# The Community Employment Innovation Project

## Design and Implementation

**John Greenwood**
**Claudia Nicholson**
**David Gyarmati**
**Darrell Kyte**
**Melanie MacInnis**
**Reuben Ford**

**SOCIAL RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION CORPORATION**

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The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation is a non-profit organization and registered charity with offices in Ottawa, Vancouver, and Sydney, Nova Scotia. SRDC was created specifically to develop, field test, and rigorously evaluate social programs. SRDC's two-part mission is to help policy-makers and practitioners identify social policies and programs that improve the well-being of all Canadians, with a special concern for the effects on the disadvantaged, and to raise the standards of evidence that are used in assessing social policies. As an intermediary organization, SRDC attempts to bridge the worlds of academic researchers, government policy-makers, and on-the-ground program operators. Providing a vehicle for the development and management of complex demonstration projects, SRDC seeks to work in close partnership with provinces, the federal government, local programs, and private philanthropies.

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# Acknowledgements

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The Authors

# Executive Summary

## INTRODUCTION

This is the first report on the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP), a long-term demonstration project that was initiated in 1999 to test an alternative form of income transfer payment for the unemployed in areas of chronic high unemployment. CEIP is operating in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) in Nova Scotia. The project was conceived by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and is funded jointly by HRDC and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (NS-DCS).

Canada's national system of Employment Insurance (EI) provides a temporary earnings replacement for unemployed workers; its primary goal is to support the unemployed while they are searching for new jobs. Provincially operated income assistance (IA) programs are the principal means-tested protection against poverty and, for the most part, benefits go to individuals or families with no (or very low) income from employment. CEIP is testing an alternative form of payment — one that takes the form of a "community wage" paid to unemployed individuals who volunteer to work on locally developed, community-based projects.

## CEIP'S PROGRAM DESIGN

### The Offer to Individuals

The core of the CEIP offer to eligible individuals is the chance to exchange their entitlements to EI or IA for the opportunity to work for up to three years on projects in selected communities in the CBRM. In most respects, CEIP employment has been set up to replicate a "real job." Participants are required to work (or engage in other eligible activities) for 35 hours a week. In return, they are paid a community wage. Initially set at $280 a week, the community wage, which is indexed to increases in the provincial minimum wage, has since risen to $300 a week. CEIP employment is insurable under the EI program and is covered by the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation program and the Canada Pension Plan. Participants are paid for statutory holidays and they accumulate an entitlement to "personal days," which can be taken as paid vacation or sick days. They may also choose to enrol in a private health plan, with premiums shared between CEIP and the participants who opt for coverage.

Although the principal CEIP activity is working on community-based projects, a number of ancillary activities have also been built into the program model. The initial two weeks of CEIP participation consists of an orientation period during which participants undergo an *employability assessment* to determine their job readiness and to collect information on their skills, aptitudes, interests, and previous work experiences. Participants who are between assignments to community projects or who have been judged to be not yet job-ready may spend some time working in a *transitional job* provided by the CEIP consortium, rather than by a community. *Job-readiness training* modules are also provided. All participants receive introductory modules prior to their initial placements; some participants receive additional

modules to help deal with identified performance issues. All participants receive a limited amount of *transferable skills training* in the form of short courses on such topics as first aid, occupational health and safety, and computer literacy. Some participants may choose to try to develop their own ideas into a *self-directed project*; CEIP provides these participants with 1 week of entrepreneurship training and a further 11 weeks in which to develop a project proposal. Towards the end of their eligibility period, participants receive assistance in *portfolio building* to bring together material (such as descriptions of positions held, training certificates, and letters of recommendation) accumulated over the three years of CEIP participation. Finally, during the final three months of eligibility each participant is given paid time off — up to seven hours per week — to engage in *job-search* activities.

During the time that an individual is eligible to work on CEIP, he or she is free to leave the project (for example, to take a job or to enrol in training). The participant can later return to CEIP if the three-year period of eligibility has not expired. However, participants who leave CEIP and return to EI or IA forfeit any further eligibility to take part in CEIP.

## The Role of Communities

A small number of communities in industrial Cape Breton have been selected to take part in CEIP. These communities are as much "participants" in CEIP as the individuals who have been enrolled in the project. Individual participants are given the opportunity to take part in employment; however, the responsibility for generating the employment opportunities rests with the communities.

The role played by the communities has two main dimensions. First, each community has to create a democratic structure to make decisions regarding the use of CEIP resources. These CEIP "community boards" are initially charged with developing strategic plans and setting priorities for the kinds of projects that should have access to workers supplied by CEIP. Second, the communities are responsible for organizing specific projects that will employ CEIP workers to help address the community needs that have been identified. This is a shared responsibility. Any community organization or individual can develop a proposal to sponsor a project (although they must have the capacity to manage the project, including providing any other resources that may be needed, such as facilities, tools and equipment, supervisors, and workers with specialized skills). Responsibility for deciding which proposals will be approved and granted access to the pool of CEIP workers rests with the community boards.

The main element of CEIP's offer to communities is the chance to be the beneficiaries of the "free labour" provided by the project, and it is hoped that this will serve as a catalyst for community action. However, CEIP's design recognizes that communities will vary in their capacities to undertake the tasks assigned to them.[1] Consequently, each community board can receive a planning grant of up to $30,000 to defray some of the direct costs of engaging in CEIP activities at the local level. In addition, the CEIP budget includes funds to hire and make available to community boards expertise to support them in undertaking CEIP-related tasks (such as setting up and running the volunteer community boards, marketing and communications activities, community mobilizing, and strategic planning).

[1]When the project started the maximum amount that each board could receive was set at $25,000. However, some community boards experienced higher levels of expenditures than others and requested that the funds available to them be increased. In September 2002 HRDC agreed that the maximum amount could be raised to $30,000.

## CEIP'S EVALUATION DESIGN

CEIP is managed by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), a non-profit social policy research organization that specializes in developing, implementing, and evaluating large-scale, long-term projects to test innovative social policies and programs. CEIP has been set up as a demonstration project to assess the feasibility of implementing a community-based jobs program for the long-term unemployed, to estimate the benefits generated by such a program, and to determine whether the benefits are worth the cost of producing them. In considering benefits, CEIP is considering both those that accrue to individuals who work on the community-based projects and those that are experienced by the communities where the projects take place.

Why might CEIP's program model produce beneficial effects? First, for the individual participants, the program may enhance their employability, leading to more employment and increased earnings in the future. Working on community-based projects offers them an opportunity to gain work experience and acquire new skills. In addition to adding to "human capital," CEIP may also contribute to an individual's "social capital." Participants who work together may develop stronger peer support networks. Project participation also brings participants into contact with project-sponsoring organizations and with individuals and organizations that benefit from the services being provided. This gives participants a chance to develop stronger social networks in the community.

Second, for the communities, there may be a positive contribution to community development. The products or services provided by the community projects are focused on needs identified at the local level, and can thus directly provide value to the community. The availability of the free labour provided by CEIP participants, or the services provided by the organizations employing them, may strengthen existing community organizations or lead to the creation of new ones. The volunteers who participate on community boards or who get involved in sponsoring projects may themselves develop new skills or stronger social networks. Over the longer run, a community's resiliency and its capacity to overcome adversity may be enhanced.

Finally, for the governments that are funding CEIP and for society as a whole, this program model may be a cost-effective alternative to traditional transfer payments.

CEIP's evaluation strategy is designed to address all these issues. It includes four main components:

- *Implementation research* to carefully document how the project was implemented, to assess how closely the program in the field matched the original design, to evaluate potential participants' understanding of the CEIP offer, and to identify delivery issues that can aid in better understanding *how* and *why* the program worked (or failed to work)
- *An individual impact study* using a random assignment design to compare the experiences of those in CEIP's program group with the experiences of a control group who were not eligible to work on community-based projects
- *A community effects study* using both a "theory of change" approach and a quasi-experimental comparison community design to evaluate the effects on the communities that participated in CEIP

- *A benefit–cost analysis* to compare the economic benefits that accrue to both the participating individuals and the communities with the cost of producing those benefits

## THE CEIP COMMUNITIES

HRDC selected industrial Cape Breton — specifically the CBRM — to be the project site. The CBRM resulted from the provincially legislated amalgamation of eight former municipal units in 1995, and it covers the geographic area of the former Cape Breton County. This is an area of chronic high unemployment that has been undergoing a process of "deindustrialization" associated with the decline of its historic industrial underpinnings — coal mining and steel production. At the same time, the region has a long history of local activism and grassroots community development, rooted in the co-operative movement, which has the potential to facilitate the implementation of an initiative like CEIP.

Although individual participants were selected from across all of the CBRM, the community-based employment opportunities have been concentrated in relatively few communities or neighbourhoods within the CBRM in order to maximize the likelihood of producing detectable community effects. Six local communities were offered the chance to take part in CEIP — the pre-amalgamation towns of Dominion, Glace Bay, New Waterford, North Sydney, and Sydney Mines and the Whitney Pier neighbourhood of the pre-amalgamation city of Sydney.

The selected communities had to "volunteer" to participate in CEIP by means of a show of support by the majority of those attending public meetings held in each community. All six selected communities eventually chose to take part. They then had to go through a series of steps designed to engage members of the communities in the process of planning for and operating the projects that would employ CEIP participants. This process was put in place to increase the likelihood that the projects would be focused on the needs perceived by members of the communities and would be more likely to generate benefits to the communities.

Each community first had to form a CEIP community board and submit the board for acceptance by the Project Implementation Committee (a committee established by CEIP's funders, HRDC and NS-DCS, to oversee project implementation). In seeking acceptance, the board was required to demonstrate that it had community support and that it had formally established itself in a manner that would allow it to function effectively. Once accepted, a community board was required to prepare a strategic plan. There was no prescribed process for boards to follow; the only specific requirement was that the plans include a set of identified priorities that would be used in soliciting, reviewing, and selecting projects for approval. The strategic plans also had to be submitted for acceptance by the Project Implementation Committee. Following acceptance of its plan, a community board was authorized to begin approving projects submitted to it by organizations that wished to sponsor projects. Being "approved" meant that a sponsored community project was eligible to have CEIP participants assigned to work on it.

Ultimately, five of the six communities that agreed to take part in CEIP completed these steps and began approving projects. Dominion went so far as to form a community board and have it approved but did not complete the rest of the process. From the time of the first project approvals in October 2000 until the end of March 2003, the remaining five communities approved 257 projects submitted by 227 different sponsors, which provided a total of 883 placement opportunities. Projects (and placements) vary in duration and not all approved projects are still operating. In addition, boards are continuing to approve new projects; the operational phase of CEIP is scheduled to continue until July 2005.

## ENROLLING PARTICIPANTS

### The Enrolment Process

The process of engaging communities ran in parallel with the implementation of procedures to enrol individual participants. During the period July 2000 to June 2002, 1,522 individuals — 1,006 EI beneficiaries and 516 IA recipients — joined CEIP. Potential participants had to be at least 18 years of age and had to reside in the CBRM. Those selected from the EI file had to have been receiving regular EI benefits for at least 10 weeks and have at least 12 weeks of benefit entitlement remaining on their EI claim. Those selected from the IA rolls had to be deemed "employable" based on the employability assessment process used by NS-DCS.

Each month a group of eligible individuals was randomly selected by Statistics Canada from a list provided by HRDC of all EI beneficiaries in the area covered by CEIP. For IA recipients, a two-stage process was used. First, NS-DCS sent a letter to potentially eligible IA recipients that provided a brief description of CEIP and included a postcard with instructions that the card had to be sent to Statistics Canada if the individual wanted to be considered for selection. The postcard authorized NS-DCS to release information from an individual's IA file to Statistics Canada for use in the CEIP selection process. Each month Statistics Canada selected a group of eligible individuals from among those who had returned their postcards.

Those who were selected from either EI or IA were sent letters by Statistics Canada inviting them to attend an information session. At those sessions, potential participants were provided information to help them decide whether to join the study. Those interested in doing so were required to complete an enrolment form consisting of a short survey to capture baseline data and an informed consent form indicating that they were participating voluntarily and agreeing to the release of data about them for research purposes. Half of those who completed the enrolment form were randomly assigned to a program group that was eligible to take part in CEIP project activities, the other half were assigned to a control group that was not eligible for CEIP activities but continued to be eligible to receive all other benefits and services for which they otherwise qualified. The two groups together make up CEIP's research sample.

### Participant Characteristics

Based on data collected on the enrolment form, those in the research sample who were selected from the two recruitment sources — EI beneficiaries and IA recipients — share many characteristics, but they also differ in some respects. Although the sample is made up

of individuals with a broad range of characteristics, the former EI beneficiaries in the CEIP sample are more likely

- to be men;
- to be between 35 and 54 years of age;
- to have a high school diploma (but are unlikely to have attained any higher levels of education qualifications);
- to live in households composed of two or more persons and with two adult contributors to household income;
- to have had a household income of less than $30,000 during the 12 months prior to enrolment;
- to have extensive work experience and to be unemployed due to seasonal or non-seasonal layoff, end of contract, or because their employer moved or closed down;
- to have lived in Cape Breton all their life and have strong social bonds to the community;
- to have small, dense, and homogeneous social networks; and
- to report being in good health.

Volunteers from the IA caseload are more likely

- to be women;
- to be between the ages of 25 and 44;
- to be living without a spouse or partner;
- to be living in households composed of two or more persons and with only one contributor to household income;
- to have an annual household income of less than $20,000 (with over half of the sample reporting income of less than $10,000);
- to have only limited work experience (with no long-term relationship to the industry in which they last worked);
- to have lived in Cape Breton all their life;
- to have small, dense, and homogeneous social networks; and
- to report being in good health (but were somewhat more likely than EI sample members to report having an activity-limiting physical or mental condition).

A comparison of CEIP's sample of former EI beneficiaries with the broader EI population who was eligible to take part shows a few differences. The research sample contains a somewhat higher proportion of women; it also contains a higher percentage of those aged 45 to 54 years (but fewer aged 55 years and over). Finally, the average weekly EI benefit entitlement of those who enrolled in CEIP is about 20 per cent lower than that for the EI population from which the sample was drawn. A comparison of the sample of former IA recipients who volunteered for CEIP with the broader IA population who was eligible to take

part[2] also shows a few differences. The IA research sample contains a slightly lower proportion of women than the CEIP-eligible population of IA recipients and was more likely to be in the 35 to 44 age group. Although CEIP volunteers received substantially more per month in other types of assistance, on average both groups received the same amount of basic IA benefits.

## Understanding the CEIP Offer

In order for CEIP's program model to be given a fair test, it is important that eligible participants understood the offer well enough to make an informed choice. In order to assess the wider applicability of the program, it is also helpful to understand why some of those who were eligible chose not to take up the offer. CEIP addressed these issues by conducting surveys of those who participated in an information session and enrolled in CEIP and a sample of individuals who decided not to take up CEIP's invitation to attend an information session.

In general, the following holds true for CEIP volunteers:

- Most were well informed about the main features of CEIP and made an informed choice to volunteer for CEIP.
- Most were aware that they had to relinquish their EI or IA benefits in order to be an active CEIP program group member.
- However, they were somewhat less well informed about the process for community project approval and the supervisory role of project sponsors.

Findings for non-volunteers indicate the following:

- Most non-volunteers received their invitation to join CEIP and found the contents of the letter clear and easy to understand.
- For various reasons, many decided to reject the CEIP offer. Among EI-eligible individuals, they mostly either considered the CEIP wage to be too low or they had found a job or were expecting to return to a previous job. The most common reasons mentioned by IA non-volunteers for rejecting the CEIP offer related to personal, family, or health problems.
- Compared with EI volunteers, EI non-volunteers were less likely to be separated, divorced, or widowed; to be between the ages of 45 to 54; and to have a trade or vocational certificate. However, they were more likely to be 55 years of age or older, to have worked for 20 or more years since turning 16 years of age, and to be employed at the time of the interview.
- Compared with IA volunteers, IA non-volunteers were more likely to be women, to be married or living with a common-law partner, and to have little or no work experience. The results also show that IA non-volunteers were less likely to be

[2]Comparisons were made between the IA sample who volunteered for CEIP and those who were mailed an introductory card from NS-DCS. However, the group who was mailed introductory cards is a random sample of the broader group of IA recipients who were eligible for CEIP and would differ only due to sampling error. As a result, comparisons can be made between IA volunteers and the mail-out sample in order to assess the extent to which IA volunteers resemble the wider population of CEIP-eligible IA recipients.

divorced, widowed, or separated and less likely to have attained a trade or vocational certificate than IA volunteers.

## PROGRAM GROUP ACTIVITIES

### Signing Up

Those who volunteered to take part in CEIP and who were randomly assigned to the program group were required to attend an orientation session. The purpose of this session was to reiterate the rights and obligations of program participation.

At the end of the orientation session, program group members were required to sign a Program Participation Agreement (PPA), formally acknowledging that they understood and agreed to comply with the terms of their participation. They also completed additional documentation related to income tax withholding, banking arrangements, the optional health insurance plan, and a criminal records check.

Active participation in CEIP generally began the week following the completion of the PPA. It began with a two-week orientation period in the CEIP office.

### The CEIP Office

The CEIP office is a storefront facility set up on the main downtown street in the former city of Sydney. The facility is centrally located, accessible by public transit, and large enough to allow for the processing of large groups of participants.

The office is managed and staffed by four local organizations: the Cape Breton Family YMCA, Breton Business Center, Breton Rehab Services, and the Atlantic Coastal Action Program – Cape Breton. The participation of these organizations, selected by means of a publicly advertised request for proposals, gave CEIP access to the expertise and resources of several established, locally known organizations. In addition, EDS Canada was engaged to design and develop a project management information system (PMIS) to provide an electronic framework both to facilitate CEIP administration (including managing the enrolment of participants and their referrals to placements and registering projects and placement opportunities) and to help in the collection of program-related data for research purposes.

CEIP office staff played a central role in the recruitment process. After the initial letters were sent to the randomly selected sample each month, the CEIP office was the point of first contact. Potential participants could call to learn more about the study, and the CEIP office arranged attendance at and conducted the information sessions. During the information sessions, staff carried out the crucial role of introducing CEIP and obtaining informed consent from those interested in taking part. For program group members, the CEIP office staff conducted the orientation sessions and arranged for PPAs to be signed. Once enrolment was completed, the two-week orientation period took place in the CEIP office.

### Orientation and Placement

The orientation period was designed to introduce participants to CEIP; conduct a detailed assessment of their employability, including their interests, aptitudes, and previous work

experience; provide introductory job-readiness training, including workshops on "Survival in the Workplace" and "How to Be a More Effective Person"; and provide transferable-skills training.

On completion of the orientation period, each participant was referred to his or her first placement on a community project (or, in some cases, to a transitional job placement). As discussed earlier, community boards approve project proposals submitted by organizations wishing to sponsor a project and take advantage of the availability of CEIP participants. A sponsor whose proposal has been approved is required to sign a Project Sponsor Agreement (PSA), formally agreeing to the terms under which the participant will work on the project. Once the PSA is signed, the sponsor completes a job order form, which provides a detailed description of the project's needs, and the project is placed on the "open projects" list maintained by the project registrar in the CEIP office.

The CEIP office staff includes a placement coordinator who is responsible for managing the process of matching individual participants to the job opportunities provided by sponsored projects and who maintains contact with project sponsors to understand their needs. Each participant is assigned to a participant manager in the CEIP office who maintains ongoing contact with the participant throughout the period of eligibility. This involves, at a minimum, telephone contact every three months and a site visit to the project where the participant is working every six months. At the peak period of operational activity, each participant manager is responsible for approximately 120 participants.

The placement process is a collaborative effort between the placement coordinator and the participant managers. The placement coordinator is most familiar with the requirements of the projects; participant managers are most familiar with participants' skills and interests. During the three-year period of eligibility, the participant manager may suggest alternative placements to a participant that may be more challenging or provide opportunities for greater skill enhancement. A participant can also express interest in moving to a new opportunity that he or she has seen on the open projects list.

While working on project placements, participants are supervised by the project sponsors; however, participants are paid by SRDC. CEIP participants are paid every two weeks, one week in arrears (for the week just worked) and one week in advance (for the coming week). Sponsors submit time reports to the CEIP office on the participants assigned to them. The community wages paid to participants are reduced if any unapproved absences are reported on the timesheets.

## IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH RESULTS

One of the primary goals of implementation research is to assess whether the program as implemented matches the intended program model. In addition, implementation research provides operational information — describing how services are organized and delivered — which can inform ongoing adjustments to the program delivery and later replication or implementation elsewhere. This first report on CEIP implementation assesses participant recruitment and some of the early program operations. Implementation research is still ongoing and a detailed assessment of other aspects of program delivery — including participant management, the job-matching process, the delivery of CEIP's training

components, the monitoring of projects in the field, and the process of community engagement — will be the subject of a follow-up implementation report next year.

Based on the implementation research that has been conducted so far, a number of early findings and lessons have begun to emerge.

*Selection and recruitment*. The processes related to the selection and recruitment of potential participants were performed effectively. The EI and IA selection criteria were applied appropriately and consistently throughout the selection period. This led to a randomly selected sample that was consistent with the target groups of the research design. However, the "employability criterion" for selecting the IA sample was not applied as rigorously and consistently as hoped. This resulted in the inclusion in the research sample of some individuals who have severe employability issues. Sample selection proceeded largely as intended, consistent with the two-year enrolment plan, and imposed no excessive administrative burden and entailed few disruptions for the study sponsors — HRDC and NS-DCS.

