

Aboriginal Participation in Major Resources Development Labour Market Development

Calgary Roundtable
Draft Summary Report
June 2012



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The Public Policy Forum is an independent, not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of government in Canada through enhanced dialogue among the public, private and voluntary sectors. The Forum's members, drawn from business, federal, provincial and territorial governments, the voluntary sector and organized labour, share a belief that an efficient and effective public service is important in ensuring Canada's competitiveness abroad and quality of life at home.

Established in 1987, the Forum has earned a reputation as a trusted, nonpartisan facilitator, capable of bringing together a wide range of stakeholders in productive dialogue. Its research program provides a neutral base to inform collective decision making. By promoting information sharing and greater links between governments and other sectors, the Forum helps ensure public policy in our country is dynamic, coordinated and responsive to future challenges and opportunities.

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Thank you to our partner:



Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada

Affaires autochtones et
Développement du Nord Canada

Overview

On June 8th, 2012 Canada's Public Policy Forum convened a roundtable in partnership with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, in collaboration with Natural Resources Canada and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, dedicated to exploring issues of labour market development in the context of Aboriginal participation in major resources development opportunities. This roundtable is one of a series of regional discussions being convened this spring and summer across Canada, engaging senior leaders from Canada's Aboriginal communities, the natural resources sector and governments. An initial roundtable was convened in Ottawa on May 22nd, 2012. A copy of the summary report of the Ottawa session is enclosed for you information.

The Calgary roundtable was hosted at the Calgary offices of Shell Canada from 8:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. and was moderated by David Mitchell, President and CEO of the Public Policy Forum. Reverend Elder Margaret Waterchief of the Siksika nation brought a welcome on behalf of the Blackfoot of Alberta. A complete list of roundtable participants and the meeting agenda is included as an appendix to this report.

This meeting was convened under the *Public Policy Forum Rule*, whereby all comments are made on a not-for-attribution basis.

A research paper prepared by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, providing context for the discussion (copy attached), was shared in advance with participants.

Ian Shugart, Deputy Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, offered opening remarks to help frame the discussion, highlighting four key indicators of success for participants to consider: ability to define and work towards a common purpose; positive impacts and engagement at the community level; coordination of efforts among governments, First Nations, Métis, Inuit, industry, and educators; and continuous impact and improvement. He also noted that our engagement must continue in the form of lasting relationships and partnerships.

Lorraine Mitchelmore, President and Country Chair of Shell Canada, provided a private sector perspective on the importance of forming sustainable partnerships between the natural resources sector and Aboriginal communities.

Corinne Mount-Pleasant Jetté spoke about the need for a stronger commitment to providing the essential skills and learning opportunities for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children.

At the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, Peter Watson, Deputy Minister of Alberta Executive Council, provided a summary of the dialogue and themes discussed.

Discussion

The purpose of this meeting was to uncover best practices and promising approaches in the area of labour market development among Aboriginal communities in order to enhance their ability to participate in and contribute to major resource development projects.

Community Engagement

Participants agreed that efforts to improve labour market opportunities and readiness among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples must begin by developing partnerships at the community level.

It was emphasized that there is no one “Aboriginal community,” but in fact that there are many different communities with diverse interests and needs. Sensitivity to the unique requirements of different communities is an important consideration for governments, industry, and educational institutions as they seek to help develop programs and initiatives in the area of education and skills training. This awareness will come from working in partnership with communities.

It was also noted that community engagement should be pursued regardless of the state of resource development in areas near Aboriginal communities. Seeking to improve education and skills training at the time of development is in some cases too late – these opportunities should be developed early on so that in the future, individuals have the skills and talent to participate in projects at all levels, from junior positions right up to the management level.

Communities must also be engaged to provide leadership in education and skills training initiatives. For programs and initiatives to have the legitimacy necessary to succeed, they must be truly reflective of the spirit and ideals of communities. This means sharing authority and in some instances giving up control to allow a community to co-lead the design of programs that fit best with their culture and their strengths.

Capacity

Participants offered several positive examples of partnerships and programs currently being delivered in Aboriginal communities through collaboration with industry and governments. However, there are key issues of capacity, which must be addressed in the form of social support and services. Capacity in the non-Aboriginal population was also identified as an issue needing to be addressed.

One area that was highlighted relates to pre- and post-employment supports for individuals and communities who have undertaken education and skills training programs. It was suggested that providing support and training for the transition to work, such as practical information about what to expect from the workplace, and what it means to be an employee, could be a way to help improve the success rates of training programs over the long-term.

Corporate Strategy

Capacity issues from a corporate perspective were also highlighted. Participants discussed the ability to transform the practices of major and local enterprises in ways that reflects a meaningful desire to develop relationships and approaches based on a common purpose. Industry, as well as governments, needs to be aware of their own capacities – or lack thereof – for engaging with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

Some industry leaders have developed Aboriginal Awareness weeks within their companies as well as internal training programs, which can help enhance employees’ sensitivity to different partners’ needs.

Similarly, an innovative new certificate program at the University of Calgary has been developed with Aboriginal and industry partners, to train new graduates in relationship-building with Aboriginal communities. It was also suggested that, in conjunction with Aboriginal Awareness Week efforts, industry leaders should be bringing awareness of their own culture to Aboriginal communities, to provide young leaders with an opportunity for workplace exchanges and exposure to these companies' cultures (a corporate awareness week for Aboriginal communities.)

Collaboration

Collaboration, partnerships, and engagement were a prominent component of the roundtable discussion. It was suggested that among the growing community of interested parties from governments, industry, First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, and educational institutions, there is a need to collectively enhance capacity for working collaboratively. This means building on the large number of unique relationships that already exist, to form the basis for genuine collaboration among the broader community of leaders. This will require some coordination to provide opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information, and to identify opportunities for working together.

A promising approach was highlighted in the “four-by-four” model currently being experimented with by a group of industry and Aboriginal leaders. This model is based upon bringing together four companies and four communities, four times annually to share information and discuss common objectives.

Best Practices and Case Studies

During the discussion, some best practices, promising approaches, and opportunities for immediately enhancing the labour market participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities were identified, including:

- **Women Building Futures** – based in Edmonton, this organization offers bursaries to support pre-employment training for Aboriginal women in the building and construction industry;
- **University of Calgary Aboriginal Relations Leadership Certificate** – developed in partnership with ATCO and Aboriginal communities, this certificate program will provide training for recent graduates from a variety of disciplines on relationship-building with Aboriginal partners;
- **School Plus** – a grant program offered by Enbridge that provides funds for K-12 schools to provide extracurricular activities and school experiences aimed at enhancing engagement and education completion rates among Aboriginal youth;
- **Energy and environmental services** – governments and industry could look for ways to leverage Aboriginal expertise in the areas of energy and environmental services, as a significant area of importance for local employment;
- **Memoranda of Understanding for long-term objectives** – formalizing long-term objectives in MOUs or other documents that help to provide clarity around outcomes and responsibilities is important for the long-term success of training and education efforts. This approach was identified as a best practice in a program for the delivery of pre- and post-employment skills.
- **Bursary programs** – funding needs often go beyond the cost of training or education programs. Bursaries could help to support education and training by offering recipients support for a wider array of education-related needs, such as child care, or travel costs associated with pursuing education and skills development.

- **“Four-by-four” model** – this model is based upon bringing together four companies and four communities, four times annually to share information and discuss common objectives.

Actionable Recommendations

- Promote cross-cultural exchanges between corporate Canada and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities. In conjunction with Aboriginal Awareness weeks sometimes organized by the private sector, Corporate Awareness weeks convened with Aboriginal communities could help facilitate understanding and relationship building.
- Incorporate pre- and post-employment training into education and skills development initiatives. Developing the soft skills and competencies required for success in the workplace could be a way to improve the success rates of existing training programs.
- Explore innovative models for relationship-building on an ongoing basis. The “four-by-four” model suggested above demonstrates one such way to provide a regular forum for collaboration.

The issues and opportunities explored at this roundtable will help inform future thematic discussions as we continue to convene meetings across Canada. A final report will be available following these roundtable discussions:

June 27, 2012	Prince George, BC Theme: Community Readiness Host: University of Northern British Columbia
August 21, 2012	Toronto, ON Theme: Financing Host: RBC
August 31, 2012	Yellowknife, NT Theme: Partnerships and Collaboration Host: Diavik Mines

Appendix A

Aboriginal Participation in Major Resource Development Opportunities: Labour Market Development

June 8, 2012

Shell Canada Ltd
Room 0910, Livingston Place West
250 2nd Street S.W.
Calgary, AB

Agenda

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m. | Opening Prayer
<i>Reverend Elder Margaret Waterchief, Siksika Nation, Alberta</i> |
| 8:10 a.m. | Welcome and Tour de Table
<i>David Mitchell, President and CEO, Public Policy Forum</i> |
| 8:30 a.m. | Opening Remarks
<i>Ian Shugart, Deputy Minister, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada</i> |
| 8:35 a.m. | Remarks
<i>Lorraine Mitchelmore, President and Country Chair, Shell Canada</i> |
| 8:40 a.m. | Remarks
<i>Corinne Mount-Pleasant Jetté, Executive Director, Mount Pleasant Educational Services Inc.</i> |
| 8:45 a.m. | Roundtable Discussion |
| 10:15 a.m. | Summary Remarks
<i>Peter Watson, Deputy Minister of the Executive Council, Government of Alberta</i> |
| 10:30 a.m. | Adjourn |

Discussion Questions

How do we define success in major resource development projects? What does success look like from the perspective of business, Aboriginal peoples, and other key stakeholders?

What are the present and future labour market needs of the resources sector? How can Aboriginal communities be engaged to meet these needs?

How do we provide skills training and educational opportunities to Aboriginal communities? What are some of the barriers to skills development and education?

What novel arrangements or case studies can we look to for best practices in the area of labour market development?

Appendix B

Aboriginal Participation in Major Resource Development Opportunities: Labour Market Development

June 8, 2012

Shell Canada Ltd
Room 0910, Livingston Place West
250 2nd Street S.W.
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Participant list

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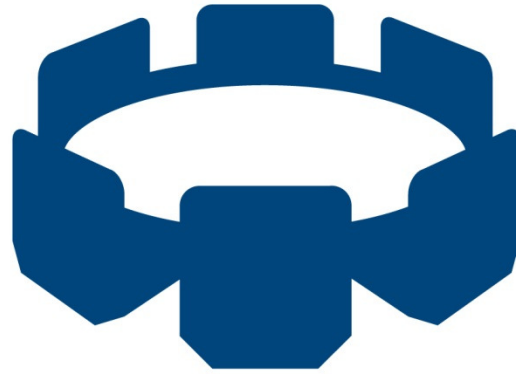
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