DCH’s quarterly publication “41-42”, a newsletter relating to the federal government’s implementation of Sections 41-42 of the OLA as well as to the Comité national de développement des ressources humaines de la francophonie canadienne, for inclusion in one of the Comité’s quarterly newsletter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One article per year will appear in each of these two newsletters. • Increased visibility and knowledge of WD initiatives by the readers of these newsletters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January to March issue of Bulletin 41-42 highlighted the previous year’s accomplishment of WD as a leader in OLA and Section 41. • It is anticipated that there will be an increase in numbers of success stories as the FEDOs are on board. They have indicated they will contribute BEST Stories for the of success stories binder and for public testimonials.

INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING & ACCOUNTABILITY

Principal measures proposed	Proposed Outcome(s)	Status
<p>Include initiatives that foster the development of official language minority communities (OLMCs) in western Canada into WD Corporate Business Planning processes (i.e. annual strategic planning, reporting and evaluation).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD’s: Report on Plans and Priorities, Departmental Performance Report, and Business Plans include Section 41 commitments and identify specific initiatives. 	<p>Francophone economic development is addressed in RPP. ...” <i>WD will continue to address the needs of SMEs and entrepreneurs through the more than 100 offices of the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN) which includes WD Client Service Branches, Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), Womens’ Enterprise Initiatives (WEIs), <u>Francophone economic development organizations</u>, and the Canada Business Services</i></p>

		<p><i>Centres (CBSCs). "... WD provides citizen-centred service delivery to meet the needs of western entrepreneurs including rural, women, youth, Francophone and Aboriginal entrepreneurs as well as entrepreneurs with disabilities...." ... "WD's strategy for its Entrepreneurship core program area is heavily dependent on collective initiatives with non-profit organizations such as Community Futures Development Corporations, Women's Enterprise Initiatives, Francophone Economic Development Organizations, and Federal/Provincial cooperation through Canada Business Service Centres...."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The negotiated inception of FEDOs, as partners in the Service Delivery Network is a demonstration WD's commitment and inclusive approach to advancing the economic development of Francophone communities. • Alberta region Special Economic Develop Initiatives (SEDI) funds supported 3 Francophone Heritage Tourism projects in Lac La Biche/Plamondon, Rivière La Paix, and CentrAlta. The SEDI funds levered matching IPOLC contributions (\$145,700) for these projects as well. The WD Alberta region and matching IPOLC funds also supported the development of a business plan for La Grande Place Francophone de Calgary.
<p>Section 41 Coordinators will continue to educate WD staff of OLMCs' needs in terms of program decisions, development and delivery;</p> <p>Whenever feasible, continue to involve members of the francophone community in the staffing process for client service officers whose responsibilities include service to francophone OLMCs;</p> <p>Educate our Western Canada Business Service Network partners of Section 41 of the OLA;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD programs and services are responsive to and meet the needs of the Western Canada's Francophone entrepreneurs and SMEs. • Stakeholder involvement will ensure a stronger community/client-service relationship and a more responsive staff. • Network partners are better informed of WD's responsibilities with respect to enhancing the vitality and supporting the development of the Western Canadian Francophone communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD is currently examining more ways to inform its employees and partners of its commitments under the OLA legislation by using existing tools such as the Intranet and Access West. The department would also like to celebrate its achievements by communicating OLA success stories internally as well as identifying areas for improvements. • This is to be achieved through pan western information sessions involving the representatives of the Commissioner of Official Languages. • WD is also embarking on a special project to post on-line the photos and the responsibilities of bilingual designated and non-designated officers in each region. The project is to highlight and bring visibility to the bilingual talents of the department. It is also intended that we link from the Action Plan to this site as an awareness campaign to the public of who their WD Section 41 and bilingual officers are. • Manitoba will include the contribution of the MB-FEDO in hiring a new bilingual client service officer.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC hired a bilingual assistant to the ADM as well as a second bilingual receptionist • Alberta region has bilingual staff to address client service and program development needs. • WD Saskatchewan has strong capacity in both client service and other parts of the organization and has involved the community in the staffing for bilingual positions.
<p>Regional Section 41 Coordinators and their respective Regional Management Committees, and the Departmental Section 41 Coordinator and the Departmental OLA Champion and the Deputy Minister will hold semi-annual face-to-face progress-reporting sessions to enhance accountability monitoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WD's senior management is better informed of the ongoing efforts towards fulfilling its corporate responsibility to Section 41 of the OLA and we can plan and implement accordingly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings of National Section 41 Coordinators were held in May, September, December and March. • In November 2001 the National Champions met in Vaudreuil, Quebec to discuss OLA issues, primarily dealing with Language of Work enhancement in our departments. • The Regional Coordinators hold regular meets with the FEDOs to discuss regional operating and strategic plans. • The regional coordinators and the National Coordinator met in February 2002 in conjunction with a departmental conference in Edmonton. • The OLA National Coordinator meets regularly with the Deputy Minister and speaks with the OLA Champion, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ottawa office on a regular basis. Updates on Le comité national, the Section 41 National Coordinators meetings, projects, issues and reports are reported to both parties.

8. Measures Proposed to Evaluate Success of Expected Results

During the 2003 - 2004 fiscal year, WD will engage an outside expert to carry out its second comprehensive program evaluation on the implementation of Section 41 of the OLA, using as a base document/instrument, the detailed evaluation framework developed for WD by an external expert in 1996 – 1997.

9. Financial and other resources dedicated to the completion of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan was prepared on the assumption that the resources required for these initiatives will come from existing budgets. The programming monies are included in WD's budget forecasts. The human and material resources will be dedicated in each Region and will be at the level required to successfully carry out the initiatives described above.

Part 4: Communications Plan

Please refer to pages 15 to 18 of the Action Plan above.

Part 5: Signatures

Oryssia J. Lennie
Deputy Minister

Judy Ferguson
Departmental Champion

Anastasia Lim
Departmental National Coordinator

Part 6: What do you think of the Action Plan?

General Comments and/or suggestions:

Strong points:

Areas needing improvement:

Please return this form to:
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Annex A

Summary of Achievements for the period 2000 - 2001 Western Economic Diversification (WD)

Regional Initiatives:

Year 2000/01 marked the first year of the new Action Plan 2000-01 to 2003-04. The year demonstrated many results for Western Economic Diversification. Each region actively worked with their Francophone Economic Development Organization (**FEDOs**) and developed operational strategies. The FEDOs received informal funding to maintain operations and initiatives to further Francophone economic development while we waited for the approval of their formal inception to the Western Canada Business Service Network (**WCBSN**).

The four FEDOs with whom WD works actively with are: 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. Through WD's informal funding, these organizations were able to provide enhanced services to Francophones, including training, business development, counselling, and marketing opportunities, not currently provided by other business service centers.

During the 2000/01-year, agreements for the creation of Special Economic Development Initiative (SEDI) funds at the regional and Pan Western level, as well as a loan loss reserve were underway for all four regions. They would receive approval in the 2001/02-year. Alberta region was engaged in two Special Economic Development Initiatives in the 2000/01-year. La Faculté St Jean improved their technological capabilities, and La Société Chant Ouest organized business development gatherings for Francophone culture in the West. All other regions began approving SEDI funding in 2001/02.

WD continued to participate actively in a number of Official Languages Sub-Committees of the Councils of Senior Federal Officials (where these exist) and in other like organizations. Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia WD regional offices were actively engaged in discussions with the regional groups, WD Alberta strengthened its involvement with the local group through continuous dialogue with stakeholders and interdepartmental efforts.

In the spirit of collaboration and partnership, WD participated in formal consultation meetings between the Francophone community and federal departments/agencies on the implementation of Section 41 of the OLA, in annual general meetings of key representative organizations, and consulted with provincial counterparts on a regular basis. The department continued to work with Network Partners, including the provincial Francophone Economic Development Organizations, to deliver small business seminars to francophone clients. Sessions ranged from topics such as E-Commerce, business planning, market research and marketing, financing, and selling to the government.

WD maintained contact with department of Canadian Heritage to negotiate an Memorandum of Understanding (**MOU**) for the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities (**IPOLC**) program. The program provides matching funding from Canadian Heritage to encourage 10-targeted federal organizations to support official-language minority communities by solidifying existing relationships and creating new partnerships and new methods of cooperation.

WD was also at the table actively participating in numerous meetings of the National Committee on Human Resources Development of the Canadian Francophonie and of the National Coordinators of Section 41 throughout the year. In addition, WD actively attended conferences related to the official languages minority community. All regions actively engaged in discussions and attended meetings with their regional economic development organizations throughout the year. Examples of these gatherings

are la Chambre de commerce francophone de Saint-Boniface, la Société franco-manitobaine, Assemblée communautaire fransaskoise (ACF), La Chambre économique de l'Alberta, Le conseil des présidents et présidentes and the Concertation meeting organised by Heritage Canada, the official launch of the new francophone economic association in Victoria, and the meeting with a French delegation with the French Consul General.

Numerous projects were undertaken and completed in Manitoba, notably the first Community Service Centre in St. Boniface, others slated for opening are the Centre in Notre-Dame-de-Lourdes and in Saint-Pierre-Jolys, The Maison du Bourgeois was scheduled for construction in 2001/02, and the Community Development Corporation revitalized the small business sector along Provencher Boulevard in Saint-Boniface and transform the business area into an identifiable francophone center.

National or Pan Western Initiatives:

In 2000/01, WD started the process of integrating the four Francophone Economic Development Organizations in the West (i.e. Société de développement économique de la Colombie-Britannique [SDECB], Chambre économique de l'Alberta [CÉA], Conseil de la coopération de la Saskatchewan [CCS], Conseil de développement économique des municipalités bilingues du Manitoba [CDÉM]) into WD's Western Service Delivery Network. The announcement by the Secretary of State was made on April 18, 2001, stating the Francophone Economic Development Organizations (FEDOs) would be official members of the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN). Operational funding would be approved to support the FEDOs over the next three years, beginning in 2001/02.

In order to enhance the relationship between the Western Canada Business Service Network partners and the provincial Francophone Economic Development Organizations, the regions held a number of meetings and discussions including the establishment of a Service Delivery Network Partners committee in Manitoba, establishing referral protocols in Saskatchewan, Alberta and BC among network partners.

As part of WD's ongoing commitments to support the Francophone community's priorities, the department supported Le Corridor touristique francophone de l'Ouest (CTFO). The partnership among the FEDOs is to develop and establish this corridor and holds the mandate to develop and market a pan-western francophone tourism action plan based on the "tourism corridors" concept and eventually linked to a pan-Canadian Route de la francophonie. WD contributed funding of \$558,132 to support this initiative over a period of three years ending March 31, 2001. However, the project has been extended into 2001-2002 to complete the initial phase of the project with existing approved funding.

In addition, WD supported financially and participated actively in various economic development and entrepreneurship events throughout the year. Le Mondiale de l'entrepreneuriat was financially supported by a \$25,000 contribution and was attended by a WD-Alta Client Service representative in 2000/01. Saskatchewan WD sponsored and had a booth at Le Forum économique in February 2001 in Regina. Client Service Officers also worked jointly with Le Conseil de développement économique to provide orientation training as our new FEDO partners for the next fiscal year. In Alberta, WD sponsored and had a booth at Le Forum économique de l'Alberta in March 2001 in Edmonton. Each of these events were instrumental in bringing together SMEs and service providers to inform on business practices, programs, services available, and provided excellent networking opportunities.

Interdepartmental Coordination:

WD is an active member of the National Committee on Human Resources Development of the Canadian Francophonie, whose mandate is to influence the policies, programs and services of the nine federal partners so that they foster the development and enhance the vitality of the Official Language Minority Communities. WD supported the four sector working groups of the Committee this year through the involvement with events such as Les Lauriers de la PME, a contest of Francophone SMEs across Canada. The contest highlighted entrepreneurs in the following sectors: tourism, rural development, the

knowledge economy, and Youth integration into entrepreneurship. WD contributed \$35,000 towards the contest promotions, the planning and the logistics of the event. Businesses from Western Canada won awards in the categories of Tourism and Youth integration into entrepreneurship. The National Coordinator was active throughout the year in the continuation of the work plan development of new initiatives to further Section 41 and the involvement of the official language minority community in economic development activities.

WD staff had also worked with the Council of Senior Federal Officials in each western province to develop collaboration mechanisms such as memoranda of understandings adapted to the circumstances in each province. The governments of Canada & Manitoba established agreements with their Francophone communities in 2000. In Alberta, a tripartite agreement had been in place since 1999. The Province of Saskatchewan was currently negotiating its agreement and BC was in the midst of verifying whether an agreement could be established.

Communications:

WD's Action Plan was posted in both official languages to the departmental website (www.wd.gc.ca), and was distributed in hard copy to minority official language groups and associations in western Canada, as well as to selected national groups. The Action Plan was also provided to the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Treasury Board Secretariat, the Commissioner of Official Languages, the National Committee on Human Resources Development of the Canadian Francophonie and federal economic departments/agencies and all other relevant organizations.

In regards to electronic medium, WD ensured all federal government informational/reference material available to entrepreneurs and SMEs through WD's Western Canada Business Service Network are developed, produced and simultaneously available in both official languages. The goal of having English and French mirrored on any page of the website was met in January 2001.

Media advertising of WD products/services/ events is one of the methods to reach Western Canadian entrepreneurs. In 2000/01, western Canadian Francophone media was used to promote events targeted to French speaking clients. WD worked with the Francophone community to raise interest and participation in departmental events. WD Manitoba advertised all training workshops offered in the French language in *La Liberté* French language weekly through the newspaper *La Liberté*. In Saskatchewan WD advertised in *L'Eau Vive* newspaper for *La Fête Fransaskoise*, *Le Forum Economique*, *La Semaine de Francophonie*, and also included Small Business Week publications. WD Saskatchewan also placed ads in *Le Partenaire*, a newsletter issued by the FEDO and the Fransaskois Internet Directory. WD Alberta Communications made it a practice to ensure events, sessions, and news advertised in English was balanced with the equivalent French advertising. WD-Alberta advertised WD events/products/services when appropriate in *Le Franco* and *Le Chinook*. Alberta region also had placements in francophone publications such as *Expert 2001*. In BC, WD advertised in the two main written publications: *L'Express du Pacifique* and *Community Digest* and with Radio-Canada. WD, with the participation of the FEDO and the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, created 4 publications entitled "Solutions pour les petites entreprises".

In addition to print media, WD used "radios communautaires francophones" to inform francophone listeners about WD programs and activities. Most regions rarely used radio advertising except for the public service announcements. However, all Press Releases or advertising was distributed to the French media simultaneously with English versions. Radio Canada receives the press releases at the same as their counterparts in newspapers and television. From those Press releases, they have made the occasional announcement on the radio as a news item, garnering ad hoc radio coverage. WD-Manitoba hosts a weekly radio program: *C'est de vos affaires !* on the community radio station *Envol 91FM*. In 2000-2001, the radio program featured information on WD programs and services as well as services provided by the Women's Enterprise Centre, the Canada Manitoba Business Service Centre, the Business Development Centre and Manitoba's FEDO, *le Conseil de développement économique des*

municipalités bilingues. The program had also featured 17 entrepreneurs in various sectors of the economy.

WD maintained a bank of “success stories” relating to francophone SMEs and entrepreneurs. Regional offices across the West kept a “BEST stories” binder of small and medium sized enterprises from WD and from FEDOs, describing the success stories of clients. These projects were specifically targeting the needs of Francophone communities. WD made available for publication in regional French language community newspapers, success stories relating to WD activity in implementing Section 41 of the OLA. Each region will endeavour to cover a success story in the French language media in 2001-2002 by working more closely with the FEDOs. In Saskatchewan the FEDO issues a newsletter called “Le Partenaire” which profiles several success stories. Through the FEDO partner, BC received success stories through “La Capsule économique”, a major success story was a BC winner in tourism for the Lauriers de la PME competition. A few other finalists at the contest were also clients of WD or the FEDOs. All of them were highlighted in Le comité national’s news brief in March of 2001.

WD submitted articles and “snippets” of information throughout the year to the Department of Canadian Heritage for inclusion in their quarterly publication Bulletin 41-42, a newsletter relating to the federal government’s implementation of Sections 41-42 of the Official Languages Act. In the January to March 2001 issue, Bulletin 41-42 highlighted the previous year’s accomplishment of WD as a leader in OLA and Section 41.

Institutional Planning and Accountability:

The department is committed to the Official Languages Act and to Section 41 and therefore included initiatives that foster the development of official language minority communities (OLMCs) in western Canada as part of the departmental Corporate Business Planning processes. As quoted in the Report on Plans and Priorities 2000/01: “*WD will continue to address the needs of SMEs and entrepreneurs through the more than 100 offices of the Western Canada Business Service Network (WCBSN) which includes WD Client Service Branches, Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs), Womens’ Enterprise Initiatives (WEIs), Francophone economic development organizations, and the Canada Business Services Centres (CBSCs).*”... The inclusion of FEDOs as a partner under the Service Delivery Network was a demonstration of WD’s commitment and inclusive approach to advancing the economic development of Francophone communities.

As part of awareness building and capacity building, WD examined new ways to inform its employees and partners of its commitments under the OLA legislation by using tools such as the Intranet and Access West. The department celebrated its achievements by communicating OLA success stories internally as well as identifying areas for improvements. This was achieved through pan western information sessions involving representatives of the Commissioner of Official Languages. In addition, human resources have been added to the compliment of existing capabilities. Manitoba had hired a new bilingual client service officer. BC hired 2 bilingual client service officers and was in process of hiring a second bilingual receptionist at the time of reporting. Alberta region hired a number of bilingual staff to address client service and program development needs.

Communications between WD Regional Section 41 Coordinators, their respective Regional Management Committees, the Departmental Section 41 Coordinator, the Departmental OLA Champion and the Deputy Minister occurred on an ongoing basis. Progress-reporting sessions were held to enhance accountability monitoring from all dimensions. A Regional Section 41 Coordinators and National Coordinator meeting was held in February 2001. The same week, a meeting among the FEDOs and the WD was held to discuss the upcoming FEDO inception into the Western Canada Business Service Network. In addition, the National Coordinator met regularly with the Deputy Minister and with the OLA Champion, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Ottawa office to keep them abreast of activities and progress made on the OLA files.