Human Resources & Skills Development Canada

**IMPACT AND LESSONS LEARNED
FROM THE OLDER WORKERS PILOT
PROJECTS INITIATIVE (OWPPI)**

**AN OVERVIEW REPORT OF EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED BY
PARTICIPATING PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES**

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Executive Summary

The objective of the Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative is to test employability approaches for older workers by funding projects designed to re-integrate displaced older workers into sustainable employment, or maintain in employment older workers threatened with displacement. The main program outcomes are to focus on the level to which the program helps them achieve greater employability and obtain and sustain employment.

In June 1999, the federal government announced that it would make available $30 million for the OWPPI. The Government of Canada and the provinces and territories, through the Forum of Labour Market Ministers, agreed to a set of objectives, guiding principles, key parameters and a range of approaches for the development and delivery of pilot projects. In 2003-2004, an additional $15 million in federal funding was made available to continue pilot activities to March 31, 2004, and to allow for new pilot projects. Subsequently, the initiative was extended to March 31, 2005, and enriched by $5 million, and again extended to May 20, 2006, and enriched by $5 million.

Participating jurisdictions have included Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

The objective of this current study is to produce an Overview Report on the Impact and Lessons Learned from the OWPPI primarily based on analysis of the evaluation information submitted by participating provinces and territories. The focus is on:
- Overall success of the OWPPI;
- Comparative success of different approaches; and,
- Other lessons learned with respect to programming for this target group including best practices and ineffective practices.

The methodology for this study has consisted of a review and analysis of three types of documents:
1. Evaluations and/or Final Reports on individual OWPPI projects and/or groups of projects prepared by participating provinces and territories;
2. Supplementary Information on the history and operation of the OWPPI program; and,
3. Inventory lists of individual projects identifying project name, sponsor, province or territory, total project funding, objectives and activities.

The scope of the study is from the beginning of OWPPI in 1999 to projects ending March 31, 2005. The subject OWPPI projects engaged approximately 9,500 participants in 130 separate projects. Participants were older workers normally between the ages of 55 – 64, who were unemployed or job threatened. Some projects included participants aged 50 to 54.

Overall success of the OWPPI

As reported in the subject evaluation reports, the OWPPI appears to have achieved a high level of overall success in the achievement of objectives.

- Flexible program design resulted in the development and testing of innovative approaches
  - o All projects tested approaches aimed at improving employment of older workers, re-employment of unemployed older workers or job-retention of threatened older workers
- Positive employment outcomes were achieved and measured
  - o Most approaches achieved some employment success, and some achieved significant success
  - o Evaluation reports were completed by all participating provinces and territories
- Employer awareness was raised
  - o Some research and awareness projects were funded
  - o Surveys indicate pre-existing employer awareness of value of older workers
- Participants were generally satisfied
  - o High level of participant satisfaction with programming regardless of personal employment outcome

Comparative success of different approaches

Projects focusing on unemployed older workers tended to employ one or more of the following employment strategies: employment assistance services such as individual assessment, prior learning assessment, counseling, resumé writing; skills training; work experience; and marketing of participants to employers. Many involved a combination of approaches in a single project coordinated for a group of participants. Projects aimed at retention of employed older workers primarily focused on provision of human resource planning assistance to employers or employment sectors.

The effectiveness of the initiative as a test of various approaches could have been improved if participating jurisdictions had used a common evaluation framework, such as the one provided by HRSDC (then HRDC). Evaluation reports vary substantially, and contain relatively little in the way of common data that would allow for combining information from projects in different jurisdictions. As well, the variety of approaches tested and the wide range of labour market settings for projects limit our ability to report conclusively on impacts by approach. Nevertheless, data reported does appear to be telling a story with respect to the impact of different approaches – pointing to the fact that some would appear to be "winners" and others of less value. At the very least, some results should be of value with respect to program design and others may provide the basis for further testing.

Within the limitations of these data, we offer the following conclusions:

- Projects which combined approaches for assisting unemployed older workers had the best success
  - o Individual assessment followed by tailored programming was widely identified as important
  - o Skills training followed by marketing of workers to employers had highest success
  - o Employment assistance services with some combination of training, work experience and/or marketing also had significant success
- Approaches that did not include employment assistance or marketing of workers had very low success
- Work experience projects involving a 100% subsidy (no employer contribution) were almost entirely ineffective in achieving sustained employment for participants
- Projects that were directed towards retention of "at risk" employed older workers appeared to have the best success rate with 88% of targeted workers still employed following the intervention. (This measurement of success is based on the premise that all 292 workers in retention projects would have lost their jobs without the intervention.)
- Three participant characteristics seemed to influence the outcome. The longer one has been out of work, the harder it is to rejoin the workforce. The higher the education level, the higher the likelihood of re-obtaining employment. The younger the participant, the easier it is to return to the workforce.

Other key lessons learned with respect to programming for older workers

- Retention approaches at the sector level may be more effective than those directed at particular employers and workers. Provincial officials reported that retention activities were significantly undersubscribed as a result of employer reticence to identify "at risk" workers.
- Multi-year funding is necessary for effective programming. Sufficient time must be allowed for participant success. Participants repeatedly cited insufficient duration as a problem with OWPPI.
- Training for older workers must be hands-on, relevant and practical.
- Partnerships at the community level enhance project effectiveness.
- Programming must include common data capture to develop improved understanding of best practices.
- Co-location of projects with broader employment services is advantageous, both in terms of participant access to the broader resources and services and from the point of view of cost-efficiency.
- Extraordinary measures (such as outreach and incentives) may be required to elicit participation of those most in need of support. Older Workers with less than a high school education are not participating in programming to the extent that more educated older workers are.

Every evaluation and/or summary report identified Lessons Learned. These are the professional opinions of the evaluators, supported or supplemented by the personal opinions of the participants, the implementing team, the employers and/or the sponsors, generally obtained through post-project surveys by the evaluators. In many cases these amounted to observations specific to a project. However, many were either found repeatedly or were general enough to have wide application. A more complete list of these can be found in the final section of the report.

Introduction

Overview of OWPPI

Objectives of the Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative

The objective of this federal-provincial/territorial cost-sharing initiative is stated in the Treasury Board's Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative Terms and Conditions for Contributions:

- To develop pilot projects that will test innovative measures designed to re-integrate displaced older workers into sustainable employment, or maintain in employment older workers threatened with displacement.
- The pilots should include active measures that will assist displaced older workers to re-integrate or to maintain themselves in the labour market.
    - The pilots will test a variety of approaches designed to meet older workers specific labour market needs.

All pilot projects will be evaluated in terms of these objectives. Measures funded through the pilots may be supplemental to, but are not to duplicate existing HRSDC (then HRDC) programming or existing provincial government labour market measures.

This objective supports HRSDC's human resources investment priorities aimed at helping clientele with particular labour market needs and issues and broadening partnerships to enhance and integrate programming.

The main program outcomes will focus on enhanced employability and long term employment of older workers and the level to which the program helped them achieve greater employability and obtain and sustain employment.

According to the Terms and Conditions, eligible participants are older workers, normally between the ages of 55 – 64, who are unemployed or job threatened. Some projects included participants who were from 50 to 54.