*Informing potential participants*. Individuals who chose to join CEIP were well informed about the main program features and made an informed choice to participate in the study. The key messages delivered at information sessions were consistent with the research design, and there is evidence to indicate that volunteers understood the offer. Effective procedures were implemented to ensure that only randomly selected individuals were invited and admitted to information sessions. Furthermore, appropriate timelines were observed for delivery and acceptance of the CEIP offer.

*Random assignment*. The process of random assignment was implemented fairly with appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of experiment. There were no systematic differences between program and control group members for either the EI or IA study samples. Procedures were also effective in ensuring that only eligible volunteers were randomly assigned, that they were assigned before receiving CEIP services, and that control group members did not gain access to the CEIP treatment.

*CEIP office resources*. The CEIP office experienced some staffing constraints as the number of active participants increased during the recruitment period. Priority was given to activities related to sample intake, so recruitment was not compromised. However, some of the regular responsibilities of staff may have been postponed or become secondary activities during the heaviest intake period.

*Initial employability assessments*. Assessing employability as participants entered CEIP was more difficult than anticipated. The employability assessment tools that were used may have been able to recognize participants with the most serious deficits; however, many with less severe problems were difficult to identify. CEIP staff reported that in many cases participants with less serious concerns — yet who might still have benefited from job-readiness training — were not identified through the assessment itself.

*Defining employability*. Employability assessments may be better at measuring job readiness on a continuum rather than as a discrete indicator. Furthermore, the "threshold" of job readiness varies based on the individual, the underlying employability issues, and the job in question. In many cases, this creates difficulty in making an absolute determination. Many employability concerns did not become apparent until the participants were in work placements. In some cases, project sponsors raised concerns about participants with the

placement coordinator after assignments had begun. In other cases, participants themselves mentioned workplace or personal concerns to their participant managers, and these issues were best addressed with specific job-readiness training modules.

*Job-readiness training*. The assessment process may have been less successful than planned in linking employment deficits to the established list of job-readiness training modules. In many cases, specific training needs became clear to the participant managers and placement coordinator only after placements had begun and they were able to discuss concerns with participants and sponsors. As a result, the CEIP office provided up-front job-readiness training to a much wider group of participants than originally planned. Early in the enrolment phase, staff began providing job-readiness training to virtually all participants during the second week of the orientation period. The view of participant managers was that participants could benefit from job-readiness training modules even in the absence of identified behavioural or skill deficits. The extent to which the demand for training was a sponsor-, participant-, or staff-driven phenomenon will be explored further in subsequent implementation research.

*The project management information system*. The PMIS helped to maintain the integrity of the experiment by strictly controlling the initial intake of the sample and tracking the status of potential participants throughout the period of the CEIP offer. However, CEIP staff noted some system limitations that may have resulted in operational constraints. The introduction of the PMIS in a series of releases, rather than one functional application, may have contributed to some early implementation challenges. Specifically, two crucial aspects of participant management were not part of the initial PMIS release: the functionality for tracking participant time reports and for tracking training activities.

*The payment system*. For the most part, the participant payment system provided speedy and reliable payments to participants and was sufficiently flexible to cope with a variety of circumstances. However, the compliance of project sponsors with the requirement to submit prompt and accurate time reports for all participants has been more difficult to obtain than expected. Although the majority of sponsors submit timely and accurate reports, some are negligent in meeting these responsibilities.

*Project documentation*. Initial resource constraints and competing demands on the time of CEIP office staff may have contributed to lax monitoring of project sponsor obligations. During the early implementation, the primary focus of the majority of CEIP office staff was on outreach, intake, and participant orientation activities. Monitoring and follow-up with project sponsors was not conducted consistently in the early stages of the implementation of CEIP. In addition, difficulties in cross-platform compatibility meant that the planned integration of the PMIS and CEIP payroll functions never occurred. Ultimately, it was easier and more cost-effective to develop supplementary procedures rather than seek to integrate the systems. As a result, the overpayments and pay adjustment functionality in the PMIS was replaced with supplementary payroll systems. The higher-than-anticipated incidence of missing or delayed time reports and the need to develop supplementary payroll systems resulted in an unacceptably high number of participant files without complete documentation to fully support the payments that had been made. As a result, administrative practices were reviewed, which led to an increase in the number of administrative staff in the CEIP office and changes to some of the administrative procedures.

## PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS OF CEIP

The final chapter of this report provides space for the participants themselves to express some of their early thoughts about their experiences and expectations. These comments were obtained from a series of one-on-one interviews conducted with 28 participants approximately six months after they had enrolled in CEIP. For the most part, participants appear to have viewed their CEIP participation in a positive light. The employment stability offered by CEIP was a relief to many participants who were not accustomed to labour market security. The participants who were generally satisfied with their CEIP experiences at the time of the interviews tended to view CEIP as a stepping stone to future employment. These participants expected to enhance their future employability through program participation. Many believed that CEIP possibly afforded them an opportunity to learn new skills through on-the-job training and to enhance their social networks. In some cases, participants' expectations were not being met at the time of the interviews. However, those participants whose expectations had not yet been met believed that they would be met before their program eligibility period ended.

# Chapter 1:
# Introduction

This is the first report on the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP), a project conceived by Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and funded jointly by HRDC and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (NS-DCS). Officially started on January 1, 1999, CEIP is a long-term research and demonstration project testing an alternative form of income transfer payment for the unemployed in an area of chronic high unemployment.

Canada is a large country, and the regions that make it up are culturally and economically diverse. Regardless of the state of the "national economy," economic circumstances differ markedly from one part of the country to another. Moreover, contrary to the adage that "a rising tide lifts all boats," some regions seem to benefit little during buoyant economic times and fall even further behind during less prosperous ones. These local economies are characterized by long-term decline and chronic high unemployment. For the people who live there, the choice is often between accepting low and irregular incomes from the available employment and moving to regions where jobs are in greater supply.

A key element of Canada's social policy structure, and one that plays an important role in dealing with unemployment and income inadequacy, is the income security system, in particular the Employment Insurance (EI) and income assistance (IA) programs.[1] However, these programs are designed principally to provide income to people who are not working; they do little to support people in their efforts to obtain or retain employment.[2]

CEIP was designed to test an alternative form of payment to the unemployed. Eligible individuals are offered an opportunity to exchange their entitlements to EI or IA benefits for a "community wage" that is earned by working on projects developed and operated at the local level. Those who volunteer are able to take part in community-based projects for up to three years, which provides them with a significant period of stable, earned income and an opportunity to expand their networks of contacts, gain experience in a variety of settings, and acquire new skills.

An important feature of CEIP's design is the role given to local communities to set priorities for the needs that are addressed by CEIP-supported projects, to develop and implement projects to meet those needs, and to approve the specific projects to which CEIP participants are referred. The CEIP program model was developed with communities in mind

[1] A more comprehensive view of the income security system would include many other programs, such as the retirement income system (the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans and Old Age Security, including the Guaranteed Income Supplement and Survivor's Allowance), the Child Tax Benefit and National Child Benefit Supplement, Workers' Compensation, and special programs for veterans and persons with disabilities.

[2] Although the bulk of expenditures under these programs go to the provision of income support, there are some elements that are designed to facilitate labour market participation. The EI system currently includes a number of "employment benefits and support measures" (funded under Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*) that seek to facilitate the re-employment of EI beneficiaries. IA programs also include some features designed to encourage employment, such as disregarding small amounts of earnings in the calculation of the entitlement to IA payments and providing various forms of "transition benefits" (e.g. temporary retention of drug and dental insurance coverage and lump-sum payments to defray the initial costs — for example, clothing or tools — of starting a job).

that are experiencing long-term economic weakness — communities where adequate levels of employment have not been generated by the private and public sectors. CEIP hopes to assess the extent to which the "third sector" — or the "social economy" — can be an alternative source of work opportunities. CEIP also hopes that the activities that residents in the CEIP communities undertake in their efforts to generate project-based jobs will help build capacity and community resiliency and help make them better able to deal with the economic challenges they face.

The original idea for CEIP was developed by officials at HRDC; their goal was to help EI beneficiaries who had lost their jobs and were unable to become re-employed quickly. Project-based employment would offer an alternative activity during periods of unemployment. In subsequent discussions with NS-DCS, the concept was expanded to include the use of project-based work as a way of providing a route into the labour market for individuals in receipt of IA, many of whom were even more disadvantaged in their efforts to find and retain employment.

Although CEIP's designers saw community-based employment as a promising approach, there was considerable uncertainty about whether and how it would actually work. The effectiveness of the program model was unproven; various forms of job creation programming have been tried but few had been carefully evaluated. In any program that provides financial transfers, the costs at stake are potentially very high. The expenditures associated with a new initiative can be justified only if the benefits they produce outweigh the costs. Operationally, it was not even certain that communities would be able to generate appropriate projects or if the offer of community-based employment would be attractive to those for whom the program was intended.

Consequently, HRDC and NS-DCS decided to implement a test of the program model under real-world operating conditions and to evaluate it using the most rigorous evaluation methods available. Conducting CEIP as a demonstration project provides a means both to study implementation issues and to evaluate the program's effects on participating individuals and communities. The Cape Breton Regional Municipality — the principal industrial area of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia — was selected as the test site. This area has experienced a steady protracted erosion of its industrial base, which was founded on the steel and coal industries, and persistently high levels of unemployment.[3] The area also has a significant history of grassroots involvement in community development. The combination of a pressing need to find ways of coping with a growing problem of unemployment and the availability of people with experience of working at the community level makes industrial Cape Breton a suitable location in which to test CEIP's program model.

HRDC and NS-DCS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding that sets out the terms under which project costs will be shared and information will be made available and that establishes two committees — a Project Research Committee and a Project Implementation Committee — to oversee the progress of the project.[4] To conduct the detailed

[3]The decline in steel and coal production culminated in the final layoff of workers at the steel mill in June 2001 and the closure of the last operating colliery, the Prince Mine in Point Aconi, in November 2001.

[4]The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was effective January 1, 1999 and was initially signed on April 6, 1999. However, a provincial election was held later that year and, in order to reconfirm the commitment of the incoming government to the project, the MOU was re-signed by the new Nova Scotia Minister of Community Services on February 23, 2000.

design, implementation, operation, and evaluation of CEIP, HRDC entered into a Contribution Agreement, effective January 1, 1999, with the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), a non-profit social policy research organization.

CEIP has been set to try to answer a number of specific research questions related to whether there is a cost-effective way of providing transfer payments to unemployed workers that is linked both to work and to desirable community outcomes:

- Will the offer of a significant period of stable employment on a series of community-based projects be attractive to a significant number of unemployed workers?
- Will individuals acquire skills and work experience and develop stronger social networks that will improve their post-program labour market outcomes?
- Can communities in industrial Cape Breton generate worthwhile projects that will provide meaningful work opportunities for unemployed workers?
- Will the process of planning for and operating projects contribute to longer-run community development by building stronger social networks, adding to the communities' stock of social capital, and strengthening both the social economy and the market economy?
- Is this alternative program a cost-effective means of achieving the twin goals of increasing the employability of transfer recipients and contributing to the development of economically depressed communities?

To study CEIP's effects on individual participants, SRDC is using a random assignment evaluation design. Those who enrol in CEIP are divided at random into two groups: a program group whose members receive CEIP's offer of project-based employment and a control group whose members do not receive the CEIP offer (but who continue to be eligible to receive all other income transfers, programs, and services for which they otherwise qualify). This process of random assignment ensures that the two groups do not differ in any systematic way; the only difference is that one group can take part in CEIP's program and the other cannot. Therefore, any differences that emerge over time in the experiences of the two groups can be attributed with confidence to the CEIP program.

Of equal interest in the evaluation are CEIP's effects on the communities where it takes place. In this case, however, a randomized design is not possible.[5] A multiple-methods research design is being implemented that features both a "theory of change" approach and a quasi-experimental matched comparison community design.

CEIP is a major research endeavour that involves some 1,500 participants and will take nine years to complete. To assist in taking CEIP "off the drawing board" and implementing it "in the field," SRDC has built a consortium of organizations. Local CEIP program activities are conducted out of a central office located in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. Program delivery responsibilities are shared among four local firms and agencies: the Cape Breton YMCA, the Breton Business Center, Atlantic Coastal Action Program–Cape Breton, and Breton Rehab Services. CEIP's Project Management Information System was developed by the Halifax office of EDS Canada. Data collection responsibilities for the project are

[5]In theory, it would be possible to design an evaluation in which communities are randomly assigned to a program group in which CEIP would take place and a control group in which there would be no CEIP-related activities. In practice, however, the number of communities that would have to be involved makes such a design impractical.

being shared between Statistics Canada and the Institute for Social Research, York University. HRDC and NS-DCS provide ongoing advice and policy direction.

The purpose of this report is to provide a document of record for the implementation of CEIP. In addition to presenting a description of the program model and an overview of the evaluation strategy, the report provides detailed information about how the project was implemented, including an early assessment of some of the principal features of program delivery and operations. It also describes the sample of individuals who enrolled in the study. The information in this report not only provides a basis for replicating the program, but it also offers a useful context for interpreting the research findings that will be later produced by the project.

CEIP is a long-term study; the final chapters of its story will not be written until 2007. Over the life of the project, a series of reports will be issued to present CEIP's findings. Next year a more detailed analysis of CEIP's implementation analysis will be published, which will discuss how communities were engaged and how they took on their CEIP responsibilities, discuss how program services were delivered to participating individuals, and set out the lessons that emerge from the analysis of these processes. Late next year the first report of CEIP's impacts — both on the participating individuals and on their communities — will be published. These will be short-term results produced while CEIP's program is still operating. Later impact findings will be presented in a report planned for 2006, which will examine CEIP's effects shortly after the end of the program. CEIP's final report will include estimates of longer-term post-program impacts and will present the results of a benefit–cost analysis.

In this report, Chapter 2 gives the background to the development of the intervention being tested and Chapter 3 provides details on the actual program model that was developed and on the research design that will be used to evaluate it. Chapter 4 describes the process for selecting communities and provides an overview of how communities were engaged to take part in CEIP. Chapter 5 gives a detailed description of the process for selecting, recruiting, and enrolling individual participants, and Chapter 6 provides a descriptive analysis of the characteristics of the enrolled research sample. Participants' understanding of the CEIP offer is discussed in Chapter 7, together with a discussion of why some individuals chose not to take up the offer to participate. Chapter 8 describes the CEIP office and presents a step-by-step review of the activities that took place there. An initial assessment of early program operations is given in Chapter 9, and the report concludes, in Chapter 10, with feedback provided from some of the participants themselves, obtained from interviews conducted six months after their enrolment in CEIP.

# Chapter 2:
# Background and Theory

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the policy context within which the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) was developed and the theory that underlies the program model that was developed. It also sets out the rationale for implementing this new initiative as a demonstration project.

Interest in developing CEIP sprang from two main sources. The first was a desire to explore alternative approaches to making income transfer payments to unemployed individuals in high unemployment regions — particularly approaches that might enhance individuals' future employment prospects, while meeting their current need for income. The second area of interest was the potential for the social economy to provide employment in regions where jobs were in short supply, as well as the role that increases in the stock of social capital, both at the individual level and the community level, might play in enhancing individuals' employability and strengthening communities.

Canada has an extensive, long-standing, and well-developed income security system. Two key components of this system are the national program of Employment Insurance (EI) and provincial income assistance (IA) programs. CEIP is testing a program that could provide an alternative to some elements of these two programs.

## EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

Employment Insurance is a multi-billion-dollar program that provides temporary income transfers to the unemployed.[1] Human Resources Development Canada (2002b) reports that in fiscal year 2000/01 EI paid out $11.6 billion and processed 1,754,000 new claims for benefits (an additional 458,000 clients received assistance through the measures provided under Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act*). The original program of Unemployment Insurance (UI), which began in 1940, provided only limited insurance coverage to approximately 42 per cent of the labour force. Over the subsequent 30 years, however, the program grew substantially as successive governments increased benefits and extended eligibility for those benefits.[2] This period of expansion culminated in the 1971 *Unemployment Insurance Act*. By then, the policy balance of the program had shifted away from its original insurance principles — providing temporary earnings replacement during periods of unforeseen interruptions of employment — and toward the pursuit of income transfer objectives. Seasonal workers were covered, allowing workers to combine part-year employment with part-year benefit receipt on a regular basis. Workers needed substantially fewer weeks of employment to qualify for benefits and could receive them for longer periods. Furthermore, these provisions were made sensitive to local employment conditions. Workers in areas of

[1] A brief description of how Employment Insurance works is included in Appendix A.

[2] For a summary of the evolution of the unemployment insurance program, see Dingledine (1981) and Human Resources Development Canada (2002c).

high unemployment could qualify for UI with less work and could collect benefits for a longer time.

By the late 1970s, however, the policy stance was again shifting. Canada had been experiencing a secular upward trend in the unemployment rate. The cost of UI and the number of people who used the program repeatedly were rising, and there was growing concern over the disincentive effects of a generous UI program. This concern extended beyond Canada. There was growing interest internationally in trying to shift spending from so-called "passive" income support for the unemployed to more "active" re-employment strategies.[3]

The Canadian response was to gradually tighten the system, in particular by increasing the minimum amount of work needed to qualify for benefits. As well, provision was made to use unemployment insurance funds for purposes other than paying benefits to the unemployed who were between jobs and looking for work. The 1977 *Unemployment Insurance Act* allowed unemployment insurance funds to be spent on "developmental uses," which included paying benefits to unemployed individuals who were taking part in approved training courses or participating in job creation projects.

Nonetheless, at the beginning of the 1990s, Canada, by international standards, was still spending a relatively large proportion of its labour market program budget on income support.[4] Moreover, the unemployment insurance system had attained a vast scope and was affecting the lives and incomes of millions of Canadians each year. For example, in 1993 alone, 3.4 million Canadians received a total of $18.3 billion in unemployment insurance benefits (Human Resources Development Canada, 1994, pp. 17, 100).

In 1994 the federal government initiated a broad-based review of the income security system, which sought to bring about changes that would, among other things, integrate the federal unemployment insurance and provincial IA programs. This attempt was ultimately unsuccessful and the federal government chose instead to enact further reforms to unemployment insurance — an area where it had exclusive jurisdiction. The resulting legislation was the *Employment Insurance Act*, which came into force on July 1, 1996.

EI retained the basic benefit system but changed the distribution of benefits and the size of the benefits. Among other changes, benefits were increased for low-income families, decreased for repeat beneficiaries, and decreased for highly paid workers. In addition, EI continued, and expanded, the practice of using a portion of the funds for programs designed to help people get jobs. These elements, known as Employment Benefits and Support Measures (EBSMs), have come to represent a significant proportion of EI expenditures.[5] For example, in fiscal year 2001/02 expenditures on EBSMs amounted to $2.3 billion, 20 per cent of total EI spending in that year (Human Resources Development Canada, 2002b).

The national system of providing temporary earnings replacements to unemployed workers has changed frequently and will continue to evolve. From HRDC's perspective,

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[3] See, for example, the discussions in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1989, 1990).

[4] Canada was ranked in the top half of 23 OECD countries in terms of the percentage of GDP spent on labour market programs but among the bottom third in terms of spending directed to active labour market measures (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1990, pp. 52–53).

[5] Part II of the *Employment Insurance Act* makes provision for five Employment Benefits (Targeted Wage Subsidies, Targeted Earnings Supplements, Self-Employment, Job Creation Partnerships, and Skill Development) and three Support Measures (Employment Assistance Services, Labour Market Partnerships, and Research and Innovation).

CEIP, which is actually funded under one of the EBSMs established by the *Employment Insurance Act*,[6] is seen as way of generating evidence to guide future EI reform.

Providing temporary employment opportunities to unemployed individuals, especially those in receipt of EI benefits is not a new idea. The previously mentioned "developmental uses" provision included "the use of UI funds for job creation . . . because of the perception that many unemployed workers, unable to find employment, received UI benefits while community-oriented projects could not be carried out because of lack of funds. The legislation [the 1977 *Unemployment Insurance Act*] was to provide a chance for claimants to continue on UI while participating voluntarily in approved job-creation projects" (Human Resources Development Canada, 2002c). Moreover, one of the current EBSMs — Job Creation Partnerships — allows individuals to receive EI benefits while working on projects developed and operated by a wide range of organizations.[7] What is new in CEIP is the attempt to replicate more closely the characteristics of a "real job," the provision of work opportunities for a longer period of time than offered in other programs, the community-based approach to developing projects to provide the jobs, and a rigorous research design that will carefully evaluate the benefits and costs of a program like this.

## INCOME ASSISTANCE

Paralleling the changes in EI have been similar, and perhaps even more dramatic, changes in IA programs. In the words of the National Council of Welfare: "All in all, the 1990s were a period of constant change in provincial and territorial welfare programs. Welfare changed more in the last few years than it had in all the years since the start of the Canada Assistance Plan in 1966" (National Council of Welfare, 1997, p. 117).

