

Human Resources Development Canada Business Plan

Achievements

2002 - 2003
Nova Scotia Region



Human Resources
Development Canada

Développement des
ressources humaines Canada

Canada

Message from the Regional Director General

With the passing of another fiscal year, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) Nova Scotia is pleased to once again provide our clients, communities and citizens with information on the results from our annual business plan. HRDC values very highly the trust placed in it by Nova Scotians and we remain committed to providing our yearly plan and following this with regular reports on results.

This past year has been very busy for us, as we undertook work to reorganize our structure and implement new technologies to improve access to programs and services, while continuing to deliver our regular business. Meeting the needs of Nova Scotians remains our main focus. With the support of our partners and communities, and significant efforts by our staff, this has been possible.

I hope you find our 2002-2003 Achievements informative and useful.



Howard Green, Director General
Nova Scotia Region

HRDC performs a key role in the Government of Canada's investment in Canadians. The department's mission, "To enable Canadians to participate fully in the workplace and the community," commits us to helping people deal with the challenges and transitions they may face during the course of their lives.

In 2002-2003, we identified commitments to form the basis for HRDC's work to help Nova Scotians and their communities. This document outlines HRDC's commitments and some of the related achievements between April 2002 and March 2003.

Commitments

SERVICE DELIVERY

HRDC undertook to establish service standards for all business lines, improve service delivery, tailor services to the needs of clients, strengthen commitment to integrity and accountability, and fully invest program funds. We agreed to focus on federal-provincial priorities, explore new ways of meeting the needs of Nova Scotians, establish a quality process, and communicate with clients and partners as we work to improve services and programs.

Achievements included:

The region worked hard to achieve a range of performance indicators for Employment Insurance, Income Security Programs, Human Resources Investment and Labour. The results are included at the end of this document. We invested taxpayer funds with integrity, by regularly monitoring program results and making changes where necessary.

We invested our program funds in Nova Scotians and their communities by implementing investment strategies. This included activity related to the Canada/Nova Scotia Labour Market Development Agreement priorities of literacy, information technology, and employability, as well as the Nova Scotia Youth Protocol work with youth facing barriers to employment and learning.

We enhanced our quality control and responsiveness to improve service and identify best practices. Our network and Regional Office Quality Committees implemented a three-part "Quality Scorecard" that included an automated Performance Management Report. The Client Satisfaction Survey, which includes a complaints

mechanism, was available in all our Human Resource Centres and enabled in-person clients to rate our service on-line. Seventy-five per cent of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with our overall service.

We improved the Canada Pension Plan-Disability application process. Each applicant is personally informed about the process, related timeframes, and the reasons for approval or denial of their claim. To help Canadians plan for retirement, we introduced the on-line Canadian Retirement Income Calculator.

We enhanced information sharing and service delivery in the Labour Program. This included the development of a federal/provincial labour brochure to inform the public on the two levels of labour jurisdiction and by tailoring service to a client group by developing and delivering curriculum on Labour Standards and Occupational Safety and Health to staff at truck driver schools.

We created a greater public awareness of our services and programs to which individuals may be eligible through numerous information sessions with partners and citizen groups.

We worked with our national headquarters to increase access and consistency in the information available to citizens on the Internet. This included the Government of Canada site and a new national Web site for HRDC that will be launched in 2003.

SERVICE DELIVERY INNOVATIONS

[MODERNISING OUR SERVICE]

HRDC committed to modernise service and realign its structure; expand citizen access to our programs and services and improve citizen choice; deepen and broaden communications and responsiveness to citizen needs; enable better use of available resources; and ensure we meet our commitment to provide service in both official languages.

Achievements included:

We positioned ourselves to provide a more consistent delivery of programs and services through regional reorganization. We realigned our networks, created some new units, moved some staff members to new positions or geographic areas in line with the new structure, and in some cases realigned duties.

Appli-Web, which enables clients to apply for Employment Insurance (EI) on the Internet, was launched in 2002 and used to file more than 20 per cent of EI applications in Nova Scotia; this exceeded the national target of 15 per cent.

Appli-Web was promoted with employers, clients and relevant organizations. In one case, laid off employees used their employer's computer lab to apply for EI on-line, with HRDC employees on location to provide assistance.

As a result of marketing, we increased the use of Teledec (using the telephone to file bi-weekly EI reports), Direct Deposit, and the use of the EI Telecentre (EIT) for renewal and revision of EI applications, instead of clients travelling to a Human Resource Centre of Canada (HRCC). The

EIT also assisted clients having difficulty using Appli-Web. Increased use of automated services means our staff have more time to spend with claimants who need in-person service for complex situations.

We used video or teleconferencing between HRCCs to provide EI claimants with an option to have their appeals heard in their HRCC, without the need to travel long distances to the office where the Appeal Board is located.

A modernised Job Bank enabled employers to input their own job advertisements on the Internet for posting on the HRDC Job Bank. The telephone-based job ordertaking function was centralized to provide consistent service delivery in applying the ordertaking policy.

SKILLS & LEARNING

HRDC undertook to support the national, regional, and provincial skills agendas through research, analysis and developing and implementing initiatives designed to help Nova Scotians improve their readiness for the labour market.

Achievements included:

In partnership with four provincial departments, led by the Department of Education, and key federal departments (Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Industry Canada and Citizenship and Immigration Canada), HRDC identified four priority areas of Employability, Career Development and Employment Counseling; Labour Market Information (LMI); Apprenticeship, Learning and Earning; and Immigration, for collaboration related to national and provincial skills agendas. To support this, we developed research and reference material and shared it with the departments involved. Committees are

developing strategic frameworks to guide work that will be undertaken in 2003-2004.

We supported the skills agenda, community partnerships, and demonstrated HRDC's commitment to supporting workers and employers through completion of a Skills Inventory in South Western Nova Scotia. Negotiations are underway for projects in our Northern Network and the Bridgewater area, and an inventory was previously completed in Cape Breton. These projects analyze and assemble inventories on workers' skills to help determine specific skills needed in the labour market and help direct support for future skills development.

We supported client identification processes and decision making by compiling socio-economic and other labour market information data in the networks. This was used to identify client groups considered a priority in local areas, helped support our decisions and ensured clients receiving assistance were those who most required our services.

We enhanced our ability to better support client training needs through an assessment of our Skills Development (SD) program where we learned more about who are SD clients, how they make skills training decisions, and employment results of the training.

We provided Nova Scotians with occupational information to assess skill requirements in career decision making. Through the implementation of a LMI corporate plan, we ensured accurate, up-to-date and publicly accessible information products. These products were promoted internally and externally and, in the South Shore/Valley, updates were sent to over 200 partners electronically, building stronger linkages within the area.

Under a federal/provincial partnership, industry and occupation outlooks were developed for Nova Scotia and shared with economic partners. The information is being incorporated into HRDC's products, such as the Occupational Profiles, and used to refer clients for skills development, helping Nova Scotians align their skills to labour market requirements.

We established projects to assist low-skilled, EI-eligible clients obtain skills to help prepare for future employment.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

HRDC undertook to help build stronger communities by augmenting the capacity of community groups and organizations; integrate socially inclusive strategies into HRDC's services, programs, and recruitment structure; and work to meet the human development needs of groups and communities who experience exclusion or face specific challenges from social and economic change.

Achievements included:

Social inclusion was promoted in HRDC funded programs for priority youth, the homeless, African Nova Scotians, Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities and low-income households. Much work was done in collaboration or partnership with community organizations and individuals through forums such as the Human Development Partnership Committees (HDPCs), Black Employment Partnership Committees (BEPs) and Persons with Disabilities Collaborative Partnership Committees (PWDCPCs).

This is demonstrated through initiatives that provided opportunities to various groups to obtain work experience, mentoring and enhance employability;

assisted single mothers with health and wellness issues; created educational and career awareness for African Nova Scotians and Aboriginal youth to make informed employment and education choices; provided an on-line employment resource centre for persons with disabilities; and provided youth and women who have come into conflict with the law with assistance on skills development or re-integration into the labour market.

Networks supported existing BEPCs and PWDCPCs in implementing their business plans. A BEPC was established in Hants County and a PWDCPC was formed in Digby. The Community Coordinators option that allows HRDC to provide funds to organizations such as PWDCPCs who directly deliver programs to eligible participants were expanded and evolved.

We helped citizens who face specific challenges in the labour market through more than 200 projects related to literacy, information technology, employability and youth, under the Labour Market Development Agreement and the Canada-Nova Scotia Youth Protocol.

We assisted community agencies in addressing the needs of homeless people in our communities by supporting more than 40 projects across the province. Activities ranged from emergency shelters, support services, supported housing, prevention and research.

We addressed social inclusion in our work with the Nova Scotia Federal Council, provincial counterparts and Sector Councils. Social and economic inclusion was also addressed with groups at risk through activity in remote communities.

An information fair for persons with disabilities attracted over 1,000 individuals, and youth fairs provided information to thousands of people. Workshops with youth service agencies helped us obtain a better understanding of human development needs for youth, as well as promoted youth programming.

We identified more than 450 visible minority people interested in working with the Federal Public Service through an inventory developed in partnership with the Department of Education and the Council on African Canadian Education.

More low income seniors in Nova Scotia are receiving the Guaranteed Income Supplement benefit as a result of presentations to client groups, an application mail-out and personal follow-up with potential beneficiaries. At least \$170,000 in underpayments was found as a result. We also launched special initiatives to inform the Aboriginal community of their entitlement to Income Security Program benefits.

In our work with communities and partners we raised awareness of the importance of including equity hiring plans in the development of our contribution agreements.

We enhanced our focus for external recruitment, to ensure that we reached potential applicants from the visible minorities, Aboriginal, and persons with disabilities communities.

EXCELLENCE IN LEADING OUR PEOPLE

HRDC undertook to implement measures designed to build a modern, professional, and representative workforce, and support staff as we worked towards establishing HRDC as a learning organization.

Achievements included:

We completed staff training as we implemented organizational and office redesign. Concerted

efforts across the region ensured that staff received training for new computer systems. Essential skills training and course development continued to be a priority to assist staff in their changing roles within HRDC.

HRDC continued work in being a learning organization with coaching and learning support provided to staff through network learning advisors, team leaders, EI and ISP program advisors, and program consultants.

The region exceeded its goals for Employment Equity representation within the department. Five employment equity employees are in developmental positions across the region under our Future Leadership in Focus management intern initiative. Employment opportunities within the Public Service were promoted to employment equity groups to increase their awareness of our hiring processes.

Students were provided with work experience and the federal government was promoted as a future career option using the Federal Student Work Experience Program, and we ensured that designated groups participated in this program.

We met our commitment to the Official Languages Act and provided services in both official languages, supported through staffing bilingual positions. These and other external and internal staffing options have been used to ensure HRDC's ability to build and retain a workforce that fully represents Canadian society.

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP

HRDC undertook to strengthen internal communications, corporate planning, accountability, and results-based management activities; broaden partnerships with intergovernmental agencies and Federal Council processes; explore ways of ensuring the effectiveness of the Labour Market Development Agreement; and ensure that our staff lead and participate at the local, regional, and national level.

Achievements included:

We increased awareness of HRDC's mandate, business lines and commitments in the region with our sponsors, partners and staff. Information sessions on our business plan were delivered internally and externally to a range of partners and community groups.

The local Human Resource Centres increased community collaboration with existing Human Development Partnership Committees and Local Action Teams created as a result of the federal-provincial Labour Market Development Agreement.

Program Investment Plans ensured program funds were nearly fully invested and all business lines were monitored to help safeguard public resources and assets.

Network directors, managers and staff members participated on many internal and external committees in their communities to build relationships with colleagues, other government departments and external partners. This ranged from local office or network activity to work with communities and federal-provincial partnerships.

POLICY LEADERSHIP

HRDC undertook to provide accountable and effective policy leadership; link policy priorities to service delivery structures, capacity, and resources; use partnerships to strengthen policy development; and monitor and evaluate the development and implementation of policies across the region.

Achievements included:

We evaluated the first phase of our regional Modernising Service for Canadians initiative and results will determine the impact of restructuring of units and functions within the networks.

Regional Office and South Shore/Valley representatives participated in a national workshop to increase linkages between national, regional, and local business planning; explore community investment planning; and build closer links between resources and priorities. Work will continue to enhance the planning process to be more effective and accountable.

An EI information strategy, promoting service delivery through technology, was implemented to ensure clients have information to make the best use of our services. These results are highlighted under Service Delivery and in the electronic annex to this report. We improved service to EI claimants with the implementation of a policy to verbally inform claimants as quickly as possible if they will be denied EI benefits, explain the decision and inform them of their options.

The positive impact of Appli-Web was demonstrated via a survey of Appli-Web users in the South Shore/Valley Network. Survey participants indicated they would use the on-line service again and would recommend it to others. Positive characteristics in applying over the Internet were convenience, no lines and no waiting.

The Region improved its reporting of strategic objectives with a new, more user-friendly format for the 2003-2004 Business Plan.

Business Plan Performance Indicators 2002 - 2003 Fiscal Year

Employment Insurance Program		
Indicators	Target	Actual
• Time from start date of your claim to first payment	85% within 28 days	66 %
• Claims in order	90%	82 %
• Response time to your telephone calls at the Employment Insurance Telecentre	95% within 3 minutes	65 %
• Date set to hear your appeal	90% within 30 days	86 %
Income Security Program		
Indicators	Target	Actual
• Time from application to decision (Old Age Security)	28 days	7.4 days
• Time from application to decision (Canada Pension Plan - CPP)	28 days	15.9 days
• Time from application to decision (CPP-Disability)	62 days	66 days
Employment Programs		
Indicators	Target	Actual
• Return to work (includes EBSM, Youth and Opportunity Fund programming)	7,150	5,818 *
• Claimants served	8,575	8,317 *
Full investment of program funds		
• Active Employment Benefits/Measures	100 %	97.0%
• Youth	100 %	96.4%
• Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities	100 %	99.1%
• Aboriginal Peoples	100 %	98.4%
• Homelessness	100 %	86.0%

Labour Program		
Indicators	Target	Actual
• % of Unjust dismissals settled	75 %	72.5
• % of Part II – Canadian Labour Code violations resolved	90 %	93.1
Partnerships		
• % of Employment Equity Partnership Committees with business plans (African Nova Scotians, Persons with Disabilities and First Nations/Aboriginal Peoples)	100 %	100 %
Investments through Labour Market Development Agreement – Human Development Partnership Committees		
• Active Employment Benefits/Measures	\$12.0 M	\$12.9 M
• Youth (under Canada-Nova Scotia Youth Protocol)	\$ 2.5 M	\$3.5 M
Leading and Supporting People		
Indicators	Target	Actual
• Human Resource Action Plans	5	5
• % of HRDC Visible Minority employees	2.0 %	6.1 %
• % of HRDC Persons with Disabilities employees	4.7 %	12.6 %
• % of HRDC Aboriginal Peoples employees	1.7 %	3.5 %
• % of HRDC employees with mandatory learning	85 %	90 %
Quality Indicators		
Indicators	447 Respondents	
	% Satisfied	% Very Satisfied
• Overall Satisfaction with Service	31.3	44.1
• Fair and Equal Service	38.7	46.1
• Quality of Information	37.6	46.8
• Staff Knowledge	36.2	50.6
• Staff Courtesy	32.9	53.7
• Waiting Time	28.4	35.6

* Year end Employment figures will be available in June