History of the Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative

In the industrially advanced countries, post-war baby-boomers are approaching retirement. A numerically smaller generation will replace them in the workforce. Also, an increasing percentage of workers are tending to take early retirement. As a result, the ratio of people drawing pensions to the working-age population is about to soar, bringing with it financial pressure on fewer contributing workers and other taxpayers to provide for more pensions. To counter these twin trends, it is in the interest of governments to encourage older workers to remain employed longer, and to work to eliminate barriers which may thwart their continued participation in the labour market, including actively providing opportunities for skills upgrading and work experience (The Economist – Nov. 26, 2005).

The Government of Canada shares with the provinces and territories an on-going concern for the special employment difficulties experienced by some older workers in the labour market. Although, as a group, older workers do quite well in the labour market, once unemployed they typically experience greater difficulties becoming re-employed.   This issue was identified as a priority by the Forum of Labour Market Ministers (FLMM) in the late nineties. At that time the FLMM identified older workers as a significant research priority, and in 1998 an ad hoc Working Group on Older Workers, co-chaired by the Province of Quebec and Human Resources Development Canada was established.

In June 1999, the federal government announced that it would make available $30 million for the OWPPI. The Government of Canada and the provinces and territories, through the FLMM, agreed to a set of objectives, guiding principles, key parameters and a range of approaches for the development and delivery of pilot projects.

In 2003-2004, an additional $15 million in federal funding was made available to continue pilot activities to March 31, 2004, and to allow for new pilot projects. Subsequently, the initiative was extended to March 31, 2005, and enriched by $5 million, and again extended to May 20, 2006, and enriched by $5 million.

Evaluation Component of the Older Workers Pilot Projects Initiative

From the beginning of the OWPPI, evaluation was intended to be central to the design of each project because of the innovative/experimental nature of these projects. Projects were intended to pilot approaches for helping unemployed older workers find employment or keep older workers at risk of becoming unemployed working. OWPPI terms and conditions specified that an evaluation must be completed by each participating jurisdiction. In order to allow the evaluation process to proceed while the initiative was extended, it was agreed that full evaluations would be conducted by provinces and territories only for activities completed by March 2004.

For projects carried out in 2004-2005, only 30 day follow-up surveys on employment outcomes were reviewed. Provinces that participated in 2004-2005 were required to provide the results of longer-term participant follow-up surveys for projects that ended on or before March 31, 2004. These have not yet been received for all projects.

HRSDC developed a generic evaluation framework to guide and support the evaluation work to be completed by participating jurisdictions. The evaluation framework was not completely followed by any jurisdictions.

Participating jurisdictions have included Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. In 2004-2005, only Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories participated. Alberta and Ontario chose not to participate at all.

Study Scope and Objective

The objective of this study is to produce an Overview Report on the Impact and Lessons Learned from the OWPPI primarily based on a summary and analysis of the evaluation information submitted by participating provinces and territories. The focus is on:
- Overall effectiveness of the OWPPI;
- Comparative effectiveness of different approaches; and,
- Other lessons learned with respect to programming for this target group including best practices and ineffective practices.

Although this report is based upon a number of evaluations submitted by provincial/territorial jurisdictions, it is specifically not a comparison by province/territory. It is a national overview of those evaluations and is therefore not an independent evaluation in itself. The distinction may be rather subtle, but it speaks to the fact that it relies heavily on the substantiated opinions expressed in those evaluations without access to the raw data.

The scope of the study is restricted to the 130 OWPPI projects that ended by March 31, 2005.

Study Methodology

The methodology for this study consists of a review and analysis of three types of documents:
- Evaluations and/or Final Reports on individual OWPPI projects and/or groups of projects prepared by participating provinces and territories;
- Supplementary Information on the history and operation of the OWPPI program; and,
- Inventory lists of individual projects identifying project name, sponsor, province or territory, total project funding, objectives and activities.

According to the Study Terms of Reference, "all participating jurisdictions have provided evaluation reports". Despite the intention that evaluations were to be central to the design of the OWPPI program, and the fact that the Audit & Evaluation Directorate of HRSDC developed a generic evaluation framework that was shared with all jurisdictions, this framework was not used to capture similar participant data during projects and for completion of comparable evaluations. The resulting diversity and inconsistency in the information contained in the evaluation reports constituted a major challenge to the production of a coherent overview. In a small number of cases, only a descriptive report was submitted, with no real evaluation content.

There were also two problems of comparability. Despite the generic evaluation framework calling for a control group to be identified in evaluating each project, there was not one case in the 130 projects where this was done. For this reason, net program and project "effectiveness" have not been evaluated. Rather this report summarizes key lessons learned based on gross employment outcomes and substantial anecdotal feedback.

The other comparability problem is that, because the mix of participants, the activities planned, and the economic conditions in the particular region all varied with every project, it can truly be said that every project was unique. This presented an additional challenge of classifying projects in a meaningful way for a valid comparison of various approaches and outcomes.

OWPPI Projects Description

National Data

The subject OWPPI projects engaged approximately 9,500 participants in 130 separate projects.

The table below shows the distribution of projects by provincial/territorial jurisdiction and primary thrust of the approach, bearing in mind that most projects used a combination of approaches to achieve the objective and there is a subjective element in their classification as one type of project or another. The approaches, which are described in more detail beginning on page 12, include:

- Employment Assistance (including but not limited to individual assessment, employment counselling, job loss management, prior learning assessment, job finding skills and assistance, marketing of workers);
- Retention of at-risk employed older workers;
- Training (including basic, job related and entrepreneurship);
- Work Experience (including wage subsidies and some on the job training); and,
- Awareness/Advocacy (raising public and employer awareness and research), which had no Older Worker participants.

Distribution of Projects by Provincial/Territorial Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Employment Assistance and Retention	Training	Work Experience	Awareness/ Advocacy	Total Projects
Quebec	56	16	1	1	74
British Columbia	11	6	1		18
Nova Scotia	4	6			10
New Brunswick	1		5		6
Newfoundland		3	2		5
Manitoba	2	2			4
Northwest Territories	1	3			4
Prince Edward Island	2			1	3
Saskatchewan	2	1			3
Yukon	1	1			2
Nunavut		1			1
Total	**80**	**39**	**9**	**2**	**130**

Project Participants

As the reporting of participant numbers was uneven, a reliable exact figure is not possible. However, our estimate based on the planned intake is that a total of 9,500 individuals participated in the 130 projects reported.

Targeting

Projects generally were open to all who were unemployed or job-threatened and who were in the target age range (50-64). There were a few projects specifically for women, one specifically for African-Canadians, one specifically for Aboriginals, one for East Indians and at least one project targeted to seasonal older workers. As well several projects were targeted to individuals from a particular sector, or who were laid off by a particular major employer. (e.g.: ex-miners or forestry workers).

Individual Assessment

Projects normally included an initial assessment of each participant, generally including abilities, skills, experience, educational level, objectives, physical capabilities and motivation. From reading the evaluations, it is clear that the authors felt that the depth and breadth of the initial assessment of each participant is of critical importance in their success or failure in the project. In situations where it was relevant, personal or social problems such as substance abuse was ascertained as well. However, due to the lack of a control group and paucity of outcome information reported, it is not possible to verify that the type, quality and motivation of participants had a major influence on the outcome of a project as would be expected.

Age of Participants

The initial target group for the OWPPI was workers aged 55 to 64. For various reasons, including the need to fill the project quota with the requisite numbers of participants, some projects expanded eligibility to include 50 – 54 year olds.

Not all evaluations specified the age of participants. The following table describes the age distribution based upon the 52% of evaluations that contained age information.

Age Range	Percentage of Participants
Under 50	2%
50 to 54	15%
55 to 59	55%
60 to 64	26%
65 and over	2%

From this table we can see that 81% of participants were within the initial target group, and 96% fell within the revised target group.

Gender

Information concerning the gender of participants was not included in all evaluations. Based upon the evaluations that did give gender information, 2,766 of participants were male and 2,153 were female.

Education

Many of the evaluations did not provide specific information regarding the educational level of participants. Based upon the 4,316 participants for whom this information exists the breakdown is as follows:

Education Level	Percentage of Participants
Grade 8 or less	7%
some high school	23%
high school diploma	21%
some post-secondary education	32%
post-secondary diplomas or degrees	17%

Many of the evaluations revealed that unemployed older worker participants had an average level of education comparable to, and in some cases superior to, the average for the population of the province or territory where they lived.

Labour Market Context

The OWPPI projects were widely dispersed and represented a diverse range of labour market contexts. In BC for example, where a project was funded in almost every region of the province, this diversity was accomplished by design. Across the country, there were projects in metropolitan areas with a large variety of job opportunities such as Montreal and Vancouver, as well as areas that had been hit by significant closures, such as Murdochville, Quebec. There were also projects in seasonal communities such as Edmundston, NB.

Project Design

Almost all pilots involved a project-based model offering programming approaches to participants in a group setting. The different approaches offered, alone or in combination, by the 130 OWPPI projects include the following:

Employment Assistance
Employment assistance approaches included employment preparation activities such as individual counseling, resume writing, assessment (including prior learning assessment), building self-confidence, goal-setting, career planning, addressing issues surrounding job displacement, development of job interview and job search skills, job finding clubs and short-term basic training such as the use of office equipment, cash registers and computers. These services were primarily offered through workshops or group sessions. Participation in full-time employment assistance projects is normally short, i.e., 3-5 weeks.

Work Experience
The common approaches to gaining work experience included:
- Work experience that occurred within the project;
- Work experience that occurred at the end of the project in the hope that it would result in permanent employment; and,
- Simulated work experience that was provided in a "virtual" employment situation.

In some projects employers were contacted by the service delivery agent and encouraged to offer a job placement to participants. In other projects participants were given the skills and opportunity to market themselves to potential employers to gain work experience. In many cases employers were encouraged to offer regular pay commensurate with qualifications and experience. Employers were normally paid subsidies for wages paid to the older workers and in some cases were asked to commit to keeping the employee at the end of the placement. At least two projects reimbursed employers for 100% of the wages paid to participants.

In a "virtual" employment situation, participants obtained practical work experience through a simulation of various functions of real-world businesses. Work experience opportunities varied to reflect required workplace skills (e.g., administration, accounting practices, and marketing).

Training
Some projects provided training adapted to the needs of each individual to enable participants to acquire the essential knowledge, basic skills, and specialized skills required for job placement, future employment, or to increase marketability. Normally participants were first assessed to determine their education/aptitude levels in order to customize training to their needs or to customize curriculum for the delivery of group-based training. On-the-job training and industry specific training modules were also provided.

Marketing

Some service providers actively marketed individual older workers to local employers. This occurred in some instances during a project for the purpose of obtaining work experience or, in other cases, at the end of a project for permanent employment

Retention

Retention approaches were aimed at implementation of accommodations necessary for "at risk" older workers to retain their employment. Examples: a) skills assessment and training; b) identification of less demanding tasks with same employer; c) development of new human resource management practices within companies to promote the retention of experienced workers, the transfer of skills before retirement and the extension of the working lives of older workers.

Employers and Industries Involved in the Project

One of the overall objectives of the OWPPI is to make employers aware of the value of older workers. The chief way of involving employers was through job placement. However, at least two projects were directed toward this objective without the active involvement of older worker participants. Project activities included research to identify issues/barriers that older workers face in securing employment and research into the management practices favoured by employers, the development of communications plans addressing the awareness, knowledge, and buy-in among identified target groups, and assisting employers with the development of effective human resource management practices with respect to accommodating older workers.

Industries Involved

Some project proposals identified specific sectors from which potential participants would be selected, particularly in communities that had experienced large numbers of lay-offs from these sectors. Industries with potential to provide new employment were also sometimes targeted by project sponsors, on the basis of local labour market information. The table below illustrates these industries as identified in project proposals.

Industries of Origin	Some Industries Targeted for New Employment
Agriculture Carpentry Clerical Clothing Construction Electrician Fish Processing Forestry Foundry Maple Sugar Metal Manufacturing Metal Processing Mining Painting Plumbing Service Shipbuilding Textiles & Woolen Goods	Care-giving Crafts Customer Contact Education Food Furniture Garden Centres Housekeeping Office Automation Printing Sales Self-employment Service Social Economy Tourism & Wood Products

Two of the evaluation reports identified and ranked the principal sectors in which participants found employment, illustrating the economic diversity involved. These are illustrated in the table below.

Where Participants Found Employment in Two Jurisdictions (in descending order of significance)	
Jurisdiction A	**Jurisdiction B**
Sales and Services	Other Services [Not specified]
Business, Finance & Administration	Health Care & Social Assistance
Processing, Manufacture and Public Utilities	Retail Trade
Trades, Transport and Mechanical.	Accommodation & Food Services
	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting
	Transportation & Warehousing
	Arts, Entertainment & Recreation
	Administration & Support,
	Waste Management Services.

Jurisdiction B also broke these figures down by region, and they demonstrated the real diversity of employment opportunity that can occur within a province. In one region, for example, Transportation & Warehousing dominated whereas in another it was Accommodation & Food Services. These differences demonstrate the need to thoroughly understand the characteristics of the labour market in a region where a project will be developed, and to orient the programming to the industries with employment opportunities.

Project Duration and Budgets

The briefest OWPPI projects ran for two months; the longest for 24 months. The average duration of a project was 13.5 months.

After the initial funding period, the OWPPI program existed on annual funding renewals. This limited the time actually available for projects by enforcing an arbitrary deadline. A significant number of survey respondents claimed that the time allowed for their project was insufficient.

Evaluations

The generic evaluation framework called for an overall project evaluation for each project covering the central evaluation issues:
- Relevance;
- Project Design & Delivery;
- Project Success; and,
- Project Cost-Effectiveness.

Most of the evaluations were conducted by outside consultants who should have been provided with an outline of the methodology to be used including:
- Baseline data collection;
- Analysis of Administrative Data;
- Document Review;
- Interviews with Project Managers/Administrators; and,
- Focus Groups and Surveys of Participants & other stakeholders.

It is our understanding that, although comparison groups had been identified as important in the framework, when it came time to implement, this requirement was dropped in view of the number of small projects in areas where it would be difficult to establish a control group.

Although in some jurisdictions, separate evaluations were conducted for each project, there were some reports that grouped evaluations of separate projects, providing detailed, in-depth analyses. Grouped reports were particularly useful coming from Quebec, British Columbia and Nova Scotia because these three provinces had the most activity.

Nova Scotia makes the point that having the same contractor undertake all the OWPPI evaluations in a province/territory improves the likelihood of consistency of methodology and reporting and facilitates roll-ups and statistical analysis at the provincial level. However, even here there were marked differences between evaluations.

Analysis of Outcomes

Overall Success of OWPPI

As reported in the subject evaluation reports, the OWPPI appears to have achieved a high level of success in the achievement of objectives.