Welfare programs were originally developed as a last-resort mechanism to provide temporary emergency assistance to those who were unemployable and had no other source of income. These programs continue to be the principal means-tested protection against poverty in Canada.[8] Until March 31, 1996, welfare was paid under the terms of the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), an arrangement that provided for costs to be shared between the federal government and the provinces and territories. Effective April 1, 1996, CAP was replaced by the Canada Health and Social Transfer, a block-funding arrangement whereby the federal government makes a contribution toward the combined cost of health, welfare, and post-secondary education.

The National Council of Welfare (1997) estimates that total welfare payments in Canada are in the order of $15 billion a year. The latest composite data available (as on March 31, 2001) show that 1.9 million Canadians were on welfare (National Council of Welfare, 2002).

Whereas most of the post-war period saw the gradual expansion of eligibility to benefits and the provision of more generous benefits, these trends have been in reverse over the past decade. Many factors are likely contributing to this shift. The industrial and occupational

[6]The ESBM under which CEIP is funded is the Research and Innovation support measure.

[7]Businesses, organizations, individuals, public health and educational institutions, municipal governments, band/tribal councils, and, in certain circumstances, provincial government departments and agencies can sponsor Job Creation Partnership projects.

[8]IA programs are administered by the provinces and territories; there is some variation in the design of these programs across the jurisdictions. An overview of the IA program in Nova Scotia is provided in Appendix B.

composition of employment has been changing in ways that have increased opportunities in jobs that have been traditional sources of employment for women, and this has been accompanied by a dramatic rise in the labour force participation rate of women. Demographic changes, especially the declining birthrate, have also facilitated greater labour market participation by women. Technological advances have increased the potential for members of some previously marginalized groups, such as persons with disabilities, to participate in the labour market. Paralleling these labour market developments have been changes in social attitudes about who should be entitled to unconditional income support and who should be expected to work.

The result has been a general trend toward "reforming welfare through work." Measures aimed at increasing participation in the labour market are seen as essential steps toward reducing welfare dependency and social exclusion as well as decreasing welfare caseloads and costs. Jurisdictions vary in the relative importance attached to incentives and sanctions and in the way resources are allocated to policing welfare rules and removing entitlements, on the one hand, and to providing programs and support services to facilitate a transition from welfare to work, on the other. However, overall, the notion of a means-tested entitlement (with benefits solely dependent on income) has been giving way to one of reciprocal obligation. Increasingly, the recipients of transfer payments are required to participate in some form of program designed to increase their probability of gaining employment and becoming self-supporting.

In Nova Scotia, coincident with the development of CEIP, the provincial government was also planning broader changes to the IA system. The new program, implemented on August 1, 2001, was governed by a new *Employment Support and Income Assistance Act* (replacing the *Family Benefits Act* and the *Social Assistance Act*). Changes included a modified IA rate structure and the introduction of an Integrated Child Benefit that brought together national and Nova Scotia child benefit payments. The new program also added a requirement for all IA recipients to have their employment readiness assessed and made "enhanced employment supports" available to facilitate transitions from welfare to work.[9] In introducing the changes, the Nova Scotia Minister of Community Services stated:

> *The new act emphasizes employment as the key to self-sufficiency. We are replacing a 30-year-old passive welfare system with one that recognizes that, with the right supports, Nova Scotians can free themselves and their families from a lifetime of dependence.* (Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, 2001b, p. 1)

The CEIP program model, in providing alternative employment opportunities for IA recipients, was seen as consistent with the heightened focus on employment inherent in the program changes that the provincial government was making.

[9]Enhanced employment supports included extended prescription drug coverage for up to 12 months after starting a job, reimbursement of up to $400 a month in child-care expenses and $150 a month in transportation costs, payment of a one-time "new start" allowance of $200 for part-time employment and $400 for full-time employment, a disregard of 30 per cent of net earnings from the calculation of IA benefit entitlement, a covering of the costs of some work-related items (work boots, uniforms, tools, and supplies), and an increase in the coverage of costs for employment-related training courses.

## THE SOCIAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

The second main contextual strand underpinning CEIP is a growing interest in the concepts of the social economy and social capital and in their links to employment. As Ninacs (2002) points out, the concept of the social economy is not new, but it has been undergoing some evolution (for example, from the "old" social economy, defined in terms of the structural aspects of the organizations — co-operatives, mutual societies — that make it up, to the "new" social economy defined in terms of "relational and sociological" aspects of organizations, their activities, and the people who make them up).

CEIP hopes to explore the potential of the social economy to serve as a source of employment in places where the private and public sectors have not produced a sufficient number of jobs. The availability of free labour from CEIP may lead to a stronger social economy; from CEIP's perspective, however, the main goal is to use activities in the social economy to provide work opportunities to the long-term unemployed.

Providing temporary jobs as a mechanism for enhancing longer-term employability is also not new, but recently this approach has been gaining more support. Johnson (1997) suggests that the notion of using public funds to create wage-paying jobs in the non-profit and public sectors for those who cannot otherwise find work is attracting renewed interest in the United States and describes Vermont's Community Service Employment Program and the New Hope project in Milwaukee as noteworthy examples of new initiatives. McGregor, Clark, Ferguson, and Scullion (1997) estimate that there are some 3,700 organizations operating in the social economy of lowland Scotland employing 42,000 people and that among the principal benefits of their activities is the creation of employment opportunities to facilitate the reintegration into society of people from disadvantaged groups. The Conference of Religious of Ireland (1998) reports on a pilot project that made paid part-time employment opportunities available to unemployed individuals on a voluntary basis doing work of "public or social value." And Borzaga (1999) describes the widespread use in Italy of "work integration social enterprises" that produce private goods and services, public goods, and social and community care services in order to create jobs for disadvantaged workers.

In CEIP, communities are encouraged to focus on the social economy; however, no particular definition of what constitutes the social economy is being imposed on them.[10] From the outset project designers have struggled to strike a balance between, on the one hand, establishing frameworks or guidelines to push the project in certain directions (for example, toward activities in the social economy) and, on the other hand, delegating responsibilities and decision-making authority to citizens at the local level (many of whom would prefer to direct resources to more traditional economic infrastructure building and the creation of private sector employment). In CEIP, the only benefit provided to projects is the availability of "free" workers; the provision of any other resources that may be needed is the responsibility of project sponsors. Consequently, the projects supported by CEIP are more

[10] At one point, consideration was given to requiring projects to be based on "social enterprises," perhaps emulating those in Quebec. This would have meant that only projects that had more precisely defined characteristics (e.g. non-profit businesses producing goods and services and having democratic organizational structures based on employee ownership) would be eligible for CEIP. This approach was not adopted since it would have placed more constraints on the choices that communities were able to make and would likely require much more in the way of a supporting infrastructure — such as is provided by the Chantier de l'économie sociale in Quebec. Social enterprises would also have taken much more time to develop and would likely have produced significantly fewer work opportunities for participating individuals (it is unlikely that 750 social enterprise jobs could have been developed within the time frame required by CEIP).

likely to be labour-intensive and to be sponsored by organizations with a history of and interest in supporting community betterment. Moreover, among the general guidelines established for eligible projects is a requirement that any profits be used for the benefit of the community and not for the private benefit of any smaller group of individuals.[11] This focus on community benefit necessarily steers community projects in the direction of social economy activities.

Ultimately, however, decisions regarding the nature of community projects to be included in CEIP are, for the most part, left to representatives of the communities themselves. To do otherwise would undermine CEIP's ability to foster community engagement. The literature on the effects of community engagement or grassroots organization on the communities in which they occur has a long history (Fisher, 1995). Nonetheless, there have been few attempts to carefully study the link between external efforts to stimulate such engagement and community development and the effects that are observed in the community. In a literature review of the effects of community projects in the social economy, Mathieu (1996) concludes that other studies have "generally not or only poorly developed the question of community organizations' social impact and its relationship to development" (p. 89, translation from French).

CEIP is also exploring the concept of social capital and the potential for a community-based jobs program to support its creation. There are some links, conceptually, between the concepts of the social economy and social capital, especially in terms of the potential role of "associational activity." Some researchers have considered the effects on individuals and their communities of associational activity — participation in informal and semi-formal organizations and networks, such as fraternal organizations, service clubs, community associations, protest and pressure groups, the Church, and — famously, thanks to Putnam (2000) — bowling in organized leagues. For example, a study of neighbourhood associations in the United States (Berry, Portney, & Thomson, 1993) reviewed by Smock (1997) concluded that there was "a strong and positive relationship between level of participation and sense of community." Community empowerment through engagement with initiatives has also been associated with positive changes in neighbourhood self-image (Eisen, 1994; quoted in same source). So some benefits to social cohesion have been associated with neighbourhood organizing.

There is also some support in the literature for the notion that associational activity can have effects on economic outcomes — principally through its effects on helping to build social capital. Putnam (1993, 2000) uses a definition of social capital that is manifested as trust and norms of civic-minded behaviour, and he argues that it is essential to a society's economic progress. He further argues that a decline in social capital may have deleterious economic consequences. Knack and Keefer (1997) also offer evidence that trust and civic norms have a significant relationship with economic performance, although here the findings suggest that this is not related to (and, therefore, not mediated by) associational activity.

An alternative, and more precise, definition of social capital describes it as being "made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital . . . " and as "the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of

[11]The project guidelines are discussed in Chapter 4.

mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 243, 248). CEIP is using this concept of social capital, which focuses on the *networks* that individuals have (Johnson, 2003). Social capital is accessed through the social network of which the person is a part. If a person's network contains only *bonding* ties (to family and close friends) or *bridging* ties to more distant friends and associates of similar socio-economic status, then the social capital within the network is likely to be of less use in generating social and economic change than if there was a vertical dimension to the network. Vertical *linkages* in the network to people of higher status (or with broader networks) would give the person capacity to leverage resources, ideas, and information that can help change their fortunes. CEIP is intended to expand the *linking social capital* of this type that is accessible to community residents and individual participants.

The mechanism in CEIP that potentially alters the social capital accessible by participants is the succession of assignments to community-based projects. These should expand the networks participants are part of by bringing them into contact with a broad range of people (project sponsors, other participants, training organizations). The mechanisms that potentially alter the social capital accessible by community residents are the process of community organization (meetings, canvassing, volunteering for boards or project-sponsoring agencies) and the products of community projects (the delivery of new services like daycare or seniors' centres that bring diverse groups of people together).

## WHY CEIP MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Within this policy context, CEIP has been implemented to test an alternative form of income transfer — one that takes the form of a wage paid for working on locally developed, community-based projects. Why might such an approach provide beneficial effects?

First, for the individual participants who take part, CEIP may enhance their employability, leading to more employment and increased earnings and income in the future. Working on community-based projects offers them an opportunity to gain experience and acquire new skills. For some participants, the CEIP offer of three years of project activity may well provide the longest period of continuous employment they have had. CEIP will allow them to develop a portfolio of project-related experiences and accomplishments that they will be able to use subsequently in job search to demonstrate their job readiness and capabilities to potential employers. For those whose existing skills have not enabled them previously to secure and retain employment, this on-the-job skill building may serve as an alternative to more formal skills training. In addition to adding to "human capital," CEIP may also contribute to individuals' social capital. Participants who work together may develop stronger peer support networks. Project participation also brings participants into contact with both project-sponsoring organizations and with those who benefit from the activities undertaken by the projects. This gives participants a chance to develop stronger social networks both within and outside their immediate local community; and stronger networks can provide individuals with more support in times of difficulty and help open doors to employment and other opportunities.

Second, for the communities involved in CEIP, there may be a positive contribution to community development. In taking up the opportunity offered by CEIP, the processes by which citizens communicate and interact with each other — how they are engaged in the

setting of priorities for action and in the identification and mobilization of community assets — has the potential to strengthen local social networks. It may also engage new players and broaden the base of individuals who are willing to participate in community-led activities; and, in taking on these responsibilities, some of the new players will develop new skills. Over the longer run, this may enhance a community's capacity to overcome adversity and create opportunities. In addition, the projects that are approved to take place in each community can directly provide value to the community. The products or services that are provided will be focused on meeting priority needs that have been identified at the local level. The availability of CEIP participants, or the services provided by organizations employing them, may strengthen existing institutions or create new ones.

Finally, for governments, the CEIP model may provide a cost-effective alternative to traditional transfer payments. Social benefits will accrue as a result of the activities undertaken by participants. Moreover, if CEIP participation does enhance employability, there could be a decrease in the amount of income support that needs to be provided in the future.

## RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Formally, the following set of research hypotheses has been developed for the Community Employment Innovation Project.

The overarching research question is as follows:

> *Is there a cost-effective way of providing transfer payments to unemployed workers that is linked both to work and to desirable community outcomes?*

Because this broad question actually has several questions embedded within it, the research hypotheses for the experiment have been divided into those concerning individual outcomes, community outcomes, and the cost-effectiveness of the program.

Two hypotheses concern individual outcomes:

> *An offer of a significant period of stable employment on a series of community-based projects will be accepted by a significant number of unemployed workers.*
>
> *By taking part in community-based projects, individuals will acquire skills and work experience and will develop stronger social networks, which will improve their post-program labour market outcomes, increasing their employment and income and reducing their receipt of EI benefits and IA payments.*

Two hypotheses concern community outcomes:

> *Communities in industrial Cape Breton can generate worthwhile projects that will provide meaningful work opportunities for unemployed workers.*
>
> *Planning for and operating these projects, using a range of community resources, will contribute to longer-run community development by building stronger social networks, adding to the communities' stock of social capital, and strengthening both the social economy and the market economy.*

The final hypothesis to be tested relates to the cost-effectiveness of the program:

> *Based on a benefit–cost analysis, the experimental program will be a cost-effective means of achieving the twin goals of increasing the employability of transfer recipients and contributing to the development of economically depressed communities.*

## WHY A TEST IS NEEDED

There is reason to believe that providing opportunities for unemployed workers to work on projects generated in their communities can produce benefits to both the individuals and to the communities. However, there are also reasons to approach this idea with caution. A program that provides income transfers, especially for a lengthy period of time, will be expensive. It is important to determine the extent to which savings in other transfer payments will offset the community wages paid out by CEIP, and an even more important question is whether the benefits generated by the program are worth the cost of producing them.

It is not certain that all the assumptions underpinning the CEIP program model will hold. For example, the offer of a community wage payment may not provide sufficient inducement to convince eligible individuals to give up other activities that they might undertake during periods of labour market inactivity. Or employers may not place much value on the experiences that participants acquire on community-based projects and, consequently, the future employability of those who take part in CEIP may not be enhanced.

It is also important to determine whether the program has unintended effects. For example, involving unemployed workers in community projects may cause them to miss out on jobs that they might have found if they had instead concentrated on job-search activities. The availability of project-based employment might also lead them to reduce their participation in further education and training and, over the longer run, decrease their probability of obtaining better-paid employment. At the community level, too much time and energy might go into developing and operating projects that are designed to take advantage of the available CEIP participants but which may not be best able to foster local development over the longer run.

For these reasons and others, it is important that CEIP's program model be tested before considering it for wider application. CEIP is, first and foremost, a research project. Ultimately its findings, positive and negative, will provide valuable evidence to guide future policy and program development. Much is at stake in terms of both potential cost and the potential effects on individuals and communities. Therefore, CEIP has been implemented as a demonstration project using a random assignment evaluation design. A demonstration project provides a way to study how the program operates in a real-world setting, and using random assignment is widely accepted as the most reliable way to estimate a program's impacts. The detailed project design — both the program to be evaluated and the research strategy to evaluate it — is the subject of the next chapter.

# Chapter 3:
# The CEIP Design

This chapter provides a more detailed description of the program being tested in the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) — first in terms of the features of the program being offered to eligible individuals, second in terms of the role played by participating communities. The chapter then describes the evaluation strategy that is being used to assess the effects of the program both on individuals and on their communities.

## THE OFFER TO INDIVIDUALS

The core of the CEIP offer is the chance for eligible individuals to exchange their existing entitlements to Employment Insurance (EI) or income assistance (IA) benefits for the opportunity to work on projects that have been developed and approved by participating communities. Insofar as possible, participants are assigned to projects that match their skills, interest, and aptitudes and that take place in, or close to, their home communities. Realistically, however, this is not always possible, and participants must accept the work assignments that are available. Over the course of their participation in CEIP, it is expected that each participant will take part in a number of projects in order to accumulate a diversity of experiences and make a range of contacts.

In return for working on these projects (or engaging in other CEIP-eligible activities), those who take part in CEIP's program receive a "community wage" (plus certain employment-related benefits). Community wages can be earned for up to three years. In many respects (but not all), CEIP employment has been designed to replicate a "real job." Participants are paid a weekly "community wage." This wage is a fixed amount; however, it is indexed to changes in the Nova Scotia provincial minimum wage. When participant selection for CEIP began in May 2000, the wage was set at $280 a week (or $8 an hour for the required 35 hours a week of participation).[1] To reflect subsequent increases in the minimum wage, the weekly community wage was increased to $290 effective October 1, 2000, to $295 effective October 1, 2001, and to $300 effective October 1, 2002.

The Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (CCRA) has ruled that paid participation in CEIP constitutes employment that is insurable under the EI program and is covered by the Canada Pension Plan (CPP).[2] To further replicate the characteristics of a job, CEIP participants accumulate an entitlement to "personal days," which can be taken as paid vacation or sick days. Participants are also not required to be available on (but are paid for) statutory holidays. CEIP also pays premiums to provide participants with coverage under the Nova Scotia Workers' Compensation program, and participants are able, on a voluntary

[1] The community wage was initially set at a level that was approximately equal to the average weekly amount of EI benefits paid at the time CEIP was launched to EI beneficiaries in Human Resources Development Canada's three Human Resources Centres of Canada that service the area from which CEIP participants are drawn.

[2] The original program design did not call for CEIP participation to be considered EI-insurable or CPP-pensionable employment; this aspect of the program was a subject of some criticism in the course of community consultations. Subsequent discussions with CCRA resulted in the status of the employment being changed to allow EI and CPP coverage.

basis, to enrol in a private health plan, the premiums of which are shared between CEIP and the participants who opt for coverage.

The offer that CEIP made to those who were assigned to the CEIP program group was time-limited. Program group members had up to five weeks to attend an orientation session, at which they were required to sign a Project Participation Agreement. Failure to attend within this time limit meant that eligibility was lost. Those who signed up were scheduled to start active paid participation on the Monday of the week following their orientation session.

Once they begin CEIP, program group members are required to be available to take part in approved project activities, as assigned by the CEIP project office, for 35 hours per week. Participants are not required to work outside the "normal working hours" established for CEIP. These hours are between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday to Friday.[3] Participants are permitted to take approved absences from participation — either with pay if they have sufficient accumulated personal days or without pay if they do not. Participants who work less than 35 hours in any week have their weekly wages for that week decreased; the reduction is proportional to the shortfall in hours.

CEIP offers each member of the program group three years of participation. Within this eligibility period, participants are free to leave CEIP (for example, to take a job or to attend education or training) and then return to CEIP. There is no limit on the number of interruptions of participation. However, the opportunity to exchange EI or IA benefits for the community wage is a one-time offer. If, after starting CEIP, a participant returns to regular EI benefits or to basic IA benefits, eligibility for further CEIP participation is forfeited.[4]

In addition to the principal CEIP activity of working on community-based projects, a number of ancillary activities have been built into the program model. In addition to community jobs, the package of approved CEIP activities includes the following:

- Employment in "transitional jobs"
- Self-directed projects
- Employability assessment
- Basic job-readiness training
- Transferable skills training
- Portfolio building
- Job search

Each of these elements is discussed further below.

[3]The nature of some community projects requires work to be done in the evening or on weekends. Participants who accept assignment to those projects voluntarily choose to work these hours as part of their 35 hours per week.

[4]"Returning to EI" means collecting regular EI benefits. Identifying a "return to IA" is not so straightforward. CEIP participants may qualify for IA top-up payments to their CEIP community wages or to their earnings while on an approved absence from CEIP. Consequently, CEIP eligibility is lost only if a participant resorts to basic IA benefits as his or her principal source of income (i.e. such benefits account for more than half of the participant's total income).

## Employment in "Transitional Jobs"

A limited number of "transitional jobs" projects have been developed by one of CEIP's local delivery partners — the Atlantic Coastal Action Plan–Cape Breton. These projects have been developed to deal with two situations. First, there will be times when a participant is "between assignments"; work on one community project has ended and an assignment to another community project is not yet available. Second, some participants may be assessed as not yet "job ready," either as a result of an initial employability assessment or as a result of issues that are identified in the course of working on community projects. In both of these circumstances, participants are assigned to a transitional jobs project, awaiting either the availability of a new community project placement or a determination that the participant has become ready, perhaps following a period of basic job-readiness training, for assignment to a community project.

## Self-Directed Projects

The vast majority of community projects are sponsored by local organizations. However, individual CEIP participants or groups of participants are given the opportunity, if they choose to do so, to develop their own ideas for projects.[5] Participants who choose to pursue this option must first complete a one-week entrepreneurship training course (one of the transferable skills training courses, discussed further below). They are then allowed to spend up to 11 weeks in the resource centre in the CEIP office planning and developing their project proposals. A resource person is also available one day a week during this period to provide advice and encouragement as work on the plans proceeds. Participants who wish to work on self-directed projects must follow the same proposal submission and approval process as any other prospective sponsor of a community-based project.

## Employability Assessment

The initial two weeks of CEIP participation consists of an orientation period, which takes place in the CEIP office.[6] During the first week of orientation an employability assessment is conducted, which has two main purposes. First, it provides an opportunity to assess the job readiness of individuals. Most project sponsors are non-profit organizations that rely on volunteers and have limited supervisory capacity. It would be inappropriate to assign to these organizations participants who require considerable direction and careful supervision. Based on the employability assessment, a participant may be required to attend one or more basic job-readiness training modules or spend a period of time on a transitional jobs project prior to being assigned to a community project. Second, the employability assessment collects information on a participant's skills, aptitudes, interests, and work experiences, which can aid in matching the participant with available community project placements.

[5] Although this option is available, very few participants have chosen to pursue it and none of them has proceeded to the point of submitting a proposal for a self-directed project to a community board.

[6] When CEIP was initially launched, orientation lasted one week. In January 2002 it was expanded to two weeks to allow some elements of job-readiness and generic skills training to be provided prior to the first work assignment. Those who received only a one-week orientation were subsequently brought into the CEIP office for a second week, which consisted mainly of participating in job-readiness and transferable skills training modules, to ensure that all participants had an equal opportunity to receive the training.

### Basic Job-Readiness Training

A modularized job-readiness training program is made available to participants; many of those selected from the IA rolls have little prior work experience. An initial period of basic job-readiness training is provided to all participants during the second week of orientation. In addition, those whose employability assessment identifies specific needs or who experience performance problems while on project assignments are able to take additional modules as a remedial measure. Participants may also choose to take part in Christopher leadership training, a motivational program offered in nine sessions (a half day a week for nine weeks) to build self-confidence and self-esteem as well as public-speaking skills.

### Transferable Skills Training

CEIP is testing community project-based employment and the informal skill-building and work experiences that such employment can provide. CEIP is not a training intervention; nonetheless, some training is provided. This training is not occupation- or industry-specific and the amount of training is limited. The CEIP office arranges the following courses, which each CEIP participant attends during the three-year period of participation:[7]

- Computer literacy — introduction to computers offered as either a two-week (for absolute beginners) or a one-week program
- First aid / CPR — a two-day program
- Occupational safety and health — a half-day session
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System — a half-day session
- Customer service — a two-day course
- Entrepreneurship training — a one-week course

In addition, a project sponsor is permitted to provide or arrange for up to 15 hours of formal training for a participant, where the nature of the project requires such training.

### Portfolio Building

Participant managers in the CEIP office assist participants in developing portfolios that can be used in subsequent job search. Portfolios contain a summary of the work experiences accumulated over the three years of participation, letters of recommendation from project sponsors and others in the community who have benefited from participants' contributions, and certificates from the various training courses completed while taking part in CEIP.

### Job Search

Prior to the end of their three-year eligibility period, participants will be permitted (and encouraged) to engage in active job search. To assist them in their job search, participants will be allowed to take up to seven hours off each week during the final three months

[7] With the exception of computer training (which can be scheduled anytime during the three-year period of participation) and entrepreneurship training (which is offered only to those who wish to pursue the option of developing a self-directed project), these training courses are typically put on during the second week of orientation.

of their CEIP participation to look for work and to attend interviews.[8] This job search is considered an approved CEIP activity and will count toward meeting the weekly time commitment of 35 hours that is necessary to qualify for a full community wage payment.

## THE ROLE OF COMMUNITIES

In the CEIP program model, individual participants are given the opportunity to take part in employment. However, responsibility for generating that employment rests with the communities that take part. The role played by a community has two main aspects — the creation of a democratic structure to make decisions regarding the use of CEIP and the sponsoring of specific projects within the community to employ individual participants. This approach has been adopted to provide a test of whether positive impacts can be produced not just for individual participants, but also for the communities as well.

The offer to communities has three main elements:

- access to CEIP program group members to work on local projects
- a $30,000 planning grant
- access to technical assistance

Communities are offered the chance to be the beneficiaries of up to 2,250 person years of "free labour."[9] It is up to the communities to decide how these workers will be used. The potential exists for communities to be positively affected both by the *process* of planning for and operating the projects to employ the CEIP participants and by the benefits provided by the *products* of those projects. To maximize the likelihood that positive effects do occur, a number of critical tasks have been assigned to the communities:

- Members of the community have to discuss the merits of CEIP and agree to participate.
- The community has to organize a democratic structure to represent its interests with respect to CEIP and to make decisions regarding the use of CEIP workers.
- The community has to develop a strategic plan for how CEIP-supported projects can be used most effectively and set priorities for the kinds of projects to be supported.
- The community has to plan and select the specific projects to which CEIP participants will be referred and then has to operate these projects, including supervising the CEIP participants assigned to them.
- The community needs to identify and access resources to complement the workforce provided by CEIP.
- The community should assess, on an ongoing basis, the extent to which specific projects are meeting the expectations it had for them.

[8]The original program design called for more extensive job-search assistance to reduce the possibility that those participants who were giving up a period of EI-supported job search in order to take part in CEIP would be made worse off by their choice. However, the situation was changed by the decision to make CEIP employment insurable for EI purposes. Participants will be entitled to receive EI benefits if they do not have alternative employment to go to when their eligibility for the CEIP program ends.

[9]CEIP's design calls for 1,500 individuals to be enrolled, 750 of whom are to be assigned to the program group. Each program group member can work on projects for a maximum of three years. In practice, however, participants spend part of their time on activities other than project-based employment, and not all participants will participate in CEIP for the full three years.

The first four tasks are required by the process (discussed in Chapter 4) that communities have to follow if they are to actively engage in CEIP. The final two tasks are activities that are expected to occur at the community level; however, communities may vary in the extent to which they actually take on these tasks.

CEIP is based on the assumption that the availability of workers will serve as a catalyst for community action. However, the project design recognizes that communities will differ in their capacities to undertake these tasks. Therefore, each participating community can receive a planning grant of up to $30,000 to defray some of the direct costs associated with engaging in CEIP activities at the local level.[10] In addition, the CEIP budget includes funding to hire and make available to communities expertise to support them in undertaking CEIP-related tasks (for example, setting up and running volunteer organizations, marketing and communications, community mobilizing, strategic planning).

Engaging members of the communities effectively in fulfilling the role set out for them is critical to CEIP's ability to provide a reasonable test of the program model. Local level responsibility for decision making will help ensure that members of the community are engaged in activities that have the potential to enhance their skills or strengthen their networks — to increase the stock of social capital available to the communities and the people who live in them. It also helps ensure that project activities are focused on what are generally perceived to be important local needs, thereby increasing the probability that projects will generate benefits to the community.

For at least a century, community engagement has been promoted as a means of participating in democracy, taking part in extra-political activity, building community, securing resources, and achieving collective goals. Each of these elements will be valuable in CEIP. For Cape Breton, it is particularly important that the communities feel that they have been given the power to affect their future, at a time when many may feel powerless in the face of the external forces that are acting to change their communities' economic fortunes.

Although social capital is a resource that CEIP hopes to nurture and make use of, there is relatively little knowledge of how to generate it. As Brown (1996) observes in her review of comprehensive community initiatives: "While recent research supports the importance of social capital for a well-functioning neighborhood, there is almost no knowledge about the way to increase this potential asset in a distressed neighborhood" (p. 168).

The CEIP evaluation study hopes to make a contribution to filling this gap in the knowledge base.

## THE EVALUATION DESIGN

CEIP's evaluation design comprises four main components:

- implementation research
- an individual impact study

[10]The community boards receive the grants in instalments of $5,000. When the project started, the maximum amount that each board could receive was set at $25,000. However, some community boards experienced higher levels of expenditures than others and requested that the funds available to them be increased. In September 2002 HRDC agreed that the maximum amount could be raised to $30,000.

- a community effects study
- a benefit–cost analysis

### Implementation Research

In CEIP, implementation research has two main goals. First, it provides a document of record for the experiment and demonstrates that the CEIP program model received a fair test. To do so, research is conducted to carefully document the program as implemented and compare how closely it matches the intended program model. If the implemented program differs markedly from the design, then it can be argued that the intended program has not been tested. In addition, whatever the eventual constituents of the program, there needs to be information on the actual services delivered that will help explain the individual and community outcomes.

A "fair test" of the CEIP program also requires that potential participants be provided with sufficient information to make an informed choice between the programs and services they are currently receiving and CEIP's offer of community-based employment. It must be demonstrated that the information provided to participants accurately reflected the nature of the program offer and that participants understood what was being offered to them.

The second goal of implementation research is to study what transpires in implementing the project and in administering the program model being tested. This includes an analysis of the approaches used, the problems encountered, the corrective measures taken, and any changes in either the program or the program's setting. The operational information that is obtained — the descriptive analysis of *how* the program was organized and delivered — can help inform the interpretation of the subsequent impact results. Whereas an impact study is designed to determine *whether* the program worked, implementation research aims to answer the question of *why* the program worked (or failed to work).

In the short run, the analysis of implementation issues can provide "formative" information to program staff to allow adjustments to be made to fine-tune the program. Then, as implementation proceeds, analysis can draw out lessons on effective practice — what appeared to work well and what not so well. This element of implementation research is particularly important in CEIP, since this program not only involves a traditional form of service delivery to individual participants, but it also involves an extensive, and essentially exploratory, process of community engagement. Later on, linking the findings from implementation research to those from the impact study can provide a basis for making changes to the program designed to improve its effectiveness prior to implementation elsewhere.

Implementation research primarily takes the form of descriptive analysis using data collected by means of a number of research techniques, including field observations, interviews, focus groups, surveys, and document reviews. Findings from the initial phase of implementation research are discussed in this report. This analysis is still continuing, however, and additional results, particularly those dealing with working with communities and activities related to the matching of individuals and project placements, will be presented in an analytical report to be published next year.

## The Evaluation of Individual Impacts

The goal of the individual impact analysis is to measure the changes in outcomes that CEIP produces for the individuals who take part. The key outcomes to be examined in this analysis are employment, earnings, income, and the amounts and duration of receipt of EI and IA benefits. The methodology being used to conduct the analysis is a random assignment evaluation design.

People leave the IA rolls or stop receiving EI benefits all the time, sometimes to take jobs, sometimes for other reasons. These changes occur as a result of their own efforts, either unaided or with the assistance of existing programs and services. In isolation, simply looking at the outcomes of those who take part in a program, such as the one offered by CEIP, will almost always overstate the program's achievements because all positive developments are attributed to the program — they do not identify the extent to which the observed outcomes simply reflect what people would have done on their own. The challenge in an impact evaluation is to determine the difference that the program makes — the changes in outcomes that result from the program.

The difference between the observed outcome of program participants and what the outcome would have been without the program is called an *impact*. The measure of what the outcome would have been in the absence of the program is called the *counterfactual*. Most commonly, a counterfactual is created by identifying a *comparison group* that resembles as closely as possible the group that takes part in the program. It is generally accepted that the best method of creating a comparison group is by means of random assignment. Starting with a group of individuals, all of whom meet the selection criteria for the program to be tested, each individual is assigned at random either to a group that will be eligible to take part in the program or to a group that will not be eligible. Those assigned to the latter group provide the comparison for evaluation purposes; and when random assignment is used, the comparison group is referred to as a *control group*.

The process of random assignment ensures that there are no systematic pre-existing differences between the program and control groups.[11] They differ only in that one group is eligible for the program and the other is not. Therefore, any differences that are observed over time in the experiences of the two groups can be attributed with confidence to the program.

Not only does random assignment produce the best possible comparison group, but it is also the fairest way of allocating places in the program. In CEIP, as in many programs, there is a limit on the number of participants who can be accommodated. Random assignment means that all those who are eligible have an equal chance of receiving an offer to take part in the program.

The CEIP research design called for the recruitment of a sample of 1,500 volunteers in two subsamples: 1,000 EI beneficiaries and 500 IA recipients.[12] Half of each subsample was to be assigned to the program group and half to the control group (so that each group would contain approximately 500 EI beneficiaries and 250 IA recipients). Data on employment,

[11] Strictly speaking, the *expected values* of the averages for all pre-existing characteristics of the program group and the control group are the same, although their *actual values* may differ somewhat, especially in small samples. Random assignment ensures that the two groups will not differ systematically, but it does not guarantee that they will be identical. Random differences can still occur; they do not bias the impact estimates, but they do reduce the precision of the estimates. Data on the characteristics of the sample can be collected just prior to random assignment and can be used subsequently in regression models to improve the precision of the estimates. See, for example, Mohr (1995) and Orr (1999).

[12] Details on the recruitment process and the number of participants recruited are provided in Chapter 6.

earnings, income, EI receipt, and IA receipt is being collected on members of both groups over time. Differences in the mean outcomes between the program and control groups provide unbiased estimates of the impacts of the program. For the CEIP evaluation, impacts will be estimated separately for the EI and IA subsamples.[13] So, for example, if the employment rate among former EI beneficiaries one year after leaving CEIP is 75 per cent and the employment rate among the control group of former EI beneficiaries is 60 per cent, then CEIP will have had a positive impact of 15 percentage points on the employment rate of this group. Similarly, if during the year following CEIP completion, program group members who had been selected from the IA rolls were found to have received an average of $7,500 in IA benefits and those in the control group had received an average of $10,000 in benefits, then CEIP would have produced a reduction of $2,500 in average IA payments to this group.

In deriving these estimates, it is important to remember that no evaluation can measure the exact impact of a program. What a well-designed experiment *can* do is determine, with a known degree of confidence, whether the program has an impact (i.e. the impact is non-zero). It can also provide an unbiased estimate of what the impact is and specify a confidence interval around that estimate within which the true impact lies.

With a large enough sample, almost any effect, no matter how small, can be detected. However, large samples are costly, and very small effects are unlikely to be important to those who have to decide whether to act on the results. Therefore, the goal is to enrol a sample that is large enough to detect *relevant* effects. In making that determination, researchers rely on the concept of *minimum detectable effect* — the smallest true impact that can be found to be statistically significantly different from zero.[14] Small minimum detectable effects (from large samples) give the evaluator confidence that even if the program produces relatively small impacts, they will be detected. Large minimum detectable effects (from small samples) mean that the impacts produced by the program will need to be large in order for the project to have a good chance of detecting them.

There is no precise method of determining what size of effect an evaluation study should be set up to detect. Ultimately, judgment must be exercised in making the trade-off between the power of an experimental design to detect impacts and the cost of conducting the study.

In CEIP, the sample is made up of 1,000 EI beneficiaries and 500 IA recipients, and the intention is to analyze these two subsamples separately.[15] The size of the EI subsample will likely permit impacts to be detected that are in the order of an eight percentage point increase in the employment rate and a reduction of $76 in the monthly amount of EI benefits received. With the smaller IA sample, the minimum detectable effects will be larger, in the order of an

[13]Using random assignment makes it possible to obtain valid impact estimates for any subgroups defined in terms of their characteristics at the point of random assignment. Therefore, in theory, it would be possible to estimate the program's impacts on people in various age groups or with different education or occupational backgrounds. However, unless the program impacts are very large, it is unlikely that they will be detected with the relatively small sample sizes in these subgroups.

[14]See Bloom (1995).

[15]Participants recruited from the two sources differ in some important characteristics (see Chapter 6) and in the alternative program entitlements that they are foregoing to take part in CEIP. In addition, Human Resources Development Canada is mainly interested in the effects on former EI beneficiaries, while the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services is more interested in IA recipients.

11 percentage point increase in the employment rate and a reduction of $86 in the monthly amount of IA benefits received.[16]

The individual impact analysis will be based on data drawn from three data sources:

1. A baseline survey conducted as part of the CEIP enrolment process provides background information about sample members and will be used to describe those who are taking part in the study.[17] Data collected at baseline will also be used to define possible subgroups for impact analysis, to provide tracking information to help locate sample members for follow-up surveys, and to provide covariates for a regression model to improve the statistical precision of the impact estimates.
2. Follow-up surveys of program and control group members will be conducted 18, 40, and 54 months after random assignment. These surveys will be the key source of data on the labour market experiences of those in the study and will provide the basis for measuring impacts on future employment, earnings, and income. The 18-month follow-up survey will allow estimates of "in-program" impacts — CEIP's effects at the point where program group members are about half way through their period of eligibility — to be calculated. The 40-month follow-up survey will provide a basis for estimating impacts just after the point at which program members have lost eligibility for further participation. Finally, the 54-month follow-up survey will reveal the longer-term, post-program effects of CEIP.
3. EI and IA administrative records will be used to determine the amounts and timing and EI and IA benefits received by sample members both during and after participating in CEIP. Federal tax records may also provide information about future earnings; however, the time lags involved in accessing tax data may make them of limited use in the short run.

## The Community Effects Study

Capturing the range of potential community effects will be a challenging exercise. CEIP is using a multiple-methods research design that relies heavily on both a "theory of change" approach and a quasi-experimental comparison community design.

The theory of change approach — as described by Weiss (1995) and as operationalized by Connell and Kubisch (1998) — requires evaluators to lay out the explicit or implicit theories about why a program should or should not work. All the assumptions built into the program have to be specified in detail. Methods for data collection and analysis are then constructed to track the unfolding of assumptions and to show where assumptions break down and which theories the evidence best supports.

In the absence of random assignment of communities to provide a counterfactual, theory-driven evaluation can provide a means of validating study findings. As evidence supporting

[16] See Appendix C for more information on the minimum detectable effects analysis. Ultimately, calculation of the impact estimates will be based on data from the retained sample, not the enrolled sample. Over time, some sample members will be lost; for example, some may choose to withdraw from the study, others may not be traceable when it comes time to administer the follow-up surveys. Depending on the extent of sample attrition, the minimum detectable effects will actually be somewhat larger than those indicated here.

[17] The characteristics of the sample are described in Chapter 6.

each micro-step linking theory to outcome is found, the underlying theory is validated. As Connell and Kubisch (1998) explain:

> *A theory of change approach would seek agreement from all stakeholders that, for example, activities $A_1$, $A_2$, and $A_3$, if properly implemented (and with the ongoing presence of contextual factors $X_1$, $X_2$, and $X_3$), should lead to outcomes $O_1$, $O_2$, and $O_3$; and, if these activities, contextual supports, and outcomes all occur more or less as expected, the outcomes will be attributable to the intervention. Although this strategy cannot eliminate all alternative explanations for a particular outcome, it aligns the major actors in the initiative with a standard of evidence that will be convincing to them.* (p. 18)

A significant problem, however, is that community-based initiatives are complex and involve the interactions of multiple partners at different levels. It is very difficult to specify a fully developed set of expectations about how a program will work. However, Weiss (1995) argues that even if fine-grained theories of change cannot be spelled out, certain assumptions and hypotheses underlying the larger endeavour can be identified. Essentially the question becomes: What signs are there that this community has improved along the general lines that have been hypothesized?

The following table (Table 3.1) provides an overview of an initial theory of change for CEIP. It specifies not only the ultimate outcomes that are expected, but also some of the steps along the way. These early and intermediate outcomes should be observed as the demonstration proceeds, and in advance of the longer-term outcomes. The multiple levels at which the initiative is expected to work within the community are reflected in the rows describing what is expected.

Table 3.1 presents only a brief overview of the underlying theory and the progression of expected outcomes. It starts with a mapping of the resources potentially made available by CEIP. The principal new inputs — free labour and the community planning grant — are being made available at the community level. Thus the initial activities are expected to take place at this level also. More formal and informal meetings, and organization and engagement of community members are expected. However, these community-level activities will also produce related effects for families and individuals who are expected to interact more, participate more, and have greater access to community institutions.

The conditions surrounding communities' participation in CEIP and their access to free labour and the planning grant are expected to influence the early outcomes of community organization. A representative community board is expected to be nominated through a democratic process. In turn, sponsors charged with developing work projects should be found. Families and individuals will be participating in the establishment of the board and communities projects through discussion, voting, and possibly paid or unpaid work. These activities should bring individuals together formally and informally more often and expand social networks. Engagement in discussions about key changes that have occurred or should occur in their community may, in turn, make individuals more accountable to one another and create a stronger community identity.

**Table 3.1: Summary of a Theory of Change for Community Effects**

| | Resources | Initial Activities | Early Outcomes | Intermediate Outcomes | Long-Term Outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Community** | Free labour supply<br>Planning grant<br>Project assistance | More engagement<br>Meetings<br>Greater organization<br>Community capacity assessment | Election of representative board<br>Strengthening of community identity | Increased social participation (voting, attendance at community events, social/sports activities)<br>Increased cross-community communication | Stronger social economy<br>Stronger market economy<br>Improved outcomes on health, income, education, and crime indices<br>Stable or increasing population |
| **Organizational/ Institutional** | Untapped assets<br>Project assistance<br>Material or financial support | More interaction<br>Donation of time and resources<br>Secure interest of sponsors | Establishment of community board<br>Establishment of community projects<br>Securing of external resources | Productive projects<br>Increase in activities of cultural, recreational, religious, social, and civic institutions<br>Greater autonomy | Further stimulation of social and commercial and private enterprise |
| **Personal network/ Family** | Social capital<br>Flexible division of labour | More interaction | Expansion of networks<br>Greater participation | High participation<br>Consumption of goods and services<br>More informal associations<br>Greater social support within networks | Greater cohesion and inclusion<br>Increased social capital |
| **Individual** | Ideas<br>Entrepreneurial expertise<br>Skills<br>Donated time | More interaction<br>Greater participation<br>Greater chance of inclusion | High participation<br>Greater accountability | High participation<br>Consumption of goods and services | Greater sense of belonging, inclusion, and empowerment and more employment<br>Reduced out-migration |

The Intermediate Outcomes column describes the next stage of expected community development. The consequence for the community of greater interaction, expanded social networks, and a stronger community identity is greater participation in its institutions and collective activities. In turn, the communities may start interacting more with each other in order to learn about alternative approaches and share resources. The social networks themselves would be expected to strengthen and become more supportive. The community projects should be productive and the goods and services produced may be consumed within the community. Depending on the nature of the product, this may engender further interaction, participation, and inclusion.

The long-term outcomes are listed in the final column. If some projects develop as sustainable activities, this should increase employment in the community. The social gains emerging from more active citizenship, the individual and collective empowerment, and the opportunities for individuals to come in greater contact with others, either through their project employment or their associational activities, should lead to an increased stock of social capital and improve the social cohesion of the population. The services produced and expansion of employment should also improve overall quality of life.

For the evaluation, the theory summarized in the table will be expanded. In addition, it would be unwise to rely wholly on a single theory. Therefore, supplementary and alternative effects will be hypothesized and added to the theory. There will be strong grounds for attributing the community effects observed to the intervention if these activities and outcomes are observed in sequence. In the words of Connell and Kubisch (1998):

> *The major audiences for an evaluation of a CCI* [comprehensive community initiative] *— including community residents, initiative managers and funders, and policy makers — should be convinced that the initiative "worked" if four points can be demonstrated:*
>
> - *up front and along the way, a well-specified and plausible theory of change described steps toward an anticipated change (from historical baselines) in important outcomes for the community, its institutions, and its residents*
> - *the activities of the CCI that were part of these steps were implemented at expected thresholds*
> - *the magnitude of changes in the early, intermediate, and long-term outcomes that followed these activities met predicted thresholds*
> - *no obvious and pervasive contextual shift occurred that could otherwise account for all these predicted sequences of activities and outcomes* (p. 34)

The theory of change approach holds promise as a way to better understand how CEIP's program model unfolds in the community. However, this is a relatively new approach and it is not certain that it will be an adequate substitute for comparing outcomes in the CEIP communities with some counterfactual. Therefore, CEIP has adopted the strategy of integrating a more traditional quasi-experimental comparison community design with the theory of change approach. The strength of this strategy is that it provides two bases of comparison. First, the theory of change allows the experiences of the communities

exposed to the program to be compared with expectations concerning how the program will operate and the changes that will be observed. Second, the comparison community design allows the experiences of the communities exposed to the program to be compared with the experiences of other similar communities where the program did not operate.

The selection of comparison communities was complicated by the fact that at the time the selection had to be made the final list of communities that would take part in CEIP was not known. It had been determined that participants would be selected from across the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), and four "lead sites" had been selected — Dominion, New Waterford, Sydney Mines, and Whitney Pier — but other communities were to be added in the second year of implementation.[18]

A detailed description of the process for selecting comparison communities is provided in Appendix D. In brief, a two-step process was used. As a first step, a "similarity index" was calculated to identify, from a list of virtually every self-contained town in Nova Scotia, those that were broadly similar to the CBRM where CEIP is being implemented. Then a community proximity score analysis was conducted to arrive at a group of communities that collectively would represent a valid comparison with the CEIP sites.[19] Since all communities within the CBRM were potential candidates to be included as CEIP communities, all CBRM communities with populations in excess of 1,500 were kept on the list. This ensured that data would be collected on all communities selected for CEIP, regardless of whether they were selected at the outset or added in the second round. In addition, any CBRM communities that were not selected for CEIP would then be available as comparison sites.

Using this process, the following communities were selected to provide the comparison:

**Within the CBRM**

- Reserve Mines
- Florence
- Sydney Main
- Louisbourg

**Outside the CBRM**

- Inverness
- Stellarton
- Pictou

[18] An overview of the process by which communities were selected is given in Chapter 4.

[19] The research design calls for comparison sites to act as a combined counterfactual and not a comparison of matched pairs of communities. Each CEIP site is not paired with a comparable non-CEIP community. Apart from the practical difficulties of trying to align individual communities in this way from among the limited set of available communities, chance factors could intervene over the study period that could render a carefully selected matched comparison site much less comparable by the end of the study. In terms of the planned community survey, pooling several communities is more efficient, since a smaller sample size is required from each community than if each CEIP site required its own matched pair. Therefore, the comparison sites will collectively serve as a barometer of changes occurring in similar Nova Scotian towns over the course of the project.

The community effects study is relying on a broad set of indicators that are being collected in the CEIP communities and in the comparison communities and that are being obtained from a variety of data sources. Wherever possible, administrative records are being tapped to obtain community level data. To complement available administrative records data, a three-wave community survey is being conducted to obtain information directly from residents of the CEIP and comparison communities. In addition, five key informants in each community are being interviewed annually during the study to obtain their detailed assessment of perceived changes in institutional structures and civic activity in their communities. SRDC researchers are monitoring local media, conducting document analysis of local community-planning material and minutes and other records of local organizations, and conducting extensive fieldwork to observe local meetings and other consultative events and to interview local stakeholders, especially those who are involved with CEIP at the local community level.

## Benefit–Cost Analysis

The CEIP research design includes a benefit–cost study. In essence, the aim of this type of analysis is to monetize (estimate in dollar terms) the direct and indirect use of resources and consequences associated with the program being assessed. It is then conceptually possible to add up all of the benefits (positive amounts) and costs (negative amounts) to determine who is better off with or without the program and by how much. Although a benefit–cost analysis can be especially useful for government officials in assessing cost-effectiveness from a government budget perspective, it is also useful in determining how participating individuals (and, in this study, participating communities), as well as society as a whole, are affected.

Paradoxically, part of what makes benefit–cost analysis so appealing to policy-makers can also constitute its main limitation: While this approach *aims* at monetizing all of the benefits and use of resources associated with a program, it is not always possible to do so. This might be the case either because some of these consequences are intangible or because, even if they are in some way measurable, they may nonetheless remain difficult to express in dollar terms.

The essential first step in a benefit–cost analysis is to establish the accounting framework that will be used. This framework sets out the relevant components to be included in the analysis. Table 3.2 presents the accounting framework for CEIP. It lists the items that will be included and identifies the expected directions of the changes — benefits (+), costs (-), or no effect (0). Four different accounting perspectives are used. First, costs and benefits will be analyzed from the point of view of participating individuals (program group members); second, from the perspective of participating communities; third, from the point of view of government budgets (also referred to as the “taxpayer” or the “non-participant” perspective); and finally, from the perspective of society as a whole. It is important to understand that, while the first three perspectives are mutually exclusive and complementary, the fourth perspective is their sum. In all three perspectives, results will eventually be provided on a per-participant basis. The following sections discuss the major components identified in the accounting framework.

**Table 3.2: Benefit–Cost Analysis Accounting Framework**

| Components of the Analysis | Accounting Perspective | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Participating | | Government Budgets | Society as a Whole |
| | Individuals | Communities | | |
| **Monetized components**[a] | | | | |
| Value of in-program output[b] | 0 | + | 0 | + |
| Employment | | | | |
| In-program | | | | |
| CEIP earnings + fringes | + | 0 | - | 0 |
| Foregone earnings + fringes | - | 0 | 0 | - |
| Post-program earnings + fringes | + | 0 | 0 | + |
| Tax payments | | | | |
| Federal income tax | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Provincial income tax | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| EI premiums | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| CPP contributions | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Transfer payments | | | | |
| Employment Insurance | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Income assistance | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| GST credit | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Child tax benefit | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Other programs | - | 0 | + | 0 |
| Transfer administrative costs | | | | |
| Employment Insurance | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Social assistance | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| GST credit | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Child tax benefit | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Other programs | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Administrative and operating costs[c] | | | | |
| Community boards | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Community-based organizations | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Employability assessment | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Job matching | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Job-readiness and generic skills training | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Technical assistance to communities | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Project management information system | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Central administration | 0 | 0 | - | - |
| Use of other programs | | | | |
| Job search | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Education | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Training | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Other | 0 | 0 | + | + |
| Employment-related expenses | | | | |
| Child care | - | 0 | - | - |
| Transportation | - | 0 | - | - |
| Other | - | 0 | - | - |

*(continued)*

**Table 3.2: Benefit–Cost Analysis Accounting Framework (Cont'd)**

| Components of the Analysis | Accounting Perspective | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Participating | | Government Budgets | Society as a Whole |
| | Individuals | Communities | | |
| **Unmonetized or partially monetized components[d]** | | | | |
| Social cohesion and individual well-being | + | + | + | + |
| Effects on other economic sectors | | | | |
| Multiplier effect | 0 | + | + | + |
| Displacement | 0 | - | - | - |

**Notes:** [a]A specific dollar amount will be determined for each of these components of the analysis.

[b]This component includes the value of goods and services produced as a direct result of the CEIP.

[c]This category differs from an overall "CEIP Program Costs" category (not used here) only in that it does not include the value of the CEIP earnings and fringe benefits listed inside in the "Employment" category. This choice reflects the nature of the program, which refers to these payments as earnings or "community wages" and not as transfers. When these amounts are subsequently monetized, a separate table for CEIP Program Costs can be created, which would include the CEIP earnings and fringe benefits, as well as administrative and operating costs.

[d]The extent to which such components are observed will be reviewed and monetary implications explored; full monetization is not expected to be possible, however.

## The Value of In-Program Output

The in-program output (the goods and services produced as a result of CEIP) is meant to be useful and beneficial to the participating communities where the projects are executed. It does not aim specifically at benefiting individual participants directly or at affecting government budgets. Overall, however, society as whole will likely benefit from this output.

## Employment-Related Components

CEIP earnings and related fringe benefits represent a benefit to participating individuals and an equivalent cost to government budgets. The participating communities will not be directly affected by the employment-related components.[20] As with other types of transfers (where the cost to government is equivalent to the benefit for participants), the cost to society as a whole cancels out.

CEIP-participating individuals are expected to have, on average, less time for non-CEIP work and are expected to see a reduction in this source of earnings and fringe benefits. While foregone earnings will represent a cost to participating individuals, they will not directly affect participating communities or government budgets. Overall, they represent a cost to society.

Work experience programs are often expected to produce an increase in employability and therefore an increase in post-program earnings for participating individuals. This will not directly affect the participating communities or the government budgets, since taxes paid on these extra earnings will be accounted for elsewhere. Summing up these three other perspectives, society as a whole therefore stands to benefit from an increase in participating individuals' post-program earnings.

[20]A community could be positively affected by the spending of CEIP community wages by members of the program group who live there. However, this potential benefit is unlikely to be captured in this calculation.

The community wages received by participating individuals are subject to income tax, and EI premiums and CPP contributions are deducted. Since the difference between average earnings for program group members and control group members is expected to increase, the difference in the amount of income and payroll taxes paid is also expected to increase. This cost to participating individuals represents an equivalent benefit to government budgets. This component represents neither a direct benefit nor a cost to either the participating communities or society as a whole.

Since, on average, program group members should see their earnings increase compared with control group members, transfers will also be reduced for program group members. This cost to participating individuals will represent an equal benefit for government budgets and will constitute neither a cost nor a benefit for the participating communities or for society as a whole. The reduction in transfer payments will produce a corresponding reduction in the administrative costs of these programs. Since this does not represent a cost to participating individuals or communities, society as a whole will also benefit.

### Administrative and Program Operating Costs

Implementation of CEIP requires funds for administration and operations at different levels. Community boards receive planning grants; they may also benefit from free access to halls and other community resources. While this does not represent a cost to individual participants, it does represent a cost to the communities and to government budgets and, therefore, to society as a whole. Sponsors of community-based projects will not receive any resources from CEIP other than the individual participants referred to their projects. They are, however, likely to draw on resources from a variety of other community sources (for example, free access to community facilities; grants from local funding agencies, such as the United Way; and proceeds from the sale of goods and services) and from government organizations and agencies. This use of resources does not affect participating individuals directly but, overall, it represents a cost to society.

Other administrative and operating costs (employability assessments, job matching, training, technical assistance to communities, the project management information system, and the central administration) are borne by government budgets as part of CEIP expenditures. While they do not directly affect the participating individuals or the participating communities, they represent a cost to society as a whole.

### Use of Other Programs and Additional Expenses

The use of some other programs (for example, job-search clubs, education, and training) may decrease as a consequence of CEIP. This does not represent a loss to the participating individuals who choose to reduce their use of these programs or for the participating communities; however, the reduction of costs from a government budget perspective translates into a net gain for society as a whole.

Some employment-related expenses (such as child care and transportation) are expected to increase as a consequence of CEIP. This represents a cost both to participating individuals and to government budgets (since these expenses may be partly subsidized for low-income workers). These increases are not expected to represent costs

specific to the participating communities but they will, overall, constitute costs to society as a whole.

### Other Components

Through the employment it creates and the services provided by community-based projects, CEIP may lead to increases in social cohesion and individual well-being from the perspectives of both the participating individuals and the participating communities. This broad category could include concepts linked to social cohesion, such as belonging, inclusion, involvement, recognition, and legitimacy. It could also include concepts linked to individual well-being, such as feelings of mastery and hope, self-esteem, emotional distress, and stress. Improvements in these factors could, in turn, provide benefits in terms of reduced crime, improved health, and similar outcomes that would represent a benefit from the government budget perspective and, overall, for society.

Activity in the non-profit sector is often characterized by a multiplier effect; what is spent in this part of the economy increases activity in other sectors of the economy. While, overall, this does not directly benefit participating individuals, it does benefit the participating communities, government budgets, and society as a whole. On the other hand, any displacement by CEIP of workers or economic activity will reduce this positive effect. While this does not represent a direct benefit or cost to participating individuals, it does represent a cost to participating communities, government budgets, and society as a whole.[21]

Overall, conducting a benefit–cost analysis for CEIP presents a particular challenge. While assessing the value of some of the components will be relatively straightforward, this will not be the case for others, which will remain either unmonetized or only partially monetized. This situation is not unique to the CEIP benefit–cost analysis; however, in the case of CEIP some of the components that will be difficult to monetize (for example, those related to building social capital) are among the most valued aspects of the project. The analysis will provide an indication of the scale of the changes that have taken place, but it may be necessary to leave to the judgment of the reader the question of how much value to place on these components.

## SUMMARY

The overall evaluation task established for CEIP — a comprehensive evaluation of program impacts on individual participants and the community effects produced where CEIP is operating — is a challenging one, and an ambitious evaluation strategy has been designed to accomplish it. As a demonstration project, the first challenge faced by CEIP was to take the project design off the drawing board and implement it in the field. The next chapter begins the discussion of CEIP's implementation, starting with the selection of the project site and the process of engaging communities to take part.

[21]CEIP attempts to avoid, as much as possible, any type of displacement. The issues of displacement and the multiplier effect are commonly ignored in employment and training benefit-cost analyses because of difficulties in measuring them. Estimates of their extent therefore remain largely speculative. It is not clear, at this stage, how much this study will be able to improve levels of measurement.

# Chapter 4:
# The CEIP Communities

The notion of "community" for the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) operates at two levels. First, the overall community from which individual participants are drawn is a specific region within Cape Breton — the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM). This is the project site for CEIP. Second, the communities where projects are developed and approved to provide employment opportunities for participants are a limited number of smaller areas within the overall project site. This chapter describes the CEIP communities and how they were selected. It also outlines the process by which local communities were engaged to take part in CEIP. Research is still being conducted to explore this process as part of CEIP's implementation analysis. The findings of this research will be presented in a later report; only a summary of the process that was used is presented here.

## WHY CAPE BRETON?

The fundamental goal of CEIP is to improve the long-term employability and economic well-being of workers in communities experiencing chronically high unemployment while, at the same time, contributing to the development of those communities themselves. In setting up CEIP, the first decision was choosing where to conduct the test. A project conducted in a single location cannot generate findings that will be equally valid for other areas. It can, however, produce important lessons to guide subsequent replications, and the estimates of impacts will have applicability to similar locations in similar circumstances.

Ultimately, the selection of Cape Breton as the test location was made by officials at Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). In initial discussions between HRDC and the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), other possible locations were considered. These included the Gaspésie region of Quebec, which has a long history of high unemployment and reliance on seasonal industries; single-industry towns in British Columbia that have been adversely affected by the decline in logging and the closure of pulp and paper mills; and mining-dependent communities in northern Ontario that have been experiencing a gradual decline in economic activity and an out-migration of their populations.

Cape Breton was selected as fitting the description of the sort of community for which the intervention to be tested was considered appropriate. Outside the industrial base of Cape Breton County, the economy has been highly dependent on resource-based activities, typically seasonal in nature. Efforts to diversify the economy using traditional development approaches (for example, locating public sector activities in Cape Breton and offering financial incentives to attract manufacturing enterprises to the area) have had only limited success. The regional unemployment rate has remained high relative to the provincial and national rates. In addition, for the past 30 years the industrial heart of Cape

Breton County has been undergoing a process of "deindustrialization" associated with the decline of its historic industrial underpinnings — the coal mines and the steel mill.[1]

In addition, Cape Breton offered an advantage that many other locations did not — a long history of grassroots community development. Much of this activity is rooted in the co-operative movement and benefits from the active involvement of local religious and educational leaders. The oldest community development corporation in Canada is located in Cape Breton, and the only post-graduate program in community economic development in Canada is offered at the University College of Cape Breton. It was thought that this tradition of local activism and the availability of expertise and organizational infrastructure would facilitate the implementation of CEIP.

The choice of Cape Breton has some disadvantages, however. The same pre-existing local expertise and infrastructure that may facilitate implementation also means that the project is unable to examine what would be involved in trying to launch an initiative of this sort at a "greenfield" site. For example, the community capacity building and development of local leadership that may occur as a result of CEIP will be additional to the significant capacity that is presumed already to exist. Furthermore, the substantial economic development efforts of existing agencies (including the Cape Breton Development Corporation, the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation, and the Cape Breton County Economic Development Authority) mean that CEIP is being tested in a community that has access to a relatively high level of resources and support services. Therefore, the project's results will have limited applicability to less "service-rich" environments.

## WHY THE CBRM?

The determination of the overall project site for CEIP and the selection of specific communities within it was driven principally by project design requirements. CEIP has to cover an area that can yield a sufficiently large sample of participants to make the experiment viable. At the same time, however, the community-based employment opportunities need to be concentrated within communities or neighbourhoods that are sufficiently small so that detectable community effects might result from them. A further practical consideration is the preference for selected communities to be in relatively close proximity to one other in order to make it feasible for participants, over the course of CEIP, to commute to a variety of project work assignments in a number of locations.

The design, then, had to manage the trade-off between CEIP's need to have a relatively large catchment area from which to draw individuals and its need to have relatively small areas in which jobs would be focused.

This trade-off was managed by, first, deciding that individual participants would be drawn from across all of the CBRM. In practical terms, the CBRM (which, since municipal amalgamation, covers Cape Breton County, excluding the Eskasoni and Membertou reserves) is the only part of Cape Breton that has a sufficiently large population base to provide the necessary sample size within a concentrated geographical

[1] A more detailed overview is included in Appendix E.

area.[2] In planning CEIP, it was thought that CEIP's offer would be attractive to only about 1 in 10 of those who received it. Since the design called for the enrolment of 1,500 participants, it was thought that it might be necessary to make the offer to approximately 15,000 Employment Insurance beneficiaries and income assistance recipients who met the eligibility criteria.

Expanding the project site beyond the boundaries of the CBRM would have produced a larger population base than was required, and the larger geographic area would have increased the commuting distances faced by participants. Alternatively, the required sample could have been recruited from within a somewhat smaller area than the entire CBRM. However, this would have necessitated specifying some sub-municipal boundaries for the catchment area (for example, in terms of postal code areas), which would have been more difficult to define and to explain.

## THE PROJECT COMMUNITIES

The next step in the community-selection process was to identify the specific communities or neighbourhoods within the CBRM where the project-based activities for CEIP would take place. The goal was to select communities that had established identities (i.e. they were thought of as "communities" by both the people who live there and by others), and that were both moderately sized in terms of population and relatively more disadvantaged economically (to increase the potential for observable positive effects to occur).

The selection of the communities was one of responsibilities assigned to the Project Implementation Committee, comprising representatives of HRDC and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (NS-DCS). This committee was established by the HRDC–NS-DCS Memorandum of Understanding and was given the responsibility to oversee all aspects of local implementation and operations of the project.[3] The committee is chaired by the HRDC Cape Breton Zone Director. Its membership comprises the managers of the Human Resources Centres of Canada and the NS-DCS district managers from across the area in which CEIP is operating and one representative each from the HRDC Nova Scotia Regional Office, the Applied Research Branch at HRDC national headquarters, and NS-DCS provincial headquarters in Halifax. The project team is represented by a member of SRDC staff.

When CEIP was launched, the final number of communities had not been determined. A strategy was adopted that involved recruiting communities in two phases. At the outset, four "lead sites" were selected; additional communities were to be selected during the second year of the project. This phased approach had several advantages. Individual participants were being enrolled over a two-year period; the phased recruitment of communities would provide a better match between the timing of employment

[2]The population of Cape Breton is heavily concentrated in the CBRM. According to Statistics Canada's 2001 Census (Statistics Canada, 2002), the total population of Cape Breton was 147,454 and the population of the CBRM was 105,968.

[3]The Memorandum of Understanding also established a project research committee, which has so far had one meeting (for purposes of reviewing and approving the project design).

opportunities and the availability of workers. It also provided an opportunity for later sites to learn from the experiences of the lead sites and facilitated the implementation research task, since not as many communities would need to be studied at the same time. Finally, a phased approach allowed the total number of communities to be expanded or contracted based on early experiences in working with the lead sites and their capacity to generate meaningful work opportunities.

To aid in the selection of communities, the Project Implementation Committee adopted six criteria, shown in the accompanying text box.

**CEIP Site Selection Criteria**

1. Individual sites must be clearly recognized and identified as distinct communities. Residents should feel that this is "their" community or neighbourhood (rather than trying to force-fit areas together to form a community) and there must be a public perception (expressed, for example, in media descriptions and the structure of organizations and associations) of a community identity.
2. There must be some pre-existing capacity for community-mobilizing activities to take place (e.g. presence of key local leaders, institutions, or organizations) and for potential project sponsors to emerge.
3. Each individual site must have a population threshold of 2,000 or more. The purpose of this requirement is
   a) to increase the likelihood that sites will generate projects providing a number of work opportunities large enough to have a significant impact on the community; and
   b) to ensure that sites are not so small that projects affect the work opportunities of those who are not members of the program group (and, in particular, the opportunities available to control group members).
4. Sites must be in geographic proximity to each other. While sites need not be contiguous, they should be close enough to allow
   a) workers to move among projects located in different sites (to provide the overall commonality of experiences that will be essential for the pooling of research results);
   b) communication to be maintained among sites (to permit sites to learn from each other and possibly to share resources); and
   c) the central job broker/worker referral organization to deal effectively with representatives at each site and with the sponsors of projects requiring workers within each site.
5. Sites must be within a broader area that is sufficiently large to produce 1,500 volunteers (program and control group members) willing to take part in community projects in the selected sites during the project's enrolment phase (anticipated to last 18 to 24 months).
6. Within the broader area, sites will be selected from among those communities with a history of relatively weaker economic conditions and chronic unemployment.

Judgmental assessments against criteria 1, 2, and 6 were made by local HRDC and NS-DCS staff who were familiar with the local communities in which they deliver programs and services. Population data from the 1996 Census were used for criteria 3. Criteria 4 and 5 were met by considering only communities that fell within the boundaries of the CBRM, the area from which individual participants would be drawn.

In addition, in applying these criteria the Project Implementation Committee decided that at least one lead community should be selected from each of the three areas covered by the local offices of HRDC (located in the pre-amalgamation towns of Sydney, North Sydney, and Glace Bay). It was thought that this geographic dispersion of project sites would increase the sense of "inclusion" (CEIP would be seen to be providing community employment opportunities across a broad area of the CBRM). It would also increase the proportion of participants who, in the early months of CEIP enrolment, would have access to project-based work opportunities in or close to their home communities.

Ultimately, six communities were selected for CEIP (see Figure 4.1 and Table 4.1). The four lead communities, selected at a meeting of the Project Implementation Committee held in August 1998, were the pre-amalgamation towns of Dominion, New Waterford, and Sydney Mines and the Whitney Pier neighbourhood of the pre-amalgamation city of Sydney. In August 2000 the committee selected two additional communities; again these were pre-amalgamation towns — North Sydney and Glace Bay.

**Figure 4.1: The Six CEIP Communities**

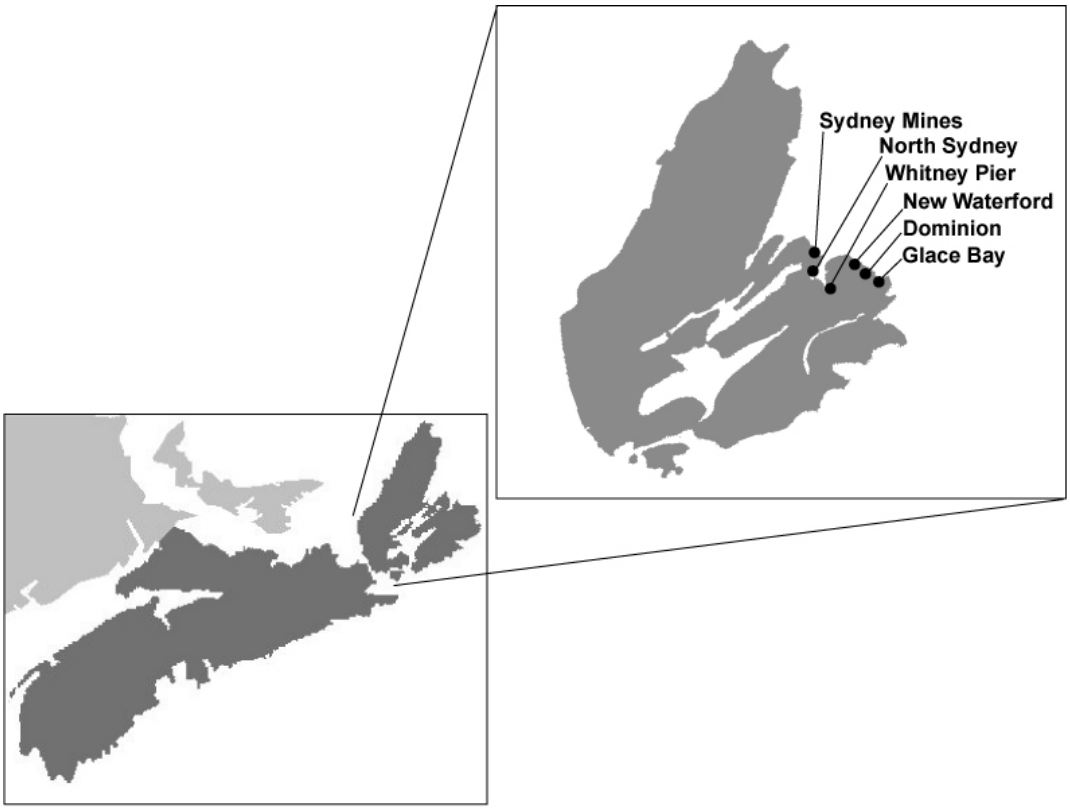


**Table 4.1: The CEIP Communities**

| Community | Area[a] ($km^2$) | Population | | Dwellings | | Institutions[b] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 2001 | 1991 | 2001 | 1991 | Schools | Hospitals | Libraries |
| Dominion | 5.2 | 2,144 | 2,517 | 865 | 830 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Glace Bay | 23.2 | 16,984 | 19,501 | 6,970 | 6,690 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| New Waterford | 5.3 | 6,944 | 7,695 | 2,846 | 2,650 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| North Sydney | 5.4 | 6,158 | 7,260 | 2,545 | 2,520 | 4 | 1[c] | 1 |
| Sydney Mines | 10.9 | 6,982 | 7,551 | 2,844 | 2,585 | 5 | 0 | 1 |
| Whitney Pier[d] | 28.0 | 5,142 | n/a | 2,113 | n/a | 2 | 0 | 0 |

**Notes:** [a]Area, population, and dwelling counts were provided by the Planning Department, Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

[b]Data refer to 2003 and were provided by the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board, the Cape Breton District Health Authority, and the Cape Breton Regional Library.

[c]The Northside General Hospital is located in North Sydney but serves the communities of North Sydney and Sydney Mines, among others.

[d]Whitney Pier is a neighbourhood within the former City of Sydney. Due to changes in Census Dissemination Area boundaries and municipal amalgamation, population data prior to 2001 are not readily available.

## THE PROCESS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

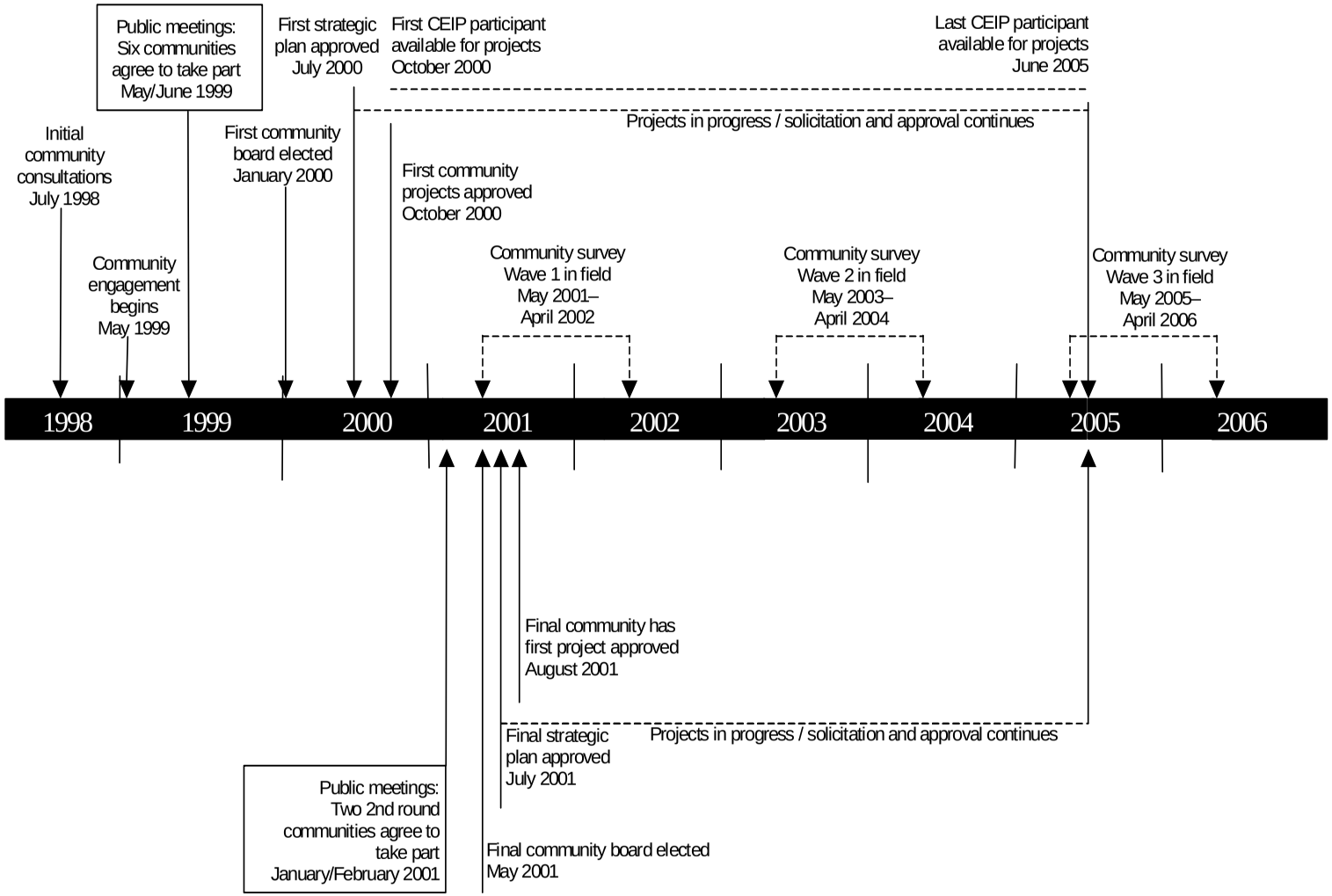
An initial round of consultations with local stakeholders to discuss what eventually became the CEIP program model took place even before there was a project. In July 1998 representatives from HRDC and SRDC attended meetings in Sydney, North Sydney, and Glace Bay to discuss the potential use of community-based projects as a way to help distressed communities and the long-term unemployed.

The overall reaction of those who attended the meetings was very positive. Although some cautionary comments were made (for example, a concern that wages not be set at too low a level), there was general agreement that a project like CEIP would offer a valuable opportunity to achieve a number of desirable objectives. Among the views expressed by attendees of these initial meetings were that the project could provide work opportunities in (and an inflow of money to) communities that are struggling to cope with chronic unemployment and could serve as a catalyst to community-mobilizing activities in places where people are often demotivated by the stress of ongoing economic difficulties. People would be encouraged to think more strategically about how they would like to see their communities change over the longer run and could learn more about the potential for alternative (for example, social economy) employment to link to and foster jobs in the private sector.

The positive response from people in the local area was an important factor in the decision to proceed with the project. In many ways, the communities taking part in CEIP are as much “volunteers” as are the individual participants. Selected communities are given an opportunity to be the sites where CEIP-related project activities take place; however, the decision whether to take up the offer has to be made by the citizens of each of those communities. Unfortunately, nine months later, when HRDC and NS-DCS scheduled the formal announcement of the launch of CEIP in March 1999, economic circumstances in the area had worsened and attitudes toward the project had changed as well. The impending closure of the last two operating collieries had been announced by the federal agency that operated them. A final attempt was being made to sell the provincially owned steel mill, with the government stating that the mill would be shut down if a buyer could not be found. On the day prior to the planned public announcement of CEIP, municipal officials were announcing cuts to the recreation budget and layoffs of staff.

At a briefing session held for local representatives the day prior to the announcement, a number of those in attendance made comments that were critical of CEIP. It was clear from the comments that CEIP was being viewed against the backdrop of the mine and mill closures and, in that context, CEIP was being criticized as an inadequate and inappropriate response from the two orders of government. Officials from HRDC and NS-DCS decided to postpone the public launch of the project and agreed to a further process of consultation with local stakeholders. Many of those who attended the briefing agreed to participate in these additional discussions.

**Figure 4.2: Estimated Timelines and Milestones for CEIP Communities and Key Surveys**



Two follow-up meetings were held in March and April. By that time, those who attended felt there was sufficient interest in moving ahead with the project to begin approaching people in local communities directly to determine their interest in taking part.[4] Consequently, in May 1999 the formal process of recruiting communities to participate in CEIP began.

The process of community engagement had several steps:

- public meetings to make the CEIP offer
- the decision to take part
- the formation of a community board
- the acceptance of the board
- the development of a strategic plan
- the acceptance of the plan
- solicitation and approval of CEIP projects

This report provides only a brief description of each of these steps. A report planned for publication next year will give a more detailed description and analysis of what took place and will attempt to draw out the lessons that were learned during this process.

## Public Meetings

The initial "invitation" to communities to take part in CEIP was made by means of an information session held in each community. In May and June 1999 public meetings were held in each of the four lead communities; meetings were held in the two "second-round" communities in January and February 2001.[5] These sessions were publicly advertised, both in the local newspaper and by means of locally distributed flyers. Attendance varied considerably, from 19 at one meeting to 82 at another.[6] The meetings were moderated either by individuals from the community (in one case, for example, a local clergyman; in another, a school principal) or by representatives of SRDC.

Each meeting consisted of an overview presentation by representatives from SRDC, followed by a question-and-answer session. Fact sheets were also distributed to provide basic information on the project. The purpose of the meetings was not to "sell" CEIP to the communities but rather to provide as much information as possible to allow the members of the community to make an informed decision.

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[4]CEIP did, however, continue to encounter some opposition. A small number of opponents sought to prevent the implementation of the project by writing critical letters to the editor of the local newspaper and by attempting to organize opposition to participating in CEIP in some of the communities that had been selected to take part.

[5]The actual dates of the meetings were May 13, 1999, in Sydney Mines; May 25, 1999, in New Waterford; June 2, 1999, in Dominion; June 14, 1999, in Whitney Pier; January 18, 2001, in North Sydney; and February 22, 2001, in Glace Bay.

[6]There were several factors that affected the turnouts at these meetings; these factors will be explored in the implementation analysis to be published next year.

## Deciding to Take Part

At the conclusion of each meeting, those in attendance were asked, by means of a show of hands, whether there was support for the community taking part in CEIP. At five of the six initial meetings, a significant majority of those in attendance indicated that the community should participate. In one community, the consensus was that there was not enough information available for the community to make a decision. In that case, a follow-up meeting was held four months later. By that time, CEIP planning had progressed to the point where more detailed information could be provided and, at that meeting, the majority of those in attendance indicated that the community should take part.

## Forming a Community Board

During the public meetings, it was explained that local decisions concerning the operation of CEIP were to be made by a volunteer community board made up of representatives of the community. Therefore, the community's first task, if it decided to participate, was to form a community board.

The usual approach to board formation was for the community to create a committee to organize a board. These committees typically consisted of a small number of people in attendance at the public meetings, sometimes with the addition of a few other community members who were subsequently recruited. These individuals took on the task of recruiting candidates for the community board. In practice, many of those who served on these committees subsequently went on to become members of the community boards.

There was a time limit on completing this task. While the process of engaging communities was taking place, steps were also underway to initiate the process of enrolling individual participants. It was crucial that community-based work opportunities be available when participants began entering CEIP. Also, the offer to communities had to be time-limited so that other communities could be brought into the project to replace those who were unable to proceed within a reasonable period of time. Therefore, communities were given 18 months to form a community board and have it approved. (A second time limit was also imposed; see the discussion below entitled "Soliciting and Approving CEIP Projects.") The "18-month clock" was started on the date of the first public meeting at which the community was invited to take part in CEIP. Each of the six communities formed a community board within the time allowed them.[7]

[7]Whitney Pier was granted an extension to the time limit. The deadline for board formation was December 14, 2000, 18 months after the date of the first public meeting in Whitney Pier. As the deadline approached, a steering committee had been appointed and efforts were underway to recruit and structure a community board. Those involved in putting the board together requested that the deadline be extended by six weeks to January 31, 2001. The Project Implementation Committee approved the request (but with no extension to the deadline by which the community board had to make its first project approval). The community submitted its proposed board to the Project Implementation Committee on January 15, 2001; however, the committee was unable to meet to review and accept the submission until February 22, 2001.

## Acceptance of the Community Board

CEIP required communities to submit their proposed community board to the Project Implementation Committee for review and approval. The purpose of this requirement was to provide some assurance that the board had support from the community it was meant to represent. In reviewing the proposed board, the committee examined the composition of the board to see how representative it was (in at least one instance, the committee accepted a proposed board but stipulated that it had to take steps to produce more gender balance by the time of its annual general meeting). The Project Implementation Committee also looked for evidence of community support, as demonstrated, for example, by public meetings at which candidates were introduced to the community and elected by them.

In making their submissions to the Project Implementation Committee, community boards were also required to demonstrate that they had formally established themselves in a manner that would allow them to function effectively and democratically. For example, the boards had to appoint members to executive positions, and adopt by-laws and procedures to govern their activities.

## Developing a Strategic Plan

Once accepted by the Project Implementation Committee, the community board was required to develop a strategic plan for how CEIP-supported projects would be used to benefit the community. Having an approved plan in place was a prerequisite to a board being permitted to approve projects. The reason for requiring a strategic plan was to try to give more focus to how CEIP participants would be used in the community and to encourage broad-based consultation and communication as a way of building stronger networks within the community.

It was left to the communities to decide on the processes they would use to develop their plans. The only specific requirement was that each plan had to include a set of identified priorities that the community board would use in reviewing and selecting projects for approval. Some boards chose to solicit ideas from the wider community as a first step; others boards decided to draft a plan and then hold public meetings to give community members an opportunity to review and comment. In some cases, boards took existing economic development plans or community revitalization strategy documents, which had been originally developed for other purposes, and used them as the building blocks for their CEIP strategy.

## Acceptance of the Strategic Plan

Community boards submitted their strategic plans to the Project Implementation Committee for approval. Again, as in the review of proposed community board composition, the committee was looking for evidence that community consultation had taken place and that the plan had community support.

In general the Project Implementation Committee adopted the approach of not second-guessing the community boards. However, in one instance the committee judged that a strategic plan was insufficiently detailed; the plan was revised and resubmitted and subsequently approved. In another case, the committee recommended that a strategic plan

be amended to eliminate a "miscellaneous" priority category, since this would make it difficult to ensure that sponsors' proposals were focused on identified needs. The board in question accepted this recommendation.

## Soliciting and Approving CEIP Projects

Once its strategic plan had been accepted by the Project Implementation Committee, a community board was authorized to begin approving proposals submitted by organizations that wished to sponsor projects. There was a deadline for each community to demonstrate that it could effectively take part in CEIP and generate work opportunities for participants. From the date of the first public information session at which a community was offered the chance to be part of CEIP, the community was given two years to approve its first project. One CEIP community — Dominion — did not meet this deadline. The community initially decided to participate and went on to form a community board. However, the board eventually became inactive and went out of operation without having approved any projects.[8]

Community boards have adopted a variety of methods to solicit project proposals, including general media advertising, flyers, and posters distributed throughout the community and targeted approaches to particular organizations that have previously been involved in organizing projects for community benefit.

The process of approving community-based projects is still going on in the five active CEIP communities. Being "approved" means that a sponsored community project is eligible to have CEIP participants assigned to work on it. Any organization or individual can submit a proposal to take advantage of this offer of free labour. However, the proponent has to demonstrate to the satisfaction of a community board that the project's activities are consistent with the strategic plan and priorities set by the board and that the sponsor has the capacity to manage the project, including providing any other resources that may be needed (for example, facilities, tools and equipment, workers with specialized skills), and to supervise the workers assigned by CEIP.

Community boards meet regularly to review proposals submitted to them and typically use some form of project review checklist to help in assessing proposals. Authority to approve, reject, or request modifications to the proposals rests solely with the community boards. There are, however, five broad guidelines that were established at the outset by CEIP's funders. These are listed in the accompanying text box.

Community boards were told that they were responsible for ensuring that the projects they approve respect these guidelines. The Project Implementation Committee is responsible for ensuring that community boards fulfill this obligation. While the committee cannot overturn a community board's decision to approve a project, it can direct the CEIP office not to assign CEIP participants to any project that, in the view of the committee, is not in compliance with any of the guidelines.

[8]Dominion's eligibility lapsed on June 2, 2001, two years from the date of the first public information session in that community. Dominion's experience with CEIP will be explored, together with the experiences of the other CEIP communities, in the next implementation report.

**Community Employment Innovations Project:**
**Community Guidelines for Approving Projects**

- Volunteer community boards must demonstrate, to the best of their ability, that the projects they approve are consistent with the broader wishes of the members of their community.
- Any profits earned by the projects must be used for the benefit of the community as a whole and not for the private benefit of any smaller group of individuals.
- The projects must avoid displacing existing private or public employment. For example, to the extent possible, project activities are not to compete with private-sector firms in the same line of business or replace public sector workers who would otherwise have been hired.
- No projects that are unlawful or unethical are to be approved by the volunteer community boards.
- Projects must be able and willing to maintain sufficient records to meet acceptable standards of accountability.

The result of this community engagement process was that six communities agreed to take part in CEIP and five of the six communities went on to approve projects. The first projects were approved in October 2000 (in Sydney Mines and New Waterford), and by August 2001 all five active communities were approving projects. Up to the end of March 2003 a total of 257 sponsored projects had been approved in the five communities providing a total of 883 placement opportunities.[9]

As can be seen in the following charts, the projects are distributed fairly evenly across the five communities, are engaged in a diversity of activities (although predominately involved in the provision of services), and the placements they provide call for a variety of occupational skills.

The process of engaging communities was running in parallel with the development and implementation of arrangements to enrol individual participants. The goal was to have the build-up of available community jobs match, insofar as possible, the build-up of participants assigned to CEIP's program group.[10] The next chapter reviews the process that was used to identify, recruit, and enrol individuals in CEIP's research sample.

[9]Projects vary in duration and not all projects were still operating at the end of March 2003 (193 of these projects were still active).

[10]As discussed, however, CEIP made "transitional jobs" available for participants while they were awaiting the availability of a project placement. During the early months of enrolment, there were more participants than project placements. Consequently, transitional jobs were used to a greater extent than was anticipated (or desirable).

**Figure 4.3: CEIP Projects, October 2000 to March 2003, by Type of Community Need Serviced**

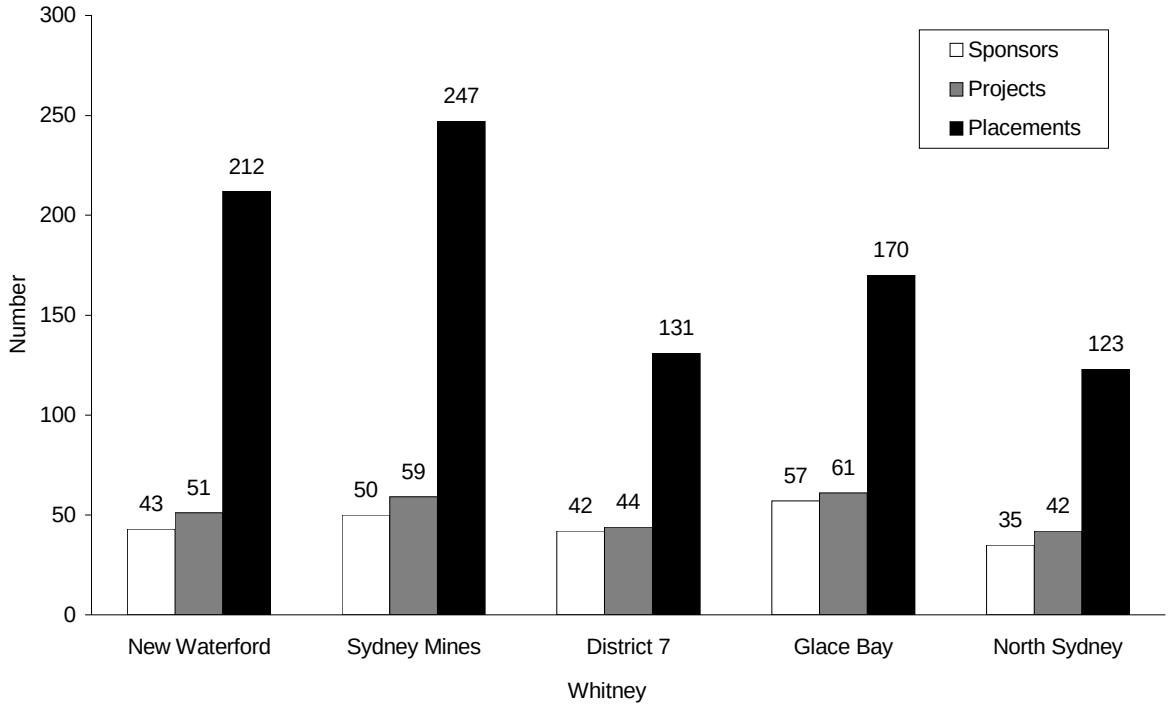



**Figure 4.4: CEIP Projects, October 2000 to March 2003, by Type**

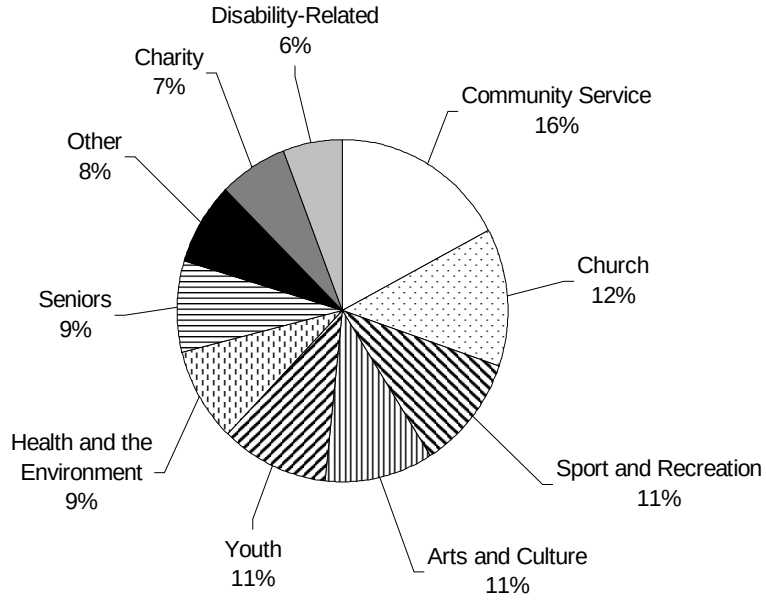
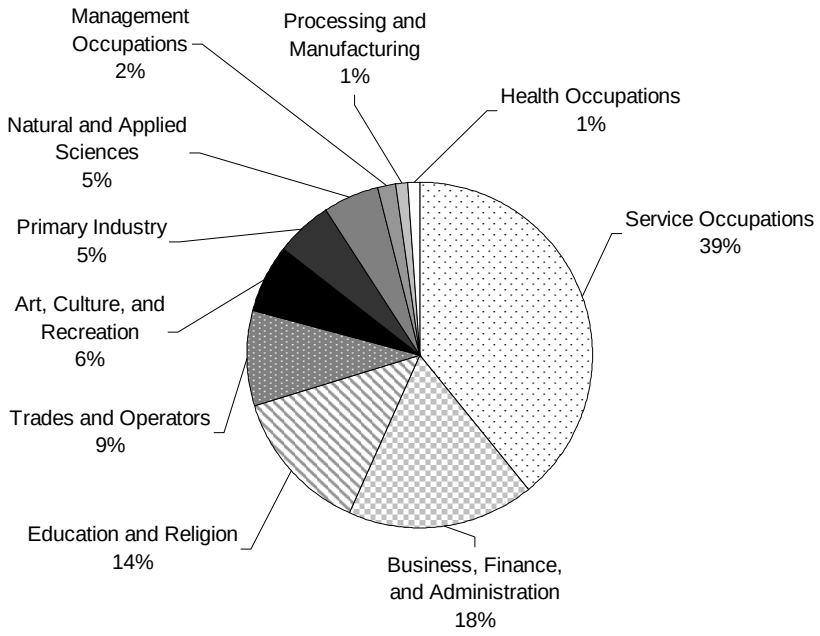


**Figure 4.5: CEIP Placements, October 2000 to March 2003, by Occupation Code**



# Chapter 5:
# Enrolling Participants

Establishing eligibility requirements and developing procedures by which potential Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) participants could join the study was a critical task in laying the foundation for CEIP. Several steps had to be taken to safeguard the process and to ensure it was fair. This chapter describes the requirements and processes that were put in place to enrol participants in CEIP. The chapter begins by defining the eligible population for CEIP: first the eligible Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries, then the eligible income assistance (IA) recipients. It then discusses the process by which potential study sample members were selected from the EI and IA caseloads. The final section looks at how potential sample members who were interested in volunteering for CEIP were enrolled in the study and how many eventually signed up for CEIP during the enrolment period.

## DEFINING THE ELIGIBLE POPULATION

The first step in identifying potential CEIP volunteers involved determining the eligibility criteria for participation in CEIP. Separate criteria and selection processes were formulated for EI beneficiaries and IA recipients. Besides differences in demographic characteristics and employment history, recipients of EI and IA are governed by different administrative agencies and policies. The criteria for participation in CEIP, for these two groups, are thus guided by the regulations that are relevant to each type of transfer payment.

### EI Beneficiaries

Individuals residing in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) who were at least 18 years of age and who had received at least $1 of regular EI benefits during the month of sample selection and were not participating in any EI-sponsored training programs were potentially eligible candidates for CEIP participation. In addition to these requirements, sample members had to meet the following criteria in order to be selected for CEIP:

- They must have received between 10 and 13 weeks of benefits on their current EI claim.
- They must have at least 12 weeks of entitlement remaining on their EI claim at the time of selection.
- Individuals could be included in the selection pool only once.

These established criteria required selected participants to make a real choice between forsaking future EI payments and volunteering for CEIP. If CEIP had selected individuals broadly from the caseload, the study would have included a number of new applicants as well as persons with little or no EI benefit remaining on their claim. Instead, each month CEIP selected a “flow sample” of a group of individuals who had reached their 10th week on claim (since the selection was made monthly, the individuals could actually have received benefits

for 10 to 13 weeks). By excluding individuals who had collected less than 10 weeks of EI benefits, CEIP's offer was not made to those who would have been able to become re-employed quickly. This approach is also similar to how a real-world program would likely operate — offering this form of intervention to people as they reached some duration milestone on their claims. By also stipulating that selected EI beneficiaries must have at least 12 weeks of benefit entitlement remaining, CEIP avoided recruiting individuals who would use CEIP simply as an extension of transfer entitlements at or close to the end of their EI benefit entitlements. With at least 12 weeks of benefits left on the EI claim, eligible individuals had to weigh the effect CEIP would have on their future EI benefits in order to make the decision to join the study.

## IA Recipients

Recipients of income assistance residing in the CBRM who were deemed "employable" by front-line staff at the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (NS-DCS) were determined to be the population eligible to participate in CEIP. "Employable" was defined by the NS-DCS and determined through an employability assessment — the Nova Scotia Employability Assessment — administered by an NS-DCS worker. This assessment was already an integral part of the intake process for IA applicants prior to CEIP.

Based on the results of the employability assessment that examined the applicant's work or volunteer experience, job-seeking skills, academic background, skills set, life situations, physical and mental health, and motivation to work, IA applicants are classified by Employability Participation (EP) codes. The following EP codes are in use by NS-DCS:

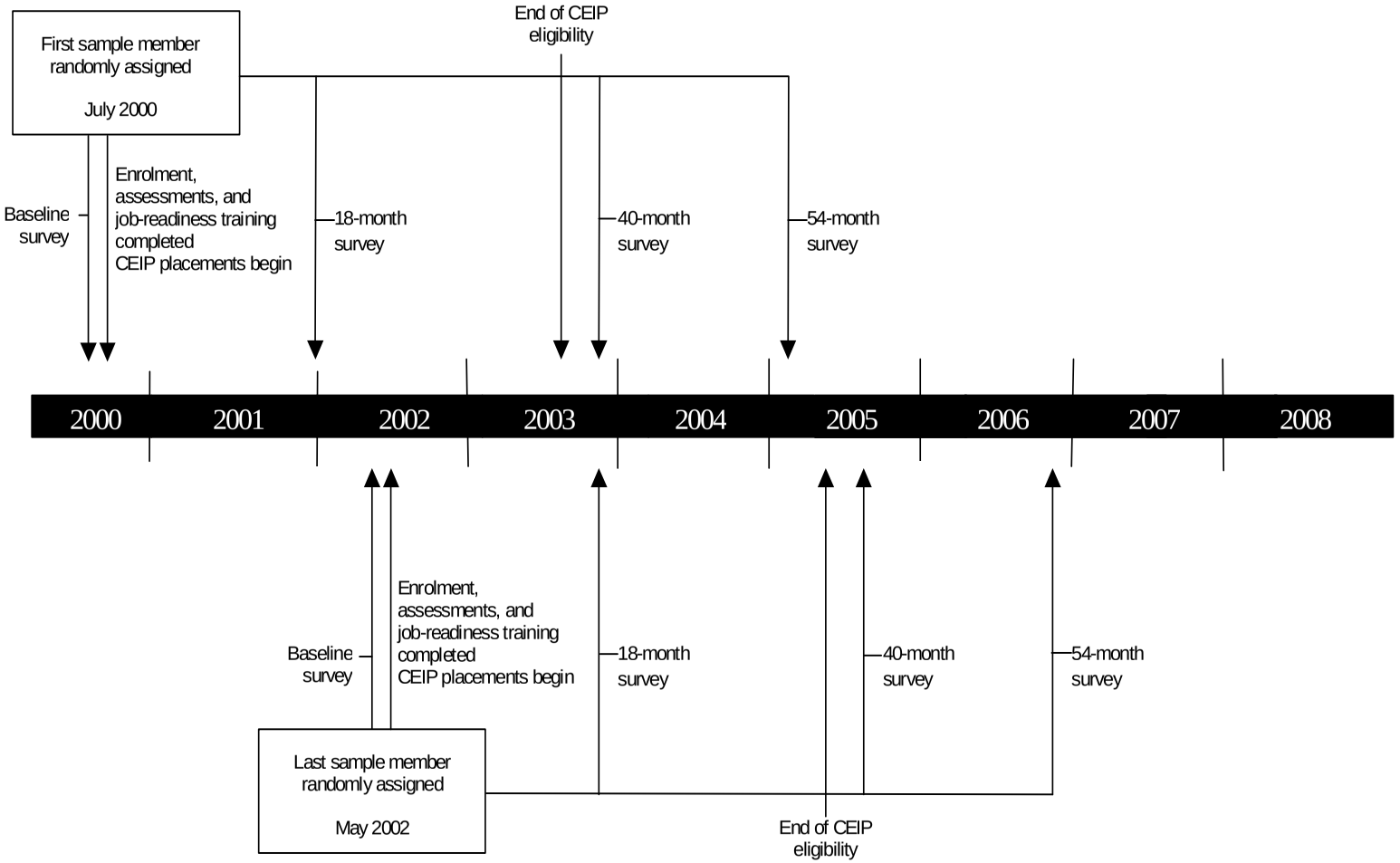
- **Code 1:** persons who are waiting for assessment
- **Code 2:** persons who are required to participate in employment support services
- **Code 3:** individuals who are temporarily excused from participating in employment support services
- **Code 4:** individuals who are not required to take part in employment support services
- **Code 5:** persons who did not turn up for their assessment appointment
- **Code 6:** persons who were Family Benefit cases prior to August 1, 2001[1]

NS-DCS decided that clients and their spouses who were required to participate in employment support services (Code 2) were potentially eligible for CEIP participation.[2]

[1]Prior to August 2001, NS-DCS administered two very distinct social assistance programs: Social Assistance and Family Benefits. Family Benefits provided assistance only to single parents and persons with disabilities for basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter where the cause of need was likely to be of a prolonged nature. EP Code 6 is used on a temporary basis for those clients. Eventually, the use of EP Code 6 will be phased out.

[2]The NS-DCS implemented new entitlement rules and procedures for IA benefits on August 1, 2001. This included changes in their pre-August 2001 employability assessment process. However, because all individuals who were deemed employable prior to August 1, 2001 were automatically deemed employable and assigned to the new EP Code 2, the effect of these changes on CEIP recruitment was minimal. Moreover, only a small proportion of CEIP sample members were selected under the pre-August 2001 rules and regulations.

**Figure 5.1: Estimated Timelines and Milestones for CEIP Participants and Key Surveys**



The remaining requirements for eligibility were related to the individual's age, place of residence, and IA benefit status. As in the case of EI, individuals selected from the IA caseload to receive CEIP offer had to be at least 18 years of age and residing in the CBRM. The criteria also stipulated that they had to have received at least $1 in benefits during the month of sample selection. In IA cases with more than one adult present, either was potentially eligible if he or she met established criteria. Only one person could be selected from each case, however. Individuals previously selected from the EI population were not allowed a second chance if they also appeared in the IA population.

In contrast to the EI "flow" sample, the IA sample was a "stock" sample since people could be at any stage of their IA claim when they were selected to participate in CEIP. While it would have been preferable to make the CEIP offer to individuals who had been receiving IA for a specified period of time, there were too few clients to make eligibility requirements based on a specified duration workable.

## SELECTING POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

The sample selection process for both EI and IA sample members was the responsibility of Statistics Canada. The process for each sample is described below.

### EI Beneficiaries

Beginning in July 2000, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) provided a data file of EI beneficiaries from the CBRM to the Special Surveys Division of Statistics Canada. The file was created every four weeks thereafter until June 2002. The data file was a derivative of the HRDC Benefits and Overpayments File (BNOP), which is used for administering EI claims and paying benefits. The information provided on the file was limited to that which was necessary to apply the selection criteria for CEIP and to allow Statistics Canada to make contact with eligible participants.

Each month during intake, staff at the Special Surveys Division applied the established criteria and created an electronic list of the eligible population. Once the eligible population was determined, Statistics Canada selected individuals at random to be offered the opportunity to join the study and sent them an invitation letter. The number of individuals selected each month to receive the CEIP offer was dictated by the project's predetermined two-year sample loading plan. In order to meet the goal of enrolling 1,000 EI beneficiaries from the CBRM over a two-year enrolment period, the amount of persons selected monthly was adjusted at various times to accommodate for changes in take-up rate, the capacity of the CEIP office, and the availability of community-based projects.

The initial mailing to selected EI beneficiaries contained two letters. One of the letters came from HRDC and the other from Statistics Canada. The generic letter from HRDC advised the individual that they had been selected to take part in CEIP. It also gave a very brief introduction to the project and acknowledged the role of Statistics Canada and the consortium of Cape Breton agencies that provided day-to-day service at the CEIP office.[3]

[3]The consortium of agencies that came together to create the CEIP office is discussed in Chapter 8.

In addition to inviting the individual to attend an information session to learn more about CEIP, the letter from Statistics Canada explained how the individual was selected and the role of Statistics Canada in the study. The letter also provided the dates and times of the prescheduled CEIP information sessions and also made it clear that individuals could reschedule their session, if necessary.

### IA Recipients

The selection of individuals from the IA caseload required a two-step process. This was necessary to address the individual concerns of both NS-DCS and SRDC. NS-DCS required that its clients provide consent to the release of information before being considered for selection for CEIP. At the same time, SRDC had an obligation to protect the identity of those who refused to participate or subsequently withdrew from the study so that they would suffer no penalty from NS-DCS as a result of that choice. Therefore, NS-DCS was required to make the first contact with eligible participants, seeking their consent to be included in the eligible list, but NS-DCS could not be directly responsible for selecting the individuals to receive the CEIP offer. The drawback to this was a lengthy enrolment process for IA recipients.

In the first step, on a pre-established monthly schedule, NS-DCS provided Statistics Canada with a file of current IA recipients in the CBRM. The file was void of personal identifiers but contained the necessary information required to apply the eligibility criteria and a unique identifier created by NS-DCS. Upon receipt of the NS-DCS monthly file, Statistics Canada applied the eligibility criteria and created a file of those who qualified for CEIP. The file of eligible participants (a list of unique identifiers) was then returned to NS-DCS to permit the initial contact with their eligible clients. Statistics Canada also used the monthly NS-DCS files to create a cumulative file of NS-DCS recipients. This cumulative file was necessary to track those who were sent the initial contact letter from NS-DCS in order to ensure that only one offer was made to selected individuals and to determine the probability of selection for future analytical work.

The initial letter from NS-DCS to eligible IA recipients was accompanied by a return card and postage-paid return envelope. The NS-DCS letter briefly introduced CEIP and explained the voluntary nature of participation. It also explained the role of NS-DCS and Statistics Canada in CEIP and indicated that in order to be considered for eligibility a signed and dated card must be returned to Statistics Canada. Individuals had three weeks to return the card to Statistics Canada in order to be included in the eligible population.[4] During the sample selection period, a total of 3,232 letters were mailed by NS-DCS to potential eligible IA participants. Return cards were received from 1,014 individuals.

The second step commenced with the return of cards during the three-week eligibility period. The signed card authorized Statistics Canada to receive from NS-DCS relevant personal information to continue with the selection process. For example, Statistics Canada was required to verify that an eligible IA recipient had completed and returned the card and that the individual did not receive an earlier invitation through the EI selection process. After

[4]Although the NS-DCS letter to eligible individuals stated they had to return the cards within three weeks in order to be eligible for selection, cards that reached Statistics Canada within four weeks were accepted and included in the pool for selection. The extra week was to ensure that individuals were not penalized for delays in the postal system that were beyond their control.

confirming eligibility, invitations to attend an information session at the CEIP office were sent, by Statistics Canada, to a random sample of those who returned a signed and dated card within the three-week eligibility period.[5]

In the first week of June 2001, NS-DCS extracted and transmitted the first of 10 monthly files of IA recipients to Statistics Canada.[6] The sample for each month consisted of eligible recipients from the prior month. For example, the first file in June 2001 was of eligible CEIP individuals from among IA recipients for May 2001. The overall targeted sample size was 500 IA recipients to be selected and randomly assigned over a period of 12 months.

Once potential sample members were identified and selected by Statistics Canada, the remaining steps in the intake process were identical for both groups of enrollees. These steps are discussed in the next section.

## SAMPLE ENROLMENT

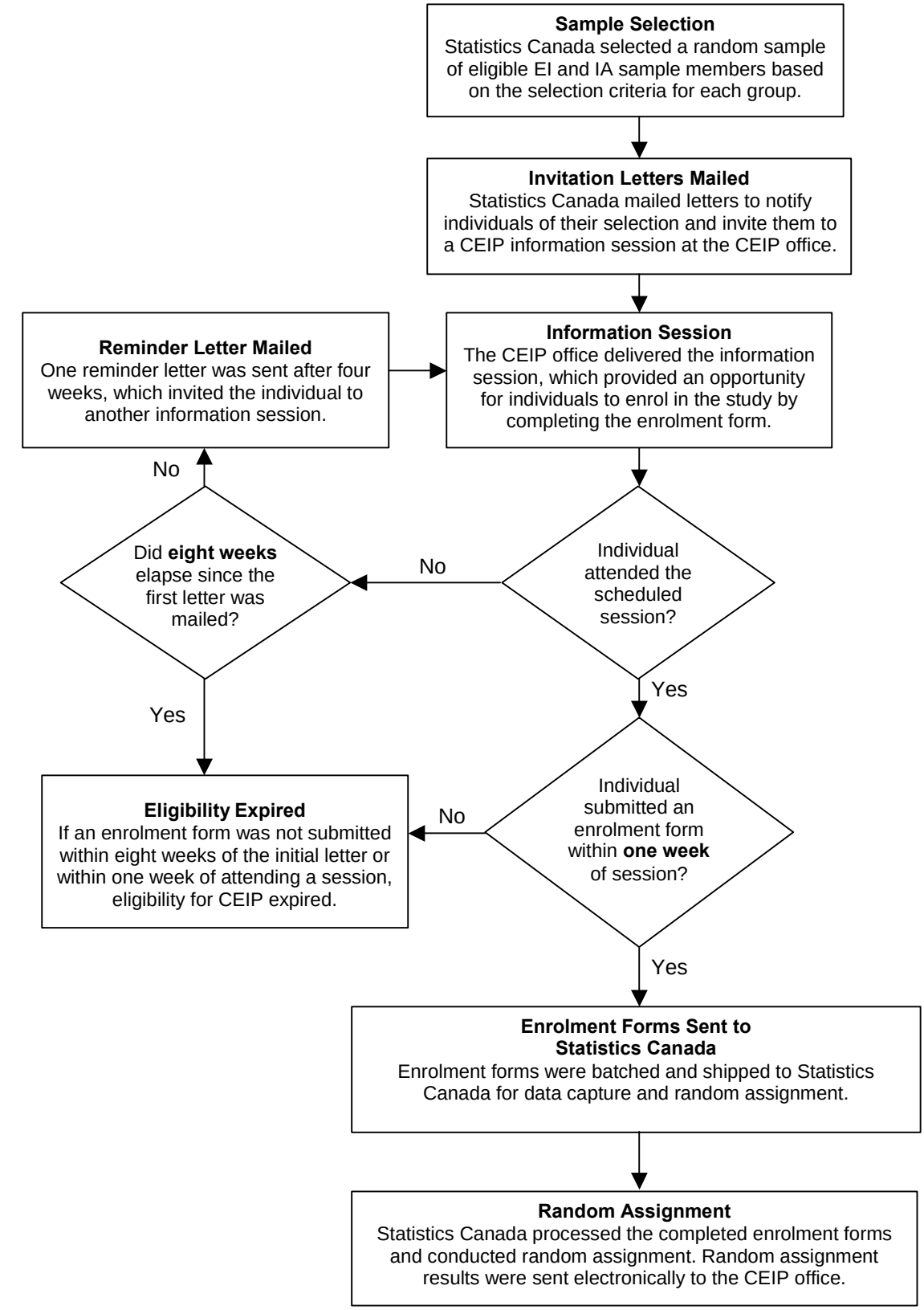
As depicted in Figure 5.2, invitation letters were mailed to potential sample members by Statistics Canada. Individuals were invited to attend scheduled information sessions and had to attend within eight weeks of the initial letter in order to maintain eligibility. The sessions were usually held every month throughout the two-year enrolment period, but with separate group sessions for EI beneficiaries and IA recipients. Interested persons could also request an individual "one-on-one" session or reschedule their attendance at a session within their eight-week eligibility period. A reminder invitation letter was sent after four weeks to individuals who had neither attended a session nor called to reschedule.

At the information session participants were shown a slide presentation about CEIP and the benefits they could gain if they decided to join the study. The main goal was to provide potential enrollees with sufficient information to help them determine whether to join CEIP. Staff at the CEIP office informed potential enrollees that CEIP was a research project and that those who signed up had a 50-50 chance of being eligible for paid community-based work for up to three years. Staff also reiterated that CEIP was a voluntary project and that participants could withdraw from the project at any time. Attendees were informed that relevant regulations for EI and IA would apply if they were selected to participate in community-based work and they subsequently quit or were terminated without just cause. It was also reiterated that a decision not to join the study at the information session would not affect an individual's eligibility for EI or IA.

[5]By selecting only a proportion of return cards, SRDC was able to spread the intake over a 10-month period and it also made it difficult for NS-DCS to determine whether non-participants were those not selected by Statistics Canada or those who did not sign up. This allowed the identity of non-volunteers to be protected and thus assured that IA recipients who decided not to take part in CEIP would suffer no penalty.

[6]Individuals were not selected during the third month of IA sample recruitment because of overwhelming response in the first two months and the need to spread intake over several months as well as balance intake with the availability of community-sponsored projects and the capacity of the CEIP office to process enrollees.

**Figure 5.2: Overview of CEIP Intake and the Random Assignment Process**



Attendees interested in joining the study were required to complete an enrolment form consisting of a short survey and an informed consent form. The survey section captured baseline measures such as individual characteristics, work experience, education, and social networks. Informed consent to participate in the study and to release data for evaluation purposes was provided by signing the consent form. Individuals could choose to complete the enrolment form at the CEIP office or take it home and return the completed form within one week following the session.[7] As shown in Table 5.1, during the enrolment period 5,980 invitation letters were mailed to eligible EI beneficiaries and 804 to IA recipients. Twenty-seven per cent of eligible EI beneficiaries attended an information session and sixty-two per cent of attendees volunteered to participate in CEIP by signing a project enrolment form. The show-up rate among eligible IA recipients was 69 per cent. Ninety-three per cent of IA recipients who showed up to an information session joined the study. However, the calculation of the show-up rate is for those who received an invitation to attend an information session from Statistics Canada. It should be noted that a large proportion of IA recipients opted out in the first stage of the sample selection process, since only 31 per cent of eligible IA recipients returned a card to Statistics Canada. The 69 per cent show-up rate is among those who had already expressed an interest in CEIP by returning a card.

**Table 5.1: Information Session Attendance and Enrolment in CEIP**

| Measure | EI Sample | IA Sample |
|---|---|---|
| Sent an information session invitation letter | 5,980 | 804 |
| Attended the information session after receiving the initial letter | 1,278 | 469 |
| Attended the information session after receiving the reminder letter | 342 | 88 |
| Signed a consent form and was randomly assigned | 1,006 | 516 |

Once enrolment forms were completed, they were batched and mailed to Statistics Canada for data capture and random assignment. Statistics Canada was required to verify the eligibility of enrollees using the invitation mail-out list and data from the EI or IA administrative data files. Mismatches were investigated to ensure that the person who completed the form was indeed an EI beneficiary or IA recipient who was sent an invitation letter. Random assignment occurred after eligibility was confirmed and the data was captured electronically for enrollees. Random assignment was performed by Statistics Canada using the random assignment facilities of SRDC.[8]

Figures 5.3 and 5.4 illustrate the sample build-up during the recruitment phase. Figure 5.3 shows the number of enrollees who were randomly assigned each month and Figure 5.4 shows the cumulative sample for each month of the CEIP recruitment phase. As mentioned earlier, the number of individuals selected, and subsequently randomly assigned, in any given

[7]Individuals selected from the IA caseload whose IA administrative records indicated that the case file included a spouse were required to obtain the signature of the spouse on a separate spousal consent form. The spousal consent provided authorization from the spouse of the potential CEIP participant to access and use, for research purposes, his or her information that was included in the potential CEIP participant's IA case file.

[8]Statistics Canada implemented the random assignment process on SRDC's dedicated random assignment software application. The process itself was relatively simple. Statistics Canada prepared a text file with anonymous CEIP identifiers for individuals who had provided completed and signed CEIP enrolment forms. Once the file was ready, Statistics Canada logged on to the SRDC random assignment computer and initiated the process. The software application assigned the individuals and generated a file of program and control group assignments.

month was determined by several factors. First, SRDC had decided that during the first half of Year 1 recruitment would proceed slowly to give the communities time to develop projects. Second, the show-up rate at information sessions and the sign-up rate of eligible participants affected the proportion of the eligible pool who received the CEIP offer. Finally, the capacity of the CEIP office to administer information sessions and complete the enrolment process also influenced the decision on how many invitation letters were mailed in any given month.

As shown in Figure 5.3, several adjustments took place over the recruitment period. Significant adjustments occurred in the third month of enrolment for both EI beneficiaries and IA recipients (September 2000 and August 2001 respectively). In those months no new sample members were selected from the administrative files. Enrolment and random assignment of earlier selected sample members continued, however. The adjustment on the recruitment of EI sample members was driven by the uncertainty over whether Canada Customs and Revenue Agency would rule that paid participation in CEIP was insurable and covered by the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). The strategy was to slow down the recruitment of participants in order to minimize the number of people affected by any possible changes, while still having some participants available to work on community projects. In the case of IA enrolment, the initial rate of response from IA recipients was much higher than expected and, as a result, a pause in selecting new sample members was necessary during the third month of enrolment.

As planned, the study was able to recruit sufficient numbers of sample members over the two-year enrolment period. From July 2000 through May 2002, 1,006 eligible EI beneficiaries joined the research sample and from September 2001 through May 2002, 516 IA recipients enrolled in the project.[9] Half of the enrollees from both the EI and IA samples were randomly assigned to the program group and the other half to the control group. Research sample members were notified by mail of their status in the study. Control group members were reminded of their importance to the evaluation of CEIP. They were also reminded that their involvement in the project did not affect their eligibility for any service that was normally available to them from HRDC, NS-DCS, or any other government agency. Program group members were invited to attend an orientation session at the CEIP office within five weeks to remain eligible for CEIP. Details regarding the orientation session and procedures for the completion of enrolment in CEIP are discussed in Chapter 8.

[9]The first group of eligible IA participants was identified by NS-DCS in June 2001 using the pool of recipients for May 2001, but because of the lengthy two-stage selection process for persons selected from the IA caseload, the first group of IA recipients attended an information session in August 2001 and was randomly assigned in September 2001.

**Figure 5.3: Monthly Enrolment of EI and IA Sample Members in CEIP**

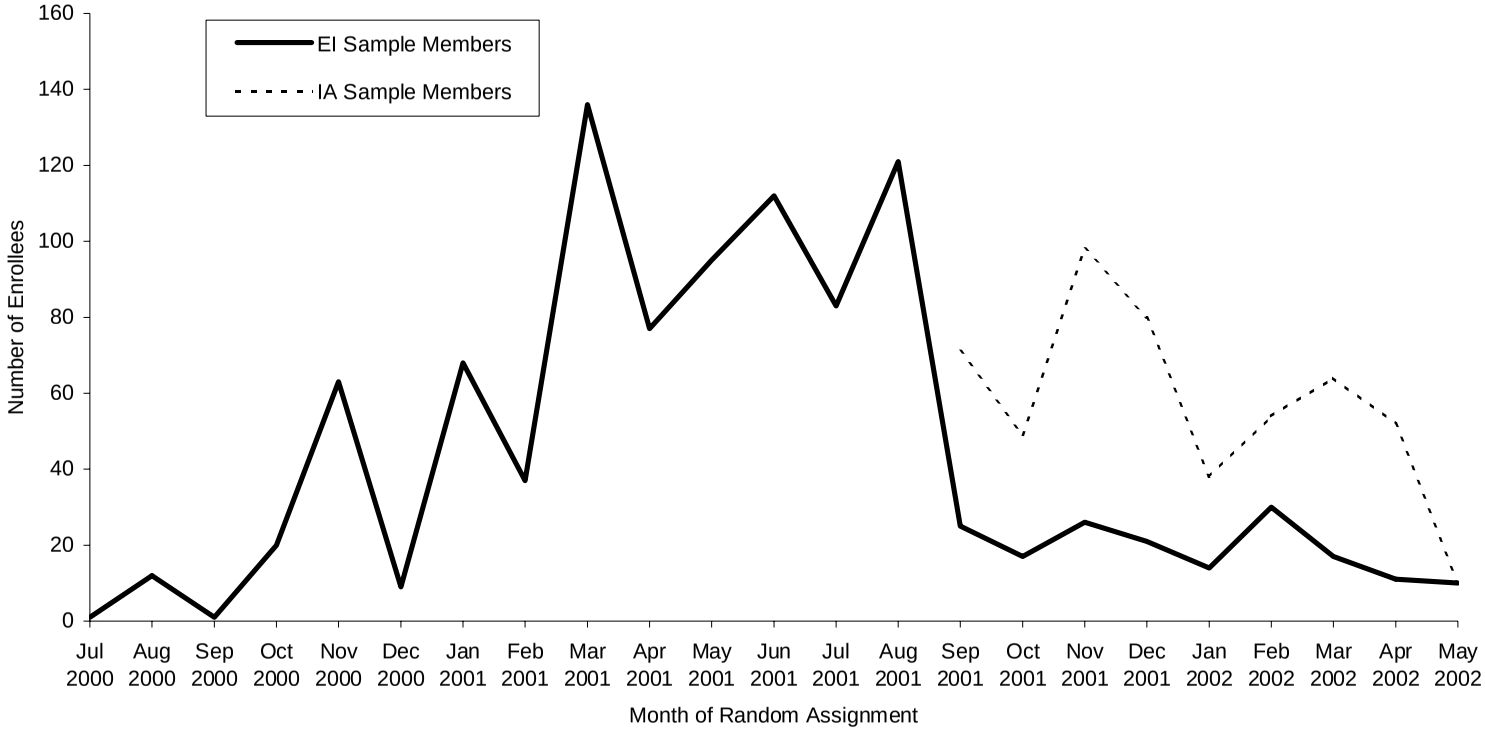
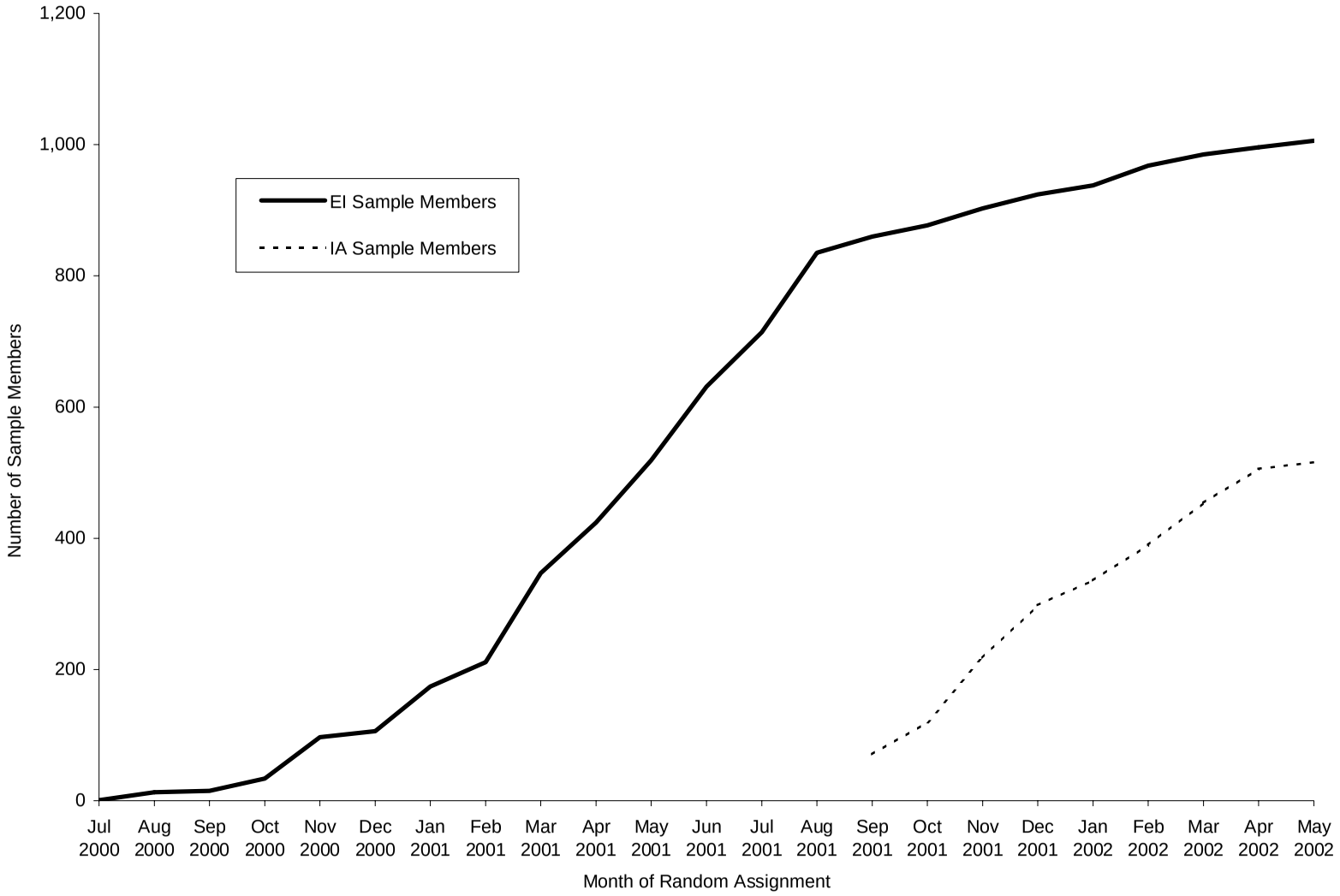


**Figure 5.4: Cumulative Enrolment of EI and IA Sample Members in CEIP**



# Chapter 6:
# Characteristics of the Research Sample

This chapter presents highlights of the characteristics of the research sample for the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP). The information presented was obtained from the CEIP enrolment form and from Employment Insurance (EI) and income assistance (IA) administrative data. The research sample is made up of 998 persons selected from the EI caseload and 516 individuals from the IA caseload.[1] The survey component of the enrolment form was designed to capture information on demographic, socio-economic, and network characteristics of CEIP participants.

As the results in this chapter will demonstrate, the two samples are both from disadvantaged populations but are different in many respects.

In general, the following holds true for the EI sample:

- They were more likely to be men and between 35 and 54 years of age.
- Most had a high school diploma but few had attained any higher levels of qualifications.
- Most were likely to live in households composed of two or more persons and with two adult contributors to household income. The household income for most was under $30,000 during the 12 months prior to enrolment.
- They had extensive work experience but were unemployed due to seasonal and non-seasonal layoff, end of contract, or because their employer moved or closed down.
- The vast majority had lived in Cape Breton all their life and had strong social bonds to the community.
- Most had small, dense, and homogeneous social networks.
- The vast majority reported being in good health.

The responses to the enrolment form survey showed that volunteers from the IA caseload had the following characteristics:

- They were likely to be women between the ages of 25 and 44 and living without a spouse or partner.
- They were likely to be living in households composed of two or more persons and likely to have only one contributor to household income. The household income of

[1] A total of 1,006 persons selected from the EI caseload completed an enrolment form. However, eight persons were dropped from the research analysis. Seven of these were volunteers who resided on the Eskasoni reserve. This reserve is surrounded by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) but is not officially part of the CBRM. The individuals met the eligibility requirements for selection from the EI caseload and were permitted to enrol in CEIP. However, the decision was made to remove them from the research sample because the nature of the transfer payments and supports for which they otherwise qualify are significantly different from those available to other sample members. The other individual was dropped because data integrity checks by Statistics Canