

**Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch
Corporate Services
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development**

Evaluation of the DIAND Youth Strategy

**Summary of Findings with
First Nations Stakeholders**

**Appendix 1
96/26**

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	1
Purpose of the Report	1
Methodology	2
First Nations Stakeholder Groups	3
Structure of the Report	3
Summary of Overall Results	4
Overall Findings	4
Lessons Learned/Best Practices	6
Suggested Improvements or Changes	7
First Nations/Inuit Implementing Organizations	9
Background	9
Implementation	10
Performance/Objective Achievement	13
Accessibility/Partnership/Sustainability	13
Impact	14
Performance Measurement/Follow-Up	15
First Nations Coordinators	17
Level of Participation	17
Process for Entering and Participating in the Strategy	18
Implementation	19
Performance/Objective Achievement	21
Accessibility/Partnerships/Sustainability	22
Impacts	23
Performance Measurement/Follow-Up	24
Improvements	24
First Nations that Reported Not Participating in the Strategy	25
Participating First Nations Schools	26
Level of Participation	26
Process/Practice	28
Accessibility	31
Partnership/Sustainability	32
Performance Measurement/Follow-up	32
Impacts	33
Improvements	34

Table of Contents (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Non-Participating First Nations Schools	35
Background	35
Awareness of the DIAND Youth Strategy	35
Views on Non-Participation and Implementation of the Strategy	36
Other Youth Programming	38
Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming	39
 Conclusions	 41

In March 1996 the Government of Canada announced that \$315 million over three years would be set aside to help create employment opportunities for young Canadians. The lead department for the federal Youth Strategy is Human Resources Development Canada. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) is a new partner in the strategy and was allocated \$10 million in 1996-1997 to initiate programs.

DIAND's Youth Strategy is targeted to First Nations (FN) communities on-reserve and Inuit communities in the North. DIAND's Youth Strategy consists of three distinct programs:

- First Nations and Inuit Summer Student Career Placement Program;
- First Nations and Inuit Science & Technology Summer Camp Program; and
- First Nations Cooperative Education Program.

The first two programs began in the summer of 1996 while the Cooperative Education Program began in September, and January 1997 for many schools. In the case of the Cooperative Education Program many communities were still implementing their programs in the winter of 1997. The strategy was renewed in late February 1997 and DIAND is planning to continue these programs and develop two new ones. The *First Nations and Inuit Work Experience Program* will address the unemployed and out of school youth. A *First Nations and Inuit Youth Business Program* will help young people learn to create their own employment through a business.

Prairie Research Associates was asked to evaluate DIAND's original 1996-1997 Youth Strategy initiative. Since the strategy is still being implemented in many communities, the focus of the evaluation is on short term impacts observed during the first year of implementation and lessons learned to date.

Purpose of the Report

The evaluation study is based on several lines of evidence, including: visits to selected DIAND regions, file reviews, focus groups with students, case studies, and interviews with First Nations stakeholders. This appendix to the final evaluation report summarizes the findings of telephone interviews with First Nations stakeholders. The purpose of the report is to provide one line of evidence to address the evaluation issues. The report examines the implementation of the strategy and provides interviewees' perceptions on the short term impacts of the strategy, lessons learned to date, and suggestions for future improvements.

Methodology

The Departmental Audit and Evaluation Branch (DAEB) provided PRA with a list of four First Nations stakeholder groups to interview:

- First Nations and Inuit organizations involved in implementing the strategy;
- First Nations youth program coordinators;
- First Nations schools participating in the Cooperative Education program; and,
- First Nations schools that did not participate in the strategy.

DAEB undertook the planning of the evaluation, including the sampling design, selection of the First Nations to contact, and the development of draft interview guides which PRA pretested and modified. DAEB made the initial contact with the potential respondents through a letter announcing the study and requesting participation in the telephone interviews. PRA followed up by telephone to identify the appropriate contact person, to arrange an interview or to conduct an interview directly.

Table 1 provides a breakdown of First Nations contacted and interviewed. We contacted a total of 103 First Nations organizations and completed interviews with 95 of them for a response rate of 92%. On average PRA made 4 call backs per respondent. We were unable to arrange interviews with only several First Nations organizations.

Table 1

First Nation Stakeholder Interviews					
Region	First Nation Coordinators	Participating Schools (Coop)	Non-Participating Schools	FN Implementing Organizations	Regional Total
Total Contacted	31	30	30	12	103
Total Interviewed	31	26	28	10	95
Response Rate	100%	87%	93%	83%	92%

We conducted interviews with respondents in all 9 DIAND regions. Given that the evaluation is being undertaken after only one year of operation, a small number of interviews were conducted by category in order to provide initial findings, to help establish baseline data, and to help develop indicators for future evaluations.

The views and perceptions of each stakeholder group is presented in separate sections of this report.

First Nations Stakeholder Groups

As mentioned, DAEB provided us with a sample of randomly selected potential respondents. Random selection can help ensure there is less bias among program users. For example, First Nations with varied experience are selected (not just successful ones) thereby reflecting more accurately the situation across the country. However, a random sample might also include respondents with limited knowledge and experience. This was our experience with many respondents who had minimal experience with programs and gave brief answers. Several First Nations are still developing Cooperative Education Programs and this may be another reason respondents did not provide detailed responses.

First Nations Implementing Organizations - There is no clear definition of an implementing organization. However, they tend to have a regional focus and help First Nations implement the strategy's programs. These organizations include consultants, Tribal Councils, regional organizations, and educational organizations. The purpose of these interviews is to examine these organizations' activities and how they help First Nations.

First Nations Coordinators - At the outset we did not know which communities were involved with the strategy. We did not have a contact name in each community. PRA contacted the communities and identified the person responsible for youth programs which included band administrators, education authority staff, school principals, and coop coordinators. These interviews explored the communities' knowledge of the strategy.

Participating Schools - PRA contacted schools that participated in the Cooperative Education Program. The list included schools that had received program funding from DIAND. The purpose of these interviews was to find out about cooperative education and to identify lessons learned about the implementation of the strategy.

Non-Participating Schools - Non-participating schools were eligible for Cooperative Education Program funds but did not take part in the strategy. These examine whether communities have other programs and the reasons they did not participate in the program.

Structure of the Report

The report is divided into seven sections. Section 2 summarizes the findings of the stakeholder groups. Section 3 describes the role and activities of First Nation/Inuit implementing organizations and their involvement with First Nation and Inuit communities. Section 4 gives an overview of the programs and activities of randomly selected communities. Section 5 provides details about the cooperative education programs of participating First Nation schools. Section 6 summarizes the findings of interviews with First Nation schools that did not participate in the strategy. Section 7 presents our conclusions.

Summary of Overall Results

Overall Findings

- the majority of respondents were aware of the strategy's programs and had received information from DIAND or their First Nations organizations (i.e., band, school board, etc.). However, many of the non-participating schools did not know very much about the programs.
- First Nations and Inuit communities found out about the strategy late in the school year. The remaining time in May and June to implement the program was very short. Under this constraint First Nations still implemented the Strategy's Summer Science and Technology Camps, and Summer Student Career Placement programs.
- many respondents reported that it was more difficult to develop the Cooperative Education program. Almost 65% of the schools contacted completed the planning phase and implemented their programs as of January 1997. Approximately 20% are currently in the planning phase for a summer or fall implementation. Three of the schools spoken to which were identified as participating in the program stated they are not participating.
- while most respondents commented that the strategy's objectives have been achieved, many do acknowledge that it is difficult to attribute changes in the transition to work, career choices, and increased graduation rates to the strategy. Respondents also noted that many of the students in these programs are not yet at the stage where they might be making career choices. Respondents also acknowledge it is too early to measure long term impacts such as facilitating the transition from school to work and increasing the schools' graduation rates.
- although the strategy has just been implemented and actual impacts may not be observed for years to come, the majority of respondents believe that the strategy has had positive effects. Respondents believe the objectives of instilling self-esteem in students and providing work related experience have been fully achieved.

Table 2 identifies the anticipated impacts reported by First Nations stakeholder groups who participated in the strategy's programs.

Table 2

What impacts do you anticipate the strategy will have? (n=54)					
	Implementing Organizations n=10	First Nations Coordinators n=22	Participati ng Schools n=22	Total n=54	Percent %
Increase levels of self-esteem and confidence	10	20	14	44	81%
Expose youths to new and innovative technologies	10	8	13	31	57%
Provide career-related employment experience	9	19	12	40	74%
Help youths with the transition from school to work	9	9	13	31	57%

- schools participating in the Cooperative Education Program stressed that the program contributes to the learning experience of youth and increases the student's perception of the importance of education for entering the labour market. Many schools also said the Summer Student Career Placement and Cooperative Education programs are essential for developing life skills that many students will need for future survival.
- First Nations stakeholder groups said that communities participating in the strategy's programs are reporting on the type of information requested in the DIAND evaluation forms. Information obtained includes the number of participants, their ages, and education levels. Schools participating in the cooperative education program collect information on placement activities, student skills, and the students' and employers' evaluation of their placement. Respondents did not report collecting other evaluation data and believe that the information presently collected is sufficient. However, most respondents believe communities should be responsible for evaluation.
- all stakeholder groups, including those that did not participate in the DIAND Youth strategy reported partnerships with other parties involved in Aboriginal youth programming. Table 3 provides a breakdown.

Table 3

Frequency of Parties Reported to be Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming by Sample Category				
	Participating First Nations	Non-Participating First Nations	Implementing Organizations	First Nations Coordinators
Human Resources Development Canada	3	7	7	18
Health Canada	2	5	1	3
Industry Canada	2	2	2	3
Provincial Ministries	3	4	3	17
Private Sector	-	-	2	2
Other	13	7	-	23
DIAND Programs				
• Summer Placement				
• Science & Technology Camps			6	20
• Cooperative Education			9	9
	22		3	4

Lessons Learned/Best Practices

First Nations stakeholder groups noted several lessons learned which are discussed below.

- the timing of the strategy was a concern to all respondents. Many First Nation coordinators stated that they needed more time to prepare and develop a proposal for the programs. First Nations also reported having a difficult time getting the programs up and going in such a short period of time. First Nations in Quebec reported fewer problems with timing. This could be due in part because the infrastructure (regional educational organizations) already existed to quickly implement the programs.
- there are a limited number of jobs on-reserve and it is hard to develop and sustain a coop program if there are no jobs available. Stakeholder groups mentioned that in the future more needs to be done to develop off-reserve partnerships and contacts. A few implementing organizations and First Nation coordinators commented that for this to happen transportation costs to send students off-reserve need to be included in future program dollars.
- First Nation stakeholder groups frequently mentioned Human Resources Development Canada as a partner involved with Aboriginal youth programming. First Nations access HRDC's summer placement program most frequently. Industry Canada was also

mentioned, as was band administration, especially in the field of health and social services. These partnerships were identified as being an integral part of the program's success. A few respondents commented that more information on developing partnerships would be helpful.

- First Nation stakeholders appreciated the flexibility accorded by the program guidelines and the freedom to implement the strategy's programs.
- the strategy's programs appear to be more successful in larger communities located near towns or urban centres. Support from the band council and community also seems to be an integral part of successful programs. Communities with both these components appear to have succeeded in developing their programs and are actively seeking out on and off reserve partners.
- the jobs provided through the summer placement and cooperative education programs provide basic work experience for young people. Many jobs are in the construction, child care, and retail sectors. While these jobs may not be every student's idea of career oriented-employment, the majority of respondents believe they provide work experience and life skills essential for future employment.
- finally, First Nations thought evaluation was important to assess the long term impacts of the programs. However, several respondents were confused about the purpose of the current evaluation study and did not understand how it differed from the information they already provided to DIAND about their programs. Respondents noted that such confusion could be eliminated if they were involved in the planning of future evaluations.

Suggested Improvements or Changes

First Nations respondents made a few suggestions for improvements which are listed below.

- there should be a program for adults or youth who are not in school.
- more time to prepare proposals is needed, especially for the Cooperative Education Program, and in some cases for the summer camps program.
- First Nation respondents noted the need for a formal long term evaluation. They expressed an interest in wanting to be involved in evaluating their own programs and directing such a study.
- information about programs should be distributed as soon as possible.
- more jobs in career related fields of interest to students should be developed.

- programs need to be longer.
- the student selection and matching process needs to be improved.

DIAND has since acted upon the first suggestion. The department is in the process of introducing a new program for out of school youth and a program for youth to start their own business. The last three suggested improvements are the responsibility of First Nations as they are the ones designing and delivering the programs.

First Nations/Inuit Implementing Organisations

This section of the report summarizes the findings from the 10 interviews we conducted with representatives from First Nations Implementing Organizations.

Background

The respondents we spoke with were involved with the DIAND Youth Strategy in a variety of ways:

- organized and administered Science and Technology Summer Camp Programs;
- hired student(s) as part of the Summer Student Career Placement Program, or Cooperative Education Program;
- distributed DIAND dollars to eligible First Nations/Inuit communities to run their own Youth Strategy program; and
- advised local bands/communities on various aspects related to the Youth Strategy program, such as how to develop funding proposals as well as how to develop and implement a program.

In all but one case, DIAND contacted these organizations to inform them that funds were available for Youth programming. One respondent said their Director had heard about the program and they contacted DIAND on their own for more information. DIAND gave all organizations information on the objectives of the program and the criteria to be met when taking part in the strategy. Although a few said the information was fairly limited, they all said it was adequate in helping them develop and implement the strategy. Respondents were appreciative of the flexibility afforded to the various organizations, but some were concerned with how late the information was distributed. These respondents felt that they did not receive the information in enough time to adequately set up a program.

Implementation

A number of other groups were involved with the implementation and administration of the various programs. First Nations/Inuit schools and businesses were directly involved in the Youth Strategy. These groups administered the programs and also decided which students would participate. Tribal Councils were often responsible for recruiting potential employers, while First Nations/Inuit businesses were the main employers of students in the Summer Student Career Placement Program and the Cooperative Education Program.

Universities were also involved in the Youth Strategy. Their activities included:

- running the Science and Technology Summer Camps;
- providing housing and meals to out of town students, and
- sending graduate students to remote communities to deliver the Science and Technology Summer Camp.

Table 4 shows how the implementing organizations were involved in the Youth Strategy. Most organizations are involved with funding, proposal development, meetings and administration. First Nations communities themselves are the ones that deliver the programs.

Table 4

First Nations Implementing Organizations Activities in the DIAND Youth Strategy			
	Summer Student Career Placement	Science & Technology Summer Camps	Cooperative Education Program
Cree Regional Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - recruited employers for 430 students - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sent 25 students to Concordia University - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - in the process of assisting school board to hire someone to develop a cooperative education program for all 9 schools in the community.
Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employed a summer student - submitted report to DIAND 	Not involved.	Not involved.
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - received funding proposals from communities - funded eligible Inuit communities - employed students - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assisted in the development of a camp 	Not involved.
NASKAPI Band of Quebec	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented funding proposal to band - recruited employers and students - worked with training coordinators - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presented proposals to bands - worked with school psychologist to organize who will attend camps, and to identify where camps will be held - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - presently working with school principal and various consultants to develop cooperative education program
First Nations Education Steering Committee (BC)	Not involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sent out advertisement for summer camp - accepted and reviewed applications - funded eligible First Nations communities - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sent out advertisement for program - accepted and reviewed applications - funded eligible First Nations communities - submitted report to DIAND

First Nations Implementing Organizations Activities in the DIAND Youth Strategy

	Summer Student Career Placement	Science & Technology Summer Camps	Cooperative Education Program
Baffin Region Inuit Association (Kakivak)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed funding proposal - recruited employers and students - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - administered camp in partnership with the Kivialliq Inuit Association 	Not involved.
Mi'kmawkin'masuti Education Authority	Not involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed funding proposals - developed summer camp curriculum - implemented a summer camp at Dalhousie University and one at University College of Cape Breton - collected information on students - submitted report to DIAND 	Not involved.
Progressive Planning Ltd.	Not involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed funding proposals - developed summer camp curriculum - implemented 4 summer camps - collected information on students - submitted report to DIAND 	Not involved.
Canadian Aboriginal Science & Engineering Association	Not involved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed funding proposals - developed summer camp curriculum - implemented 4 summer camps - collected information on students - submitted report to DIAND 	Not involved.

First Nations Implementing Organizations Activities in the DIAND Youth Strategy

	Summer Student Career Placement	Science & Technology Summer Camps	Cooperative Education Program
Kativik Regional Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developed funding proposal - recruited employers and students - coordinate community participation - visited projects to meet students - submitted report to DIAND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - funded Kativik school board to run two camps 	Not involved.

Performance/Objective Achievement

Eight of the respondents said that the objectives of the strategy have been fully achieved while two said they have been partially achieved. Some of the comments included:

- the program gives Inuit youth very good work experience.
- it exposes youths to science and math and shows them it can be fun.
- our community had a large number of students who experienced meaningful employment.

Most respondents felt the program was a good start for preparing youths in skills and knowledge to enter the labour market. However, respondents did point out that it is too difficult to tell whether this program will have any 'real' long-term effects. Two respondents were concerned that students were not matched in jobs related to their field of study. Another was concerned about the limited number of jobs on reserves, as well as the costs of transporting young people to jobs off the reserve.

All respondents felt that the program was delivered in the most cost-effective way.

Accessibility/Partnership/Sustainability

In partnership with other organizations/departments, 7 of the implementing organizations undertake other youth programming. The nature of these partnerships are strictly related to funding roles and the organizations believe these partnerships will be maintained for other youth projects. Table 5 lists the program and the affiliated party.

Respondents stated that many First Nations access funds from Human Resources Development programs, such as the Summer Career Placement Program. Along with the DIAND funds they are able to expand or enhance their programs. Given that these other funds exist, respondents said it would be more difficult to continue without the DIAND Youth Strategy but it could be done.

Table 5

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming	
Agency/ Program	Number of Responses
Human Resources Development Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges Program • Stay in School Program • Summer Career Placement (2) • Youth Service Canada • Pathways to Success 	7
Provincial Ministries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Volunteers Program • Education (2) 	3
Industry Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Net Program 	2
Private Sector	2
Health Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brighter Futures 	1

Impact

Table 6 shows what the respondents anticipate for the strategy.

Table 6

What impacts do you anticipate the strategy will have? (n=10)	
	Frequency
Increase levels of self-esteem & confidence	10
Expose youths to new and innovative technologies	10
Promote science and technology as a career choice	10
Provide career-related employment experience	9
Help youths with the transitions from school to work	9
Increase rates of high school graduation	5

- all of the respondents felt that the strategy will increase levels of self-esteem and confidence.

- half of the respondents believe the strategy will contribute to higher rates of high school graduation. Those who did not agree with this statement felt that many other issues need to be addressed.

Most respondents said the strategy has had a positive impact, and that students have changed their outlook on educational achievements. Respondents also said that the strategy has had an impact on the community. Their positive comments included:

- the whole community has to get involved. The parents were out there raising money for the summer camps.
- it has encouraged other kids in the community to want to get involved.
- the communities run their own summer camps and can incorporate their traditional beliefs.
- it has a positive impact on the family unit because they have a youth who has had work experience.

Other comments included:

- there hasn't been much of an impact in terms of job creation. The jobs were already there.
- it is frustrating because a lot of the jobs for First Nations are in locations where they can't travel. Targeting students on reserves is too difficult because there are no jobs. We need to create more jobs on the reserve to have a true impact.

Performance Measurement/Follow-Up

Most of the implementing organizations said that they are collecting demographic information on all of the students participating in the strategy. Some organizations also gather information from students and employers about their experiences with the strategy. These organizations said they talk to the students and employers themselves, or they have the students fill out an evaluation of the program. All of the organizations said that the best way to measure the impacts of the strategy is to ask students and employers to evaluate the strategy.

Besides the report required by DIAND, none of the implementing organizations said they had any plans to evaluate the strategy.

The respondents discussed what they considered to be both the strengths and weaknesses of the strategy. Many respondents were pleased with how flexible DIAND was in their criteria for project development. Respondents said that this enabled them to design projects according to the community's needs.

Another strength was the positive effects the strategy has had on youths. First Nations and Inuit youths were exposed to employment and educational opportunities that they may not have otherwise had.

The most common weakness mentioned by respondents was that information on the strategy was distributed too late in the year for some projects to be adequately developed.

Lastly, the respondents suggested some improvements to the strategy. The majority suggested that the strategy must make efforts to distribute information on the strategy as soon as possible. The respondents also mentioned the need for more funds. Another suggestion was to try and match students in jobs related to their field of study. This would enable students to experience meaningful employment.

First Nations Coordinators

This section summarizes the information we gathered from 31 Participating First Nations Coordinators. Of the First Nations interviewed, 9 said they had not participated in any of strategy’s programs and knew very little about the strategy.

Therefore most of the findings presented in this section refer to the 22 First Nations that did participate in DIAND’s Youth Strategy at some level. Reasons given for not participating included lack of information and resources to implement the programs. We will provide findings for the 9 First Nations that did not participate in the strategy, page 25.

The interviews focussed on the following topics:

- level of participation;
- process for entering and participating in the strategy;
- implementation;
- performance/objective achievement;
- accessibility/partnerships/sustainability
- impacts;
- performance measurement/follow-up; and
- improvements.

Level of Participation

Table 7 shows the number of First Nations that participated in each of the strategy’s three programs.

Table 7

First Nations Coordinators’ Contacted Participation in Strategy Programs (n=31)		
Program	Participated (Yes)	Did not Participate (No)
Summer Student Career Placement	20	11
Science and Technology Camps Program	9	22
Cooperative Education Program	4	27

- given that we had a random sample of 31 First Nations and 9 did not participate, we have an overall participation rate of 70% in the strategy.

- the majority of First Nations participated in the Summer Student Career Placement Program.
- less than a third participated in the Science and Technology Camps.
- four participating First Nations were involved with the Cooperative Education Program.

Process for Entering and Participating in the Strategy

Table 8 shows how the respondents found out about the program. At times respondents identified more than one source.

Table 8

How did you find out about the programs?	
DIAND	10
First Nations	6
Tribal Councils	3
Other sources	5
Received no information	2

- DIAND was the main source of information about the program.
- other sources of information include universities, the Aboriginal Training Association, HRDC, and newspapers.

All but two of the respondents said that the information they received about the strategy was adequate in helping them to develop the program. However, a few mentioned that the information was sent out too late to develop an effective proposal or program.

Implementation

Table 9 shows who was involved in the implementation and administration of the strategy. Again, some respondents provided more than one answer to the question.

Table 9

Who was involved in the implementation of the strategy?	
First Nation	20
DIAND	7
Tribal Councils	5
First Nations Implementing Organization	1
Private employers	1

- First Nations was cited most often as being involved in the implementation and administration of the strategy.

All of the respondents said that the division of responsibilities was clear. They discussed how duties did not overlap, and that everyone understood what their position entailed. None of the First Nations requested assistance from DIAND to implement the strategy. Often DIAND's role was simply to provide information about the program and the required funding.

Summer Student Career Placement Program

The roles and responsibilities of First Nations in this program varied. Most were responsible for developing funding proposals and the implementation of the program. Some of the responsibilities included:

- recruiting appropriate employers;
- selecting eligible students to participate;
- supervising students; and
- hiring supervisors to run the programs.

Appropriate employers were recruited in many ways, which included:

- direct calling to potential employers;
- advertised to bands;
- sent out notices to malls, stores, and businesses;
- advertised in community newsletters and bulletins; and
- through discussions in regular program management meetings.

In many cases, the student was matched according to the employer's expectations and the student's interests and career goals. Students were asked to identify this information on their application form and were then interviewed by either the program manager, or the employer. In other cases, students were placed in jobs where there was a need regardless of its suitability to the student. For example, if child care is a community priority, the Band Council will open up employment in that field. This meant that although the student received work experience, they may not have worked in their field of study or interest.

The program gave students an opportunity to gain valuable skills needed in the job market. The types of skills mentioned include administrative, managerial, supervisory, personal enhancement, communication, computer, and writing skills.

Science and Technology Summer Camps Program

The roles and responsibilities of the 9 First Nations participating in the Science and Technology Summer Camps Program included:

- researching existing programs;
- identifying needs of students in the community;
- developing funding proposals;
- selecting eligible students, and
- delivering Summer Camps.

The summer camps were held in various locations, both within the community and at Universities. First Nations recruited students to participate by:

- advertising with posters and sign-up sheets; and
- asking the students directly if they would like to participate.

Most of the camps focussed on different areas of study, such as traditional medicine, biology, math, astronomy, technology, and hunting and fishing. The respondents all felt that these camps were well oriented towards the promotion of science and technology to youths. Further, they all felt the topics covered in the camps were appropriate for the community's needs.

Cooperative Education Program

Three respondents said their community participated in DIAND's cooperative education program. The communities were in Quebec, Ontario and Alberta. All three respondents stated that their programs were based on the concept of building up the community. Coop placements were in the field of construction and home repair. The respondent from Quebec also noted that their program provided placements in a band run daycare. The respondent from Alberta noted that their program also provides work experience in on-reserve retail.

All three respondents believed the program had positive impacts on the community, young people, and employers. They all believed the program provides valuable life skills.

In its second term, the Alberta program seemed to be the most advanced and provided on and off reserve employment. The school in the community hired a coop coordinator to meet with employers and to prepare students in class. The respondent said they had their proposal approved from the community board and band council. The community and employers were both aware of the benefits of the program. Also, the respondent commented that there is ongoing evaluation of the students.

Performance/Objective Achievement

Figure 1 shows the extent to which respondents feel the objectives have been met.

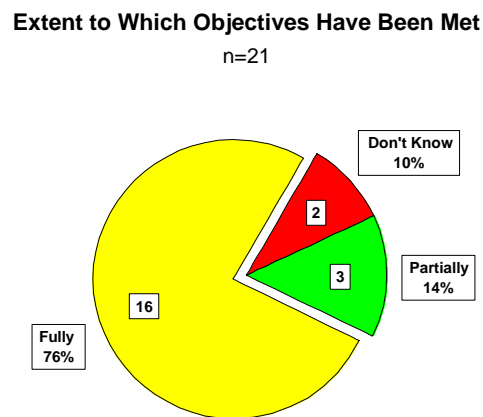


FIGURE 1

- over three-quarters (76%) of respondents said the objectives have been fully achieved, in particular those of the Summer Student Career Placement and the Science and Technology Camps.
- respondents said that problems with matching students in jobs related to their field of study and the limited time given to First Nations to develop programs contributed to the objectives being only partially met.

Most coordinators said that the strategy prepares students in skills and knowledge for entrance into the labour market both on and off the reserve/community. First Nations Coordinators also

said that the strategy was implemented in a very cost-effective way.

Accessibility/Partnerships/Sustainability

Respondents, including those not participating in the strategy, identified many partnerships with various departments and organizations involved with Aboriginal youth programming. Table 10 shows the type of program and affiliated party. Human Resources Development was the federal department most often mentioned by respondents.

Table 10

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming (n=31)	
Agency/Program	Number of Responses
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys and Girls Club • Indigenous games • Chief & Council/Band/Tribal Council (3) • YMCA • New Careers North (Manitoba) • Alcohol and drug programs (3) • Recreation/sports/cultural programs (9) • Post Secondary and Occupational Skills Training • Youth worker on interim basis • Stay in School program • Peer mentorship 	23
Human Resources Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer Career Placement (4) • Pathways (2) • Summer Employment/Economic Development • Youth Services Canada (7) • Native Internship Program • Summer camps • Community Futures • Job creation services 	18
Provincial Ministries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mines (Quebec) • Education (Alberta, British Columbia) (3) • Community Action Plan (NWT) • Health (3) • Social Services (3) • Children's Services • Summer Experience Program (Ontario) (2) • Advanced Career Development (Alberta) • STEP program • Enterprise Cape Breton (Atlantic) 	17

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming (n=31)	
Agency/Program	Number of Responses
Industry Canada • Schoolnet	3
Health and Welfare • Brighter Futures	3
Private Sector • Business in the community • Raglan Mines (Quebec)	2

All of the respondents said these partnerships will continue to promote youth programming. Other programs have been in place for a few years. Most agreed that although it would be more difficult, current youth programming would continue in the absence of the DIAND Youth Strategy. The respondents did not provide any details about how other programs work with the DIAND Youth Strategy program.

Impacts

Table 11 shows the distribution of anticipated impacts.

Table 11

What impacts do you anticipate the strategy will have? (n=21)	
	Frequency
Increase levels of self-esteem & confidence	20
Provided career-related employment experience	19
Help youths with the transition from school to work	9
Expose students to new and innovative technologies	8
Increase rates of high school graduation	8
Promote science and technology as a career choice	7

Many Coordinators also said that the program has changed some of the youths general outlook towards education. Respondents believe that students gained an understanding of the importance of staying in school, and how an education leads to meaningful employment. Respondents also stated that some students also plan to choose a particular field of study as their career choice after having gained work experience in that area. Respondents also believe the Youth Strategy has had a positive impact on the community. They indicated that the strategy allows the entire community to get involved in a program that benefits their children and creates jobs for people.

Performance Measurement/Follow-Up

Coordinators said that talking to students and employers is the most effective way of measuring some of the impacts of the strategy. Some said that they currently collect information from these sources about the program. Many also collect statistical information for DIAND. Most participating First Nations currently submit a final report to DIAND at the end of a program, but few said they were planning to formally evaluate the program.

Improvements

Respondents mentioned a number of strengths of the strategy, which included:

- it provides students with the opportunity to have some employment experience;
- gives youth the chance to explore career choices;
- the program is very flexible;
- funding levels are good; and
- It introduces students to Science and Technology.

Some of the weaknesses mentioned were:

- not able to reach all students;
- information on the program was distributed too late; and
- programs are too short.

Overall, respondents were pleased with the Youth Strategy and hoped that it would continue. However some suggestions were made on how to improve the strategy:

- we need to have a formal evaluation process;
- DIAND needs to distribute information about the program much sooner;
- Youth Strategy should provide additional funds to cover such things as transportation costs;
- it would be good to give students the opportunity to work outside of their community; and
- the programs need to be longer and they need to reach more students.

First Nations that Reported Not Participating in the Strategy

As mentioned earlier in this section, 9 First Nations reported that they did not participate in any of the strategy's programs.

- six of the respondents stated that they did not receive any information about the DIAND programs and had no knowledge of the programs. Three respondents did receive information, two of them after the programs had begun.
- of those that had heard of the programs, as well as those that had not, one had prepared a proposal but their staff member did not pass it on to the proper authorities.
- two respondents commented that their community did not have the budget or resources to implement youth programs.
- four respondents indicated that they had access to the Internet.
- while these communities were not involved in DIAND youth programming they have other initiatives underway. These included:
 - access to other programs (5);
 - placements with the RCMP;
 - use of a grant to construct buildings to hire 15 students;
 - elder/mentor program;
 - hired students through Canada Employment Centre and FSIN;
 - youth workshops on issues such as health, drugs and lifestyles; and
 - Post Secondary and Occupational Skills Training.
- respondents also identified other parties involved in Aboriginal youth programming¹, including:
 - five respondents identified Human Resources Development Canada as a partner, in particular the Summer Employment/Economic Development program, the Native Internship Program, Youth Services Canada, and a work experience program;
 - one respondent identified Health Canada's Medical Services Branch as an employer of students;
 - one respondent stated that they had hired students through a program of the FSIN; and
 - one respondent singled out the band as being the only employer on-reserve and that there were no other parties involved.

¹ These responses are also included in Table 10 which lists parties identified by all 31 First Nations interviewed.

Participating First Nations Schools

We conducted telephone interviews with 25 representatives from participating First Nations schools. Of these, 3 indicated that they had not participated in the strategy - two said they had never heard of the program; the third said his/her knowledge of the program was minimal. Many co-op programs were new and therefore respondents provided brief, or no responses to many questions. The respondents included principals, vice principals, project coordinators, a counsellor, and a program supervisor.

The interviews focussed on the following topics:

- level of participation;
- process/practices;
- accessibility;
- partnership/sustainability;
- performance measurement/follow-up;
- impact, and
- improvements.

Level of Participation

Table 12 shows the current status of the program for the various schools. Almost two thirds of the schools interviewed had completed the planning phase and implemented their programs as of January 1997. About a third of the schools reported having programs in place and expanded existing coop programs.

Table 12

Status of Cooperative Education Programs (n=25)		
Status	Frequency	%
Program Started in Fall '96 or January '97	9	36%
Program already in place (2 prior to strategy)	7	28%
Planning/Development Stage	5	20%
Never Heard of Strategy/Did Not Participate	3	12%

The schools that had a program in place reported that approximately 251 students participated in the program. There were approximately 115 male and 136 female students involved.

Figure 2 shows whether respondents said there was a positive response to the program by potential participants.

- most respondents feel youths responded positively to the program.
- poor response was attributed to lack of promotion.

Type of Reaction to the Cooperative Education Program
n=25

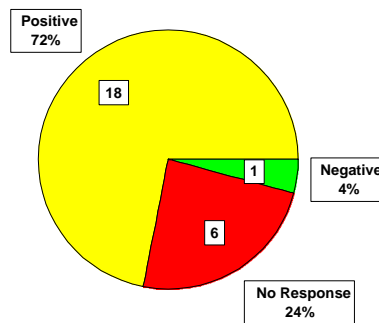


FIGURE 2

The number of Cooperative placements made available for students ranged from 1 to 25 placements. Most (n=20) respondents said there was a sufficient number of placements for interested students. A few said they had students quit their co-op placements. The reasons for quitting included:

- youth didn't listen to the supervisor;
- youth lacked interest in the field; and
- the youth was dissatisfied with the lack of wages.

Process/Practice

Table 13 lists the schools' activities in developing and implementing the program.

Table 13

What activities were involved in developing and implementing the program? (n=22)	
	Frequency
Identification of employers	16
Student selection	14
Orientation session	11
Develop learning plans for students	10
Obtaining parental consent	9
Administer Cooperative Education Program	5
Feedback on placements	5
Matching students & employers	4
Other	2
No response	7

- over half of the schools were involved in the identification of potential employers and in the selection of students.
- four respondents said that their school was responsible for matching students and employers. In most cases, a program supervisor conducts this role.

Students were recruited based on their interests and career goals, as well as on their school performance. The types of promotional tools used to elicit students included:

- announcements on the radio;
- advertisements at the post-office and employment office;
- teacher/principal approached individual students;
- sent out newsletters; and
- announced at parent meetings.

Table 14 lists the fields where at least one student had a placement.

Table 14

Fields Where Students of the Cooperative Education Program had Placements (n=22)	
Employment Sector	Frequency
Health/Social Services/Education	16
Automotive/Home Maintenance	10
Retail/Grocery	7
Legal/Police	5
Restaurant	5
Administrative	5
Recreation/Media	5
Economic Development Officer	2

Note: Respondents gave multiple responses. Also, one or more students were placed in each of the fields.

- job placements were primarily in the health/social service/education sector and included nurses aid, teachers assistant, and child care aid.
- other types of placements included the police, carpentry, waitressing, radio broadcasting, and others.

The majority of students had input in the matching process by identifying their career interests. Schools tried to match students according to their interests and career goals. In a few programs however, the students were on a rotating basis so that they could gain a variety of work experience.

Table 15 show the respondents' views on the "quality" of the available co-op placements offered to the students.

Table 15

What is the general quality of the available co-op positions in terms of: (n=22)					
	Poor	Needs Improvement	Good	Excellent	No Response
Skills development	1	-	9	5	7
Labour market knowledge	1	2	10	2	7
Relevance to students' future education	-	1	9	6	6
Relevance to future job/career goals	-	-	7	8	7

- overall, over half of the respondents rated the quality of the positions as either *good* or *excellent* in terms of the various attributes provided.
- respondents considered the potential for the program to achieve long-term impacts as a good quality of the program.

The majority (n=21) of respondents said the program guidelines were clear and that they allowed sufficient flexibility to meet the community's needs. Respondents also said that they were satisfied with the guidelines.

Most (n=21) respondents said the program has remained within previously outlined funding allocated by DIAND.

Those involved in funding decisions include Chief and Council, Directors of Education, the Education Authority, the Board of Education, and the school committee. Decisions about funding allocations are usually determined by considering any expenses associated with the program. For instance, if transportation or housing costs are needed, then more funds will be allocated.

Accessibility

Figure 3 shows the percentage of respondents who think the program adequately targets the employment needs of the youths in their community.

Program Targets Employment Needs
n=22

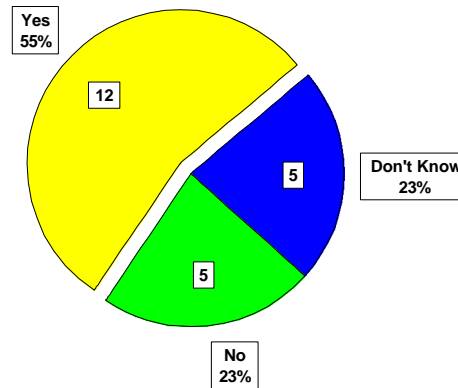


FIGURE 3

- over half of the respondents said the program adequately targets the needs of youths in the community.
- some (23%) said there were not enough jobs or funds available to target the needs of youths in their community. Therefore, students are unable to enjoy meaningful employment.

Location appears to have an effect on how the program is implemented. Eleven respondents said that their community is isolated and it is therefore difficult to get students to locations where jobs exist. Respondents were particularly concerned with transportation issues. These respondents said that the costs associated with transporting students to other communities reduces access to meaningful employment.

Partnership/Sustainability

Most respondents agreed that the Program encourages the formation of partnerships with other organizations and departments. Some of the parties these schools have been involved with include Human Resources Development, Industry Canada, and the Band Council. Table 16 provides a breakdown of other parties involved in Aboriginal youth programming.

Table 16

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming	
Agency/Program	Number of Responses
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School board (5) • Sports/recreation/cultural programs (4) • Band (3) • Community Youth Centre (Internet program) 	13
Human Resources Development Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Services Canada • Entrepreneurial training • SATES program 	3
Provincial Ministries	3
Industry Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schoolnet 	2
Health Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brighter Futures 	2

Respondents also said that these partnerships would be maintained in the promotion of other youth projects. As well, most thought youth programs would continue in the absence of the DIAND Youth Strategy.

Performance Measurement/Follow-up

The reporting requirements for those participating in the program included:

- progress reports;
- interim reports; and
- final report.

The type of information collected on students included:

- interviews with students, employers and teachers;
- student diaries;
- pre and post placement evaluations;
- on-site visits; and
- employer evaluations.

Most of this information is used to evaluate the Youth Strategy as First Nations give DIAND this data when they submit their program evaluation forms. For instance, demographic information is used to determine the number, location, and age of youth who experienced employment.

Student interview data and diaries provide an in-depth understanding of the student's experience of the program as well as the employers.

Impacts

Table 17 shows the respondents' perception of the potential impacts from the program.

Table 17

Potential Impacts from the Program(s) (n=22)				
	Yes	No	Expected in the future	No response
Increased levels of self-esteem and confidence	14	-	3	5
Provides career-related employment experience	12	1	3	6
Exposure to new and innovative technologies	13	2	-	7
Increases ease of transition from school to work	13	-	3	6
Work experience has assisted student with school studies	6	2	5	9
Contributes to the learning experience of youth	15	2	-	5
Increases student's perception of the importance of education for entrance into the larger labour market	14	-	2	6
Promotes student self-sufficiency in pursuing education/or career goals	13	-	4	5
Developed First Nation community human resources	11	-	5	6

Note: Respondents provided one response to each of the listed potential impacts.

- with the exception of assisting students with school studies, over half of the respondents agreed that the program had a variety of positive impacts.
- of those who responded, most believe that short term impacts have been achieved, especially in terms of increasing self-esteem and changing student's perception of the importance of education. Others expect the program to have future impacts.
- approximately one-quarter of respondents did not respond to this question.

Improvements

The respondents identified a number of strengths of the program, which included:

- the program guidelines are very flexible;
- provides youths with meaningful work experience;
- teaches youth life skills and it increases their self-confidence, and
- it expands students' horizons by exposing them to new industries and technologies.

A few weakness mentioned were:

- there are not enough jobs available on the reserve/community; and
- lack of funds.

Lastly, the respondents suggested the following improvements:

- increase resources so that youths can be transported to jobs outside of the community;
- promote the program better;
- improve the student selection process;
- improve the matching of students with employment opportunities in their field of study; and
- try to include elders in the implementation process.

Non-Participating First Nations Schools

Background

A total of 28 non-participating schools were contacted and interviewed by telephone. The following types of schools were contacted:

- One K-7 school;
- Three K-8 (the number of students ranged from 40 to 300);
- One K-9 school;
- Two K-12 schools (range of 340 and 500 students); and
- An adult education program in the community.

The schools contacted appear to have many young students under age 14. The schools may have decided not to participate in the strategy because they do not have enough secondary students to sustain a cooperative education program.

Awareness of the DIAND Youth Strategy

Approximately 60% (n=17) of the non-participating First Nations schools contacted knew about DIAND's cooperative education program. The schools found out about the strategy from DIAND and others, mainly organizations affiliated with First Nations.

Table 19

How did you find out about the program?	
Source	n=28
DIAND	6
First Nations	1
Other	9
No Response	12

Others who provided respondents with information about the strategy include:

- a school superintendent;
- school board meetings;
- a general meeting with other principals (Saskatchewan);
- the Conseil d'Éducation des Premières Nations (Quebec); and
- the Ministry of Education.

DIAND sent schools a letter and an information package on the strategy. Two respondents mentioned getting their information at a general meeting. One respondent in Ontario received information through a presentation.

The majority of the schools (n=14) that were aware of the strategy found the information that they received adequate to assist them in deciding whether they wanted to participate in the Cooperative Education Program. Twelve respondents did not respond to the question.

We asked respondents how the program could be improved in order to encourage participation. Six respondents made the following comments:

Guidelines/Program Set-up

- *“target proper age group. Our kids are in grades K to 8 and between 4 to 13 years.”*
- *“we are in an isolated area. There are not enough businesses/institutions to sustain a program.”*
- *“we have trouble getting job placements for students.”*

Need for Information

- *“send an example of how a proposal should be and more budget information (eg., transportation costs).”*
- *“we are a small community. We are also not clear on objectives of program. We were supposed to get more information from the implementing organization.”*
- *“getting complete information on time is important.”*

Views on Non-Participation and Implementation of the Strategy

We asked respondents if their school wanted to implement the cooperative education program and other strategy programs but were unable to do so for some reason. Half the respondents answered the question. Of those respondents, half stated they did not want to implement the strategy, while six were interested and one did not know.

Table 20

Did you want to implement the Cooperative Education Program but were unable to do so?	
Yes	6
No	7
Do not know / No response	14

The following reasons were given for not implementing the Coop program: did not receive information in time; lack of job placements for students; and lack of resources to implement the program. Some of the following comments were made by respondents in Ontario, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

- Timing. We could not meet the Ontario school program deadlines - September, January or June. We could not meet the Ministry of Education’s requirements. This program is important because there is a 90% unemployment rate on-reserve.
- We got the information late. We also don’t have the students in that age group.
- We are in an isolated area. We received the information late so we could do nothing about the proposal.
- Our geography. There are a limited number of businesses around.
- Few job placements on-reserve. We could also not find out the exact requirements for the program.
- Would like to have a work study experience. We need to assist our teachers. We need resources to figure out things like credits and field trips.

The majority of respondents (n=13) did not submit a proposal to participate in the Coop Program. Two respondents indicated that they did submit a proposal. The first respondent’s proposal had been approved but “*the program collapsed due to the lack of supervision on the training/employer’s part.*” The second respondent was not involved in developing the proposal and could not make comments on it. Twelve respondents did not answer the question.

Most respondents (n=10) did not request any assistance in the development of their proposal. Sixteen respondents did not provide a response.

Eleven respondents said that they decided on their own not to participate in the program. In most of these cases, the schools served children from K to grade 8 and these students were too young for cooperative education. Respondents gave the following reasons for not participating in the program:

- students are too young. Grades 6 to 9 and ages 11 to 16 years;
- grades K to 7. There are a total of 51 students in the school and two are in grade 7;
- there is another high school that has a program;
- students are too young. Grades K to 8;
- most employers are funded by the government. Coop program would be taking jobs from them;
- school consists of six students from grades K to 7. Older students get bussed to an outside school;
- not enough time to prepare a proposal;
- our kids are too young. Students in grades K to 8 and the ages of 4 to 13 years;
- have a program already in place;
- students too young for a work program;
- the program does not seem to be geared to our school; and
- because the number of students in the age group are not enough.

Other Youth Programming

The majority of respondents identified other youth programming undertaken by First Nations but most were not related to student employment programs. Rather, the majority of the programs mentioned included youth programs such as sports or recreation and cultural programs. These programs are sponsored by the band council or the school. The types of programs offered may reflect that many of the students are young, grades K-8, and are interested in activities such as sports and recreation.

In terms of computer programs, the majority of schools (n=17) reported they have access to the Internet. However, while many schools have access to the Internet, only four reported that their students use it.

Table 21

Other Youth Programming Undertaken by Your First Nation	
Type of program	Number of responses
Sports/recreation program	6
Cultural/language program	4
Summer camps	2
Drop-in / counselling	1
Business/computer program	1
Summer work program	1

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming

Table 22 show other participants involved in a range of Aboriginal youth programming.

Table 22

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming	
Agency/Program	Number of Responses
Human Resources Development Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none">• summer employment program (6 to 8 weeks, grades 12 and university)• Brighter Futures Program (n=5)²• child care program	7
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">• junior band achievements• band program “Building Healthy Communities” (Manitoba)• band youth leadership program• tree planting initiative• band / school job opportunity• Department of Education - coop placement part of school program (Ontario)• school retreat program	7

² There seems to be confusion among respondents about whether this is a Health Canada or Human Resources Development Program.

Other Parties Involved in Aboriginal Youth Programming	
Agency/Program	Number of Responses
Provincial/Federal Ministries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language programs (Secretary of State) • Child and Family Services youth program • recreation program • Alberta Indigenous Athletic Games 	4
Industry Canada <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schoolnet Program 	2

Conclusions

PRA interviewed just under 100 First Nation communities across Canada and the majority of them had positive comments about the strategy. Many believe the opportunity to provide summer jobs increases students' self-esteem and provides them with basic work skills needed in the future.

The major concern of the respondents was the short time frame given to prepare proposals, and to develop and implement programs before the end of the school year in June 1996. Given that the renewed strategy was announced only a couple of months before last year's announcement, some First Nations may run into the same problems again. However, these problems should be overcome by year three of the strategy.

DIAND can also help First Nations speed up the development of the programs, such as the Cooperative Education Program, by facilitating a process whereby communities who have been running programs for a few semesters share their knowledge and experience with those new to the programs.