Innovative Approaches Encouraged and Tested

Numerous evaluations cited flexibility as a key factor in the success of the OWPPI at the local level. Because of the pilot nature of the initiative, there was considerable latitude for testing a wide variety of approaches. This flexibility allowed for innovation – an essential component which all projects needed to demonstrate in order to obtain funding. This often took the form of adapting existing employability services to the specific needs of older workers. That the initiative has been effective in this regard is attested to by the variety of approaches tried. They include, for example:

- Development of a Seniors Human Resources Centre, including a skills inventory database, which would serve as a clearinghouse for employers and individuals who want to hire older workers.
- Establishment and coaching of a producers co-operative of older workers that would provide consulting services (communication, advertising and promotion, project management training) to businesses in the region.
- Responding to individual training needs by using a team of professionals (psychologists, orthopedic specialists, etc.) to carry out an assessment of each challenged older worker's skills and physical challenges and evaluate any difficulties with reasoning and thinking.
- Offering sixteen weeks of practical work experience in a simulated work environment where older workers would be "hired" to engage in various jobs within the virtual "firm".
- Using a variety of means (newspaper, radio, television, individual & group meetings, conferences, symposia, etc.) to make employers and major socio-economic players aware of the importance of helping experienced workers to obtain and retain employment.

Positive Employment Outcomes Achieved and Measured

Not only did projects need to be innovative, but they had to include active elements designed to re-integrate unemployed or keep threatened older workers in employment. Virtually all of the projects included such elements with varying degrees of success, as would be expected in a test of innovative approaches. Based on the information available, it can be said that most projects achieved some success in terms of employment outcomes and some achieved significant success in this regard.

The overall success of the initiative, as a test of various approaches, might have been improved had the proponents used the standardized evaluation framework provided by HRSDC. As it is, the evaluation reports contain little in the way of hard common data that would allow for a valid comparison across all 130 projects. Nevertheless, reported data does appear to be telling a story with respect to the impact of different approaches – pointing to the fact that some would appear to be "winners" and others of less value. At the very least, these results provide the basis for hypotheses for further testing.

Employer Awareness Raised

One of the overall objectives of the OWPPI is to make employers aware of the value of older workers. Project activities included research to identify issues/barriers that older workers face in securing employment and research into the management practices favoured by employers, the development of communications plans addressing the awareness, knowledge, and buy-in among identified target groups, and assisting employers with the development of effective human resource management practices with respect to accommodating older workers.

Projects dedicated to this approach had no older worker participants and so are difficult to measure in terms of employment impact. However, the surveys of employers undertaken during numerous OWPPI projects did, in fact, elicit awareness of many positive attributes of older workers.

Participants Satisfied

No initiative can be judged to have been completely successful if it leaves its participants unsatisfied with respect to their legitimate expectations. In this regard, the evaluations report a generally high level of participant satisfaction with programming regardless of their personal employment outcome.

Comparative Effectiveness of Different Approaches

The different approaches represented, alone or in combination, by the 130 OWPPI projects have been described above. As a reminder, these include:
- Employment Assistance
- Work Experience
- Training
- Marketing
- Retention

Even with the best of data, attribution of results or outcomes to the approach tested can be a problem in evaluating projects. In the case of OWPPI projects, there could be many other local labour market economic factors impacting on job availability, and an economic upturn or downturn could make the results of a mediocre project appear to be very successful, or make the results of a very successful methodology appear to be mediocre.

As mentioned in the previous section, the evaluation reports do not contain the participant outcome data that would allow for a comparison of approaches across all 130 projects. However, actual employment numbers are available for approximately 2100 participants that can be used to provide an indication of what approaches might be most effective.

Having said all this, the table below represents a quantitative appraisal of outcomes based on all the evaluations taken together, for which data was provided.

Employment Outcomes by Approach

Approach	Number Participants Evaluated	Number Employed at Finish	Percent Employed at Finish	Number in long term Followup	Number Employed at Followup	Percent Employed at Followup
Retention	292	257	88.0			
Training and Marketing	19	15	78.9			
EAS/Marketing/Work Experience	176	106	60.2			
EAS with Work Experience	32	18	56.3			
EAS/Training/Work Experience	344	191	55.5			
EAS with Skills Training	163	81	49.7	72	53	73.6
EAS with Marketing to Employers	120	56	46.7			
Training with Work Experience	43	16	37.2	18	15	83.3
EAS	752	276	36.7			
EAS, Training, Work Experience[1] and Marketing	129	47	36.4	102	43	42.2
Work Experience w. 100% subsidy	24	3	12.5	0		
Training + Work Experience w. 100% subsidy	6	0	0.0	0		
Totals	2100	1066	50.8	192	111	57.8

In the table, approaches are presented in descending order by percent of participants employed at finish, meaning that they are arranged in order from most to least effective by this measure. The shaded row near the middle contains the median percentage employed at finish (46.7), the point at which half the evaluated participants are above and half are below – the middle approach in terms of effectiveness. It should also be noted that there are two sharp breaks (signified by the black rows) in the otherwise gradual differences in outcomes.

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[1] Based on three projects operating in relatively depressed economies, two of which offered an initial 100% wage subsidy.

This separates the table into three areas where the top two approaches show significantly better outcomes and the bottom two show outcomes that are significantly worse. The middle is an area which shows a range of gradual differences in outcome by approach category.

Within the limitations of these data, we offer the following conclusions.

1. Projects that were directed towards retention of "at risk" employed older workers appeared to have the best success rate with 88% of targeted workers still employed following the intervention. If we accept the assumption that all 292 participants in retention projects would otherwise have lost their jobs, then this is the approach with the most favorable outcome.
2. Retention approaches at the sector level may be more effective than those directed at particular employers and workers. Provincial officials reported that retention activities were significantly undersubscribed as a result of employer reticence to identify "at risk" workers.
3. For unemployed older workers the most favorable outcomes were achieved by projects that combined approaches such as employment assistance services or marketing to employers with a combination of training and/or work experience.
4. Projects which just offered employment assistance services were somewhat effective, but more effective when combined with other approaches. Training with work experience alone is approximately as effective the provision of employment assistance services alone.
5. Projects offering training followed by marketing of individual workers to employers (and no employment assistance services), appeared to be very effective, but the sample is too small to draw a conclusion.
6. Approaches that offered a 100% wage subsidy to employers for hiring older workers were almost entirely ineffective, and relatively ineffective even when a gradually declining subsidy was offered which started at 100%.
7. The little information available from long term follow-up indicates that jobs are retained in a significant number of cases.

Other comparisons presented below are illustrative only, coming as they do from a single jurisdiction.

In one province, the evaluators reported that of the 647 former participants who responded to a follow-up survey, approximately 30% had worked more since the project ended. The evaluators also reported that for those who had not been working at intake, the proportion working post-program increased from 22% for those with less than six months since services ended, to 37% for those with over a year since services ended. The first statistic validates the efficacy of the OWPPI in assisting people obtain work; the second statistic shows that the OWPPI experience led to long term improvement in employment.

Another factor demonstrated in a one-province analysis of results, including 27 projects, is that the longer an older worker has been out of work, the harder it is to re-join the workforce. To arrive at this conclusion, the province analyzed the success rate of finding employment of former OWPPI participants based upon the length of their period of unemployment prior to their joining the OWPPI project. The table below shows the percentages employed for each interval of pre-project unemployment. Figures are given separately for the two project funding periods because this is how they were originally reported – without the raw numbers needed to combine them.

Percentage Employed Post-project by
Pre-project Unemployment Period

Pre-project Unemployment Period	Projects funded for 2000-2003	Projects funded for 2003-2004
Less than 12 months	77.9	84.2
12 – 23 months	54.4	63.7
24 months and more	55.5	43.1

Cost Analysis

Based upon the 99 projects for which we have both participant and budget information, the average cost per participant for all projects was $5,297. The average cost per participant for the three types of projects that involved participants were:
- Employment Assistance (59 projects) - $4,318
- Training (31 projects) - $8,116
- Work Experience (9 projects) - $10,736

Two reasons for these different costs is that Training projects tend to run longer than Employment Assistance projects, and Work Experience projects often involve paying an allowance to the participant or a wage subsidy to the employer.

We understand that the majority of the 130 projects were implemented at or below the project funding figure. Populous provinces could draw in more people, reducing the average cost. Also, some projects used shared accommodation where the cost was less than stand-alone locations.

Lessons Learned

Every evaluation and/or summary report identified Lessons Learned. These are the professional opinions of the evaluators, supported or supplemented by the personal opinions of the participants, the implementing team, the employers and/or the sponsors, generally obtained through post-project surveys by the evaluators. In many cases these amounted to observations specific to a project. However, many were either found repeatedly or were general enough to have wide application.

Budgets

- After the initial funding period, the OWPPI program existed on annual funding renewals. This limited the time actually available for projects by enforcing an arbitrary deadline, causing many participants to claim that the time allowed for their participation was insufficient. In designing future programs of this nature, obtaining multi-year funding would allow the funds to be used more efficiently and more effectively.

Design/Methodology

- Unemployed older workers vary considerably in terms of the causes of their employment problems, their motivation in seeking employment and the type of assistance to which they are likely to respond. Flexible programming and attention to individual needs are key ingredients of success in the planning and implementation of projects aimed at assisting older workers in gaining and/or retaining employment. Many projects managed to provide necessary individual attention within group programming. This combination offered the benefits of tailored programming and the mutual support and efficiencies of group programming.

- The overwhelming message that came from participant surveys was their insistence that any training must be practical and relevant, such as on-the-job training, training where theory is learned one day and implemented and tested the next day in the work situation, training leading to trade certificates and diplomas, job-specific computer training, and practical specific resume writing. Mentoring, job coaching and job shadowing are three more examples. Group activities and all forms of counseling seemed to be well received. The improvement in participants' self-esteem was widely commented upon favourably.

- From our review of the actual activities carried out in each of the 130 projects, the most successful projects were those that combined at least two of the approaches; in fact combining two of the approaches is almost always essential to success. To quote one province's experience: "More than half of the OWPPs dealt with three of the target issues while the others covered, for the most part, two issues."

- It is possible that there are two potential problems in project planning:
  - ➢ One is a lack of awareness that these unemployed older workers had an average level of education comparable to, and in some cases superior to, the average for the population of the province or territory where they lived. It is possible that there is a tacit assumption that one characteristic of any group of unemployed persons is that they will have lower than average education. The educational statistics for these older worker participants challenge this assumption, and raise the question of whether, in designing training projects for unemployed older workers, the educational sights were sometimes set too low for the more highly educated participants. There were some complaints from participants who felt this to be the case.
  - ➢ The other potential problem would occur if planners did not recognize that older workers might need longer than average to learn new skills or to complete training courses. While we saw no proof of this, we noted that some participants in just about every project stated that the time allotted for the project was too short.

Employers

- Older workers frequently claim employer bias against older workers when they are unsuccessful in a job application, rather than accepting at face value the reason given by the potential employer. One positive finding from the OWPPI projects is that the often-quoted bias of employers against older workers is much less widespread than thought previously. The surveys of employers during numerous OWPPI projects did not demonstrate bias; in fact many employers displayed positive attitudes towards older workers, citing various advantages they brought to the workplace.

Evaluations

- Consistent data was very difficult to obtain from the evaluations. Serious administrative attention needs to be paid to this issue, particularly with respect to pilot programs, and some measures, such as the threat of withholding payments, should be considered as a means of gaining compliance. Ideally, evaluation would be fully incorporated into project management in order to keep the project objectives in the forefront. Crucial data that should be captured for each participant, at the time of intake, immediately post-participation, at the thirty day follow-up, at the sixty day follow-up, and at the one year follow-up include, age group, educational level, gender, employment status and, except for intake, outcome.

Finance/Allowances

- Wage supplements, allowances and other income subsidies can be a powerful influence on the motivations of employers and project participants. Jurisdictions varied from those who relied heavily on these inducements to those who operated entirely without them. The small amount of comparable hard data available from the evaluations would indicate that 100% wage subsidies paid to employers were ineffective. Therefore, further study is required to determine the positive and negative impact of these financial tools on employers and participants, and what fine-tuning might be desirable.

Location of Employment Assistance Activities

- From the point of view of participants and the project team, co-location of activities with a sponsor or partnering organization is to be preferred to stand-alone. Where the project activities take place at the same physical location as other services that may be used by participants, it offers the participants more convenient access to the co-locator's services. This may also reduce costs for premises and equipment where these may be shared with the co-located organization.

Participants

- The type, quality and motivation of participants have a major influence on the outcome of a project. In reading the evaluations, it became clear that the depth and breadth of the initial assessment of each participant is of critical importance in their success in the project. This assessment should include abilities, skills, experience, educational level, participant's objective, physical capabilities and motivation. The participant assessment and intake process should be able to screen out individuals who, though they might benefit in some way from participation, have needs that could better be met through other channels. This applies to two classes of individuals in particular: those who wish to participate for social reasons with no intention of seeking employment; and, those with basic literacy and math skills issues or health or social problems that may be too challenging for the type of employment assistance needed by older workers generally.

- Extraordinary measures (such as outreach and incentives) may be required to elicit participation of those most in need of support. Older Workers with less than a high school education are not participating in programming to the extent that more educated older workers are.

- The initial assumption that the 55 to 64 year age group constitutes the appropriate target population for OWPPI projects proved to be inadequate. The extension of the target population to include 50 to 54 year olds increased the number of participants with similar needs. It is also important to realize that there are persons over the age of 64 who wish to participate in the workforce.

- One factor very clearly demonstrated, in an analysis of the results of 27 projects in one province, is that the longer one has been out of work the harder it is to re-join the workforce. To arrive at this conclusion, the province in question analyzed the success rate of finding employment of former OWPPI participants based upon the length of their period of unemployment prior to their joining the OWPPI project. They found that the success rate in obtaining employment was significantly higher among those that had been out of the workforce for 12 months or less. Further analysis of the reasons for this may reveal the need for a difference in approach for those who have been out of the workforce for a longer period of time.

- There were two other participant characteristics which in some projects appeared to improve their employability, but which were not reported on sufficiently to establish a national trend. One was that the higher the participant's education level, the higher the likelihood of re-obtaining employment. The other was that the younger the participant, the easier it was to return to the workforce.

- When the age homogeneity of the group was mentioned by participants, it was mentioned positively. Instructors who were in the same age group were particularly well received. However, very positive collaborations with younger workers were also reported.

Partners

- The establishment of solid community-level partnerships and leveraging of partner resources, including co-location, can be a critical success factor for employment projects. The brevity of a two-year contracting period can be a major barrier to the establishment of partnerships with employers and community organizations on which the success OWPPI projects depends.

Regional Labour Markets

- There is significant local variation in labour markets, even within the same province. The employment situation, trends and possibilities of a region where a project is being developed must be thoroughly investigated and the project activities oriented to local conditions and local opportunities. In choosing instructors, a key criterion would be that the proposed training reflects local realities and issues.

Retention of Employment

- Some projects were wholly or partially directed towards the retention of employment by older workers whose continued employment was considered to be at risk. They have characteristics that sharply differentiate them from projects for unemployed older workers including:
  - ➢ It is difficult to determine just whose job is threatened; employers are often unable or unwilling to identify these employees/positions;
  - ➢ The participants are employed and, therefore, do not have as much time to attend training, counseling and other activities; and,
  - ➢ The training needed is often an upgrade of what they are already engaged in, not training in totally new subjects.

  These differences may be significant enough to suggest that these older workers would be better served by separate programs.

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Appendix A - Innovative Approaches

There were 130 OWPPI projects between January 2000 and March 2005. Basically, every one of the 130 projects had the objective of testing innovative active measures and/or a variety of approaches designed to re-integrate unemployed or threatened older workers into employment. Approximately 9,500 older workers participated in the 130 OWPPI projects.

The list of innovative approaches below shows the success of the OWPPI in stimulating and testing new approaches for older workers. More details of selected approaches appear in the body of the report.

Employment Assistance

Adapt specialized employability services to the specific needs of experienced workers.

Adapt job entry assistance services for older workers using a psychometric test to establish a customized competency assessment.

Conduct a feasibility study with a view to setting up a worker cooperative.

Design and test tools and services specifically designed for experienced workers.

Design, produce and distribute a guide for experienced workers with information and advice about the steps to obtain employment.

Develop a Facility Human Resource Audit Tool Kit, which will offer a resource planning package for employers and workers in continuing care facilities.

Develop and implement a portfolio development process.

Establish a producers co-operative.

Experiment with an "intake, counseling and referral service" for older workers.

Form small business groups to explore self-employment and networking options.

Help clients turn hobbies/interests into marketable skills.

Hire an older worker to act as a "Client Navigator".

Holistic service provision; explore self-employment and marketing options.

Mix structured and flexible services.

Offer distance employment services such as WebCT online career and education courses.

Pilot the application of electronic portfolios.

Provide access to older worker transition coaches who are knowledgeable about barriers and needs of older workers.

Set up an office automation technical service.

Test a new structured approach to enable experienced workers to do a skills assessment and establish their personal occupational profile.

Test an approach that incorporates activities that specifically focus on older workers and special labour market needs.

Test new approaches to securing employment for experienced workers in the printing sector.

Test whether displaced loggers in the forestry sector, who have traditionally worked on a seasonal basis, can be retrained to allow them to move to full-time employment in industry-related areas of the forestry sector.

Use a dedicated outreach worker to liaise with existing programs and local businesses.

Use a holistic approach to explore employment and lifestyle options.

Training

Adapt a social and occupation integration service by offering older workers semi-specialized training.

Enable older workers to improve their basic skills and obtain a high school equivalency certificate, involving local Boards of Education as partners.

Extensive computer training component, blending structured and self-directed coursework.

New career transition and adjustment program.

New college-level training program in the sales and service sector.

Teach organic farming methods to Indo-Canadian workers with backgrounds in agriculture.

Team of professionals (psychologists, orthopedic specialists, etc.) carries out an assessment of each challenged worker's skills and evaluates the worker's difficulties with reasoning and thinking.

Test a mentoring model adapted to small and medium-size businesses.

Test a new grid for measuring the motivation, intentions and needs of older workers.

Test the Distance Communications Network in providing information and training in a timely/effective manner.

Upgrade the practice of mentoring in the crafts sector.

Use apprenticeships to provide specialized on-the-job training.

Work perception indicator evaluation grid.

Work Experience

Non-profit organizations give work experience to older workers to take up positions in the social field.

Offer practical work experience that simulates various departmental functions of real-world businesses.

Use Aboriginal elders as valuable resource people.

Retention

Develop, implement and transfer a coherent human resources planning and management model and operational tools in the social economy sector.

Identify the best ways of retaining experienced workers through a survey of workers and managers.

Introduce tools for evaluating and planning the aging workforce, and develop multi-functional models of human resource management.

Advocacy and Research

Conduct research among employers and individuals to identify issues/barriers older workers face in securing employment.

Extend the experiment to ensure that management planning skills can be used on a larger scale and be efficient.

Improve people's attitude by raising awareness of future labour market trends.

Promote and advertise a Mature Worker Week in the region.

Target employers to change employer attitudes, raise awareness.

Use a variety of means (newspaper, radio, television, individual & group meetings, conferences, symposia, etc.) to make employers and major socio-economic players aware of the importance of helping experienced workers to obtain and retain employment.

Appendix B – Employment Assistance & Training Topics

TRAINING TOPICS AND SERVICES OFFERED:

Employment Assistance and Retention:

Adjustment centre
Assessment of needs

Career options
Conferences to make employers aware of the importance of helping experienced workers
to obtain and retain employment

Determine the management practices favoured by employers
Development of a career plan

Electronic portfolios
Employer expectations

Facility human resources audit tool kit

Getting over job loss
Group meetings to make employers aware of the importance of helping experienced
workers to obtain and retain employment
Guide for experienced workers with information and advice

Hire an older worker as Client Navigator
Human resources planning and management model

Intake, counseling and referral service

Job entry assistance services
Job finding clubs
Job interview skills
Job loss grief
Job readiness sessions
Job search skills
Job search strategies

Labour market research
Life/work balance

Multi-functional models of human resource management

Newspaper and radio advertisements to make employers aware of the importance of helping experienced workers to obtain and retain employment

One-on-one counseling

Portfolio development

Raise awareness of future labour market trends
Research issues/barriers facing older workers
Resume development

Self-awareness through skills assessment
Self-confidence and self-esteem building
Skills assessment and personal occupational profile
Specialized employability services
Succession planning
Survey of employers and managers

Team of professionals carries out an assessment of each worker's skills and evaluates the worker's difficulties with reasoning and thinking
Transferable competencies & skills

Vocational assessment

Work perception indicator evaluation grid
Work with the overall personality of the project participants

Training:

Accounting
Adding machines
Automated inventory management systems

Bartending
Bookkeeping
Buddy-system
Building maintenance

Cabinetmaking
Canvassing
Career transition and adjustment program
Care-giving
Carpentry
Cash registers
Catering
Cleaning

College-level training in the sales and services sector
Communications
Computers
Cooking
Copyright
CPR
Crafts sector
Customer contact industries
Customer service

Develop and run a small business
Distribution
Doors and windows

Electrician
Establishing a producers co-operative

First Aid
Food services
Forestry products

Garden centres

Health & safety
High school equivalency certificate
Home care
Home health care
Housekeeping
Human resources

Information technology

Legal aspects of contracts

Machinery work
Management planning
Marketing
Mathematics
Meat processing
Mechanic
Mentoring
Motivation

Office equipment
Office training

Performance indicators
Preventive maintenance
Product knowledge & use
Production
Purchasing

Retail sales

Sales and marketing
Secretarial
Setting up an office automation technical service
Special events coordinator

Taxation
Telephone communication skills
Time management
Tour guide
Tourism
Translation

Visitor information

Warehousing
Welding
Worker cooperative

Work Experience:

Acquire or improve skills in "virtual" firms that simulate various departmental functions of real-world businesses

Apprenticeships

Work experience in non-profit organizations and service groups

Appendix C – Survey Comments & Opinions

COMMENTS AND OPINIONS RECEIVED

Every evaluation, every report and some other documents contained comments and opinions of the participants, the implementing team, the employers and/or the sponsors, generally gathered through surveys. These are untested opinions, and like so many opinions, they are occasionally contradictory.

These comments and opinions are presented alphabetically by and within topics, to facilitate reference when planning future programs/projects.
Positive comments and opinions are grouped ahead of negative comments.
Negative comments and opinions are in italics.

BUDGETS:

Allow for research & development.
Avoid significant delays.
Funding should be renewable.

DESIGN/METHODOLOGY:

Active marketing of workers was key to success.
Active participation of OWs in the design, development & delivery of programs aimed at OWs is a plus.
Adapt activities to needs and rhythm of older workers.
Assisted placement at end of participation was effective.
Clients were not as interested in longer-term projects.
Each participant had personal training plan.
Evaluation component must be there from the start.
Flexibility stressed.
Formal and informal training are essential for OWs to successfully transition into wage employment.
Give OWs new skills that are portable to other jobs or other regions.
Group learning, discussions & other activities are very popular with OWs.
Improve follow-up of participants.
In environments where a significant portion of OWs have little wage employment experience, building self-esteem and confidence are key elements of successful labour market supports to this segment of the labour force.
In Inuit and First Nation communities, recognizing and supporting the traditional role of older people within contemporary work places strengthens the cultural integrity of the whole community.
It is good for older workers to work together and share their experiences.

Job Finding Clubs proved effective and received positive feedback.

Job shadowing, job placements and mentoring worked well.

Keeping OW in their previous field of experience results in higher productivity and better quality work.

Main intervention included a combination of several approaches customized to the needs of older workers.

Mix theory with practice.

More relevant to finding jobs than saving jobs.

Most displaced older workers want to resume full-time employment.

Need for more specific job-finding assistance.

Offered certification.

Pairing younger & OW has proven effective.

Peer helper approach was a success.

Personal counseling is highly appreciated/valued.

Personal development courses improved participants' quality of life.

Portfolio development well received.

Programming for unemployed is different from programming for job retention because of limitations on time of employed persons.

Project program should be developed in response to an identified need.

Projects targeted to those affected by company closures also obtained a high rate of re-employment.

Promote lifelong learning.

Quality computer software & hardware essential.

Realism and relevance essential.

Re-entry program effective.

Requested training topics: Job search, resume writing, interviewing, identification of transferable skills, peer support, group work, one-on-one counseling, transition, professional support, basic computer skills, small business development, entrepreneurship, agricultural training, WHMIS/OHS certificates, any training leading to trade certification or high school certificates.

Respond to different academic skill levels.

Self-employed home-based production is a valid option for OW even with limited resources.

Sensitivity and consultation with First Nation agencies needed in First Nations programming.

Tool kits, which offer a resource planning package for employers and workers specifically geared to older workers, were successful.

Training projects obtained the highest success rates. However, other approaches also provided very good results. It is important to avoid concluding that one approach is better than another.

Transition from work to retirement is still generally experienced as being abrupt; transition information can be very helpful.

Use local resources.

Using older workers as Career Navigators – where the participants are guided through the programming by one person, was found to be successful.

While most projects included training and wage subsidies for a minimum 12 week work placement, those with no pre-employment training were generally successful.
Women are increasing their representation in the labour force and their level of education; this needs to be considered in designing projects.
Workers were receptive to the electronic portfolio; employers were not.
Concern re taking specific training and then finding no opportunities in that field.
Lack of teachers.
Low interest among participants in retention & awareness type programming.
Not long enough for their career aspirations.
Offered inadequate help in actually finding jobs.
Program too difficult for some OWs.
Was better suited to 50-60 than 55-64 range.
Workplace liability issues were not anticipated and were not overcome.

EMPLOYERS:

Advisory board for employers.
Awareness seminars.
Campaigns.
Employer/partners should demonstrate 3-4 year planned commitment.
Establish database of enterprises.
Financial incentives [tax, EI, wage subsidies].
HR management planning/methods/tools permit proactive resource planning.
Involve employers from the start.
Involve foreman level.
Need to be re-educated to rid themselves of negative stereotypes.
OWs on the Board or on Labour force committees.
Positive and supportive work places encourage OWs to acquire new skills and knowledge. They have flexible work environments that serve the needs and circumstances of OWs, including compressed week and ergonomic workstations.
Put OWs in real work positions & give them responsibility.
Retrieve profiles sought by employers.
Suggestion that employer interest only lasted as long as wage subsidies.
Three barriers identified: Lack of education, lack of skills & employer stereotypes.
Toolkit is effective educational method for employers.
Wage subsidies for double-banking employees.
When surveyed, employers displayed positive attitude towards OWs, citing various advantages they brought to the workplace.
Difficult to recruit.
Employers don't like to identify at-risk employees.
Have other priorities.
Have own HR depts.
More networking with employers needed.

FINANCE/ALLOWANCES:

Everyone agreed that the availability of wage subsidies helped this project.

Financial return to participants has an impact on people who apply for the project, in terms of their education levels and EI eligibility.

Government grants assisted participants to find work.

Income support was crucial.

Money is better spent supporting long term businesses than make-work projects [and reduces dependence].

Mortgage/housing assistance should be considered when appropriate.

OWs do not need to be compensated for receiving employment services.

Participant allowance is important yet not essential.

Sliding scale wage subsidies.

Some participants needed wage subsidies to get employment.

Wage subsidies worked with some participants, but no income support during Job Finding Clubs tested motivation.

Work-for-pension plan is an option.

Funding inadequate to secure capable coordinator.

Inadequate resources for welcome and follow-up of participants.

Income support measures designed to facilitate the early withdrawal or retirement of older workers do not necessarily improve the overall labour market adjustment process.

Income support mechanisms for OWs appear to be an effective means for ensuring the financial security of those who have suffered a job loss, but they present a disincentive for re-employment.

Longer term funding needed.

More funding needed for employer education.

Need for funding for post-program follow-up activities.

Travel subsidies for female OWs ineffective.

Wages offered by employers should increase to a level that would meet the needs and living expenses of participants.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM:

A skilled administrator/coordinator is essential.

Administrator should meet with employers & set guidelines.

Administrator should visit each workplace from time to time & have more frequent contact with workers.

Bilingualism appreciated in team members.

Clear role definitions essential.

Client Navigator was an OW; this was appreciated by OWs.

Local instructors understand local issues.

OWs respond well to team members who are OWs.

Should be patient, understanding, easy to talk to and sympathetic to the needs of OWs.

Skills & characteristics of project staff are central to project success.

Team members should take personal interest in each participant.

Had not received project-specific training.
Need to improve report keeping, filing & storage.
Poor management of two projects.
Project co-ordinator did not have employment counseling skills.

LOCATION:

Co-location preferred to stand-alone; it brings many advantages.
Local participants + local instructors = ownership.
Location should be accessible to disabled OW.
Pilot projects are most effective when existing administrative structures are used.
Could have used co-located Career Resource Centre more.
70% of budget went on space & equipment in stand-alone situation.

PARTICIPANTS:

Anticipated age of retirement affects recruitment, training & pay practices throughout a career.
Appreciated working with peers of same age group.
Being an OW can be defined by state of mind and need and not just by age.
Better initial screening re: motivation, abilities, physical capabilities, literacy and mathematics skill levels and expectations.
Check and benchmark their attitudes at start.
Ethnic diversity must be considered.
Friendships developed between participants.
Gained more confidence and greater workforce motivation.
Indications pointed towards a lower age group needing and benefiting from a program of this type.
Longer the time out of the workforce, the more difficult it is to get back into the workforce.
One third of the participants were only seeking part-time work.
Opportunities to contribute in a way that is meaningful are attractive to OW.
OWs are as diverse a group as any other.
OWs should be given credit for considerable knowledge & skills.
OWs have no special needs, just a little more time & lower production expectations.
OWs have mature work habits.
OWs must see personal growth.
Participants appreciated that project was for OWs.
Participants appreciated working with people their own age and working with people from their own town/community.
Participants and employers agreed on the three main barriers for OWs: Lack of job skills that are in demand, difficulty in meeting technical demands of the job, and lack of confidence when looking for employment.
Participants in the 55-59 age range were more successful at finding employment than those of 60-64 years.
Participants with low education faced major barriers to employment.

Pension eligibility plays an important role in the timing of retirement.
Productivity of older workers remains fairly constant.
Reduce eligibility age; should include 50-54.
Should be grouped by similarity of experience, not similarity of age.
Some accepted part-time employment, which succeeded in meeting their needs.
Age range too narrowly defined.
Barriers: Skills no longer in demand.
Capabilities not assessed initially; project flawed.
Lack of experience/skills in job searching.
Lack of skills in growth industries.
Lower literacy & education.
Less mobile.
Negative stereotyping by employers.
OWs with low levels of education or literacy can have a negative impact on project success; maybe they should be directed to providers of upgrading services.
Pressures to step aside, reduce costs, downsize organizations.
Reluctant to travel to work or to receive lower wages.
Self-esteem often needs strengthening.
Should not include retired people.
Some OWs used project as a social activity.
Visible minorities underrepresented.

PARTNERS:

Actively involve local HRSDC office and local employment centre.
Assistance from well-respected organizations is valuable.
Buy-in from partners is essential.
Clear role definitions and coordination between partners is essential; put arrangements in writing.
Community integration strategies to maximize services available.
Consultation with stakeholders is essential.
Dynamism of partners is valuable asset.
Involve unions from the start.
Ownership of the project by the community is important.
Partnerships at the community level enhance project effectiveness and relevance and participant satisfaction.
Partnerships with aboriginal organizations are crucial.
Useful for inexpensive workshops and services.
More partnerships should have been developed.
Poor access to partner resources and services.
Union reluctance.

PROMOTION:

Developed strategic communication plan using newspapers and website.
Newspapers seem effective.
Used print media and existing contacts in region.
Did not meet target numbers in many projects.
More promotion needed.
Participants were difficult to recruit.

REGION:

Fit to employment needs & opportunities in the immediate area.
Money goes further in your home setting.
Undertake needs assessment of area.
Unrealistic to expect OW to seek employment elsewhere.

SPONSORS:

Energy and expertise of sponsors is crucial.
Local sponsor's or shareholders' expertise and reputation are valuable.
Sponsor to provide human and physical resources.

TIMING:

Duration of projects must allow for a comprehensive approach.
Need more than a year of programming for some people.
Pilot should extend beyond the project period – a planned sequence of activities.
Reflect seasons when appropriate/relevant.
There must be timely effective distribution of information about programs, so that programs are well designed and executed.
Twenty-two weeks worked better than fourteen.
Approval delays.
Did not allow enough time [six months only]. One year is too short.
Gap between project start date and start date of training courses.
Late start means some activities were not completed.
More time for job training and job placement.
Projects too short.
Time constraints limited project potential.

Appendix D - Documents Studied

DOCUMENTS STUDIED:

The methodology used to make best use of this quantity of written material was to read each document and type notes of the contents of each document. Subsequently each document was re-visited and Findings and Lessons Learned were extracted summarized and typed.

Title	Source
Acadia Centre for Small Business & Entrepreneurship OWP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Acadian Peninsula OWPP – Evaluation	New Brunswick
Accountability, Risk and Audit Framework	HRSDC
African Nova Scotia OWPPI - Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Ageing & Employment Policies - Canada	OECD
Agriculture Awareness Community Service Program – Evaluation	Newfoundland
British Columbia OWPPI – Evaluation	British Columbia
Cape Breton OWPP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Chaleur & Restigouche OWPP – Evaluation	New Brunswick
Client Navigators OWP – Final Report	Nova Scotia
Conference Call with Provinces & Territories	HRSDC
Description of Pilot Projects [56]	Quebec

Etude des effets des Projets pilotes a l'intention des travailleurs ages	Quebec
Evaluation Summary Report	HRSDC
Forestry Worker Bridging Program – Evaluation	Newfoundland
Generic Evaluation Framework	HRSDC
Guysborough County OWPP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Health Care Human Resource Sector Council OWP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Key Findings & Background – OWPPI	Quebec
La Mise en Oeuvre par Etudes de Cas – Evaluation	Quebec
Miramichi OWPP Final Report	New Brunswick
New Brunswick OWPP – Interim Report	New Brunswick
Nova Scotia Older Worker Pilot Project Initiatives – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Nunavut Teaching & Learning Centres Cultural/Language Specialist OWPP – Final Report	Nunavut
NWT 2000-2002 OWPP Evaluation	Northwest Territories
NWT 2003-2004 OWPP Evaluation	Northwest Territories
Objectives – OWPPI	
Old Skills: New Opportunities Program – Evaluation	Newfoundland
Older Worker Adjustment Programs: Lessons Learned	HRDC

Older Workers in Agriculture   Saskatchewan
Pilot Project Evaluation

Older Worker Pilot Project –   Manitoba
Final Report

Participant Outcomes   Provinces/Territories
for Projects that Ended
by March 31, 2004 [17]

Prince Edward Island OWPP –   Prince Edward Island
Evaluation

Qualitative Research – OWPPI   HRSD

Rural Older Workers Project –   Saskatchewan
Evaluation

Seasoned Employees Education &   Nova Scotia
Development Skills Career Centre OWP –
Evaluation

Sondage aupres des Organismes   Quebec
Promoteurs et des Partenaires Impliques

Sondage aupres des Personnes   Quebec
Participantes – Evaluation

St. Lawrence Miners Program –   Newfoundland
Evaluation

Summative Evaluation – Canada/BC   EIC
Labour Market Development Agreement

Synopsis of the Evaluation of the   Quebec
Implementation, Relevance &
Effectiveness of OWPP

Synthese du Rapport d'Evaluation   Emploi-Quebec

Terms & Conditions for
Contributions - OWPPI   Treasury Board

Thirty Day Employment   Provinces/Territories
Outcomes – 2004/05 [8]

Tusket OWP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Use of the Employment Benefits & Support Measures	EIC
Valley Seeds OWPP – Evaluation	Nova Scotia
Value of the Older Worker Awareness Initiative – Evaluation	Prince Edward Island
Workshop Summary Report	HRDC
Yukon OWPP Program Evaluation	Yukon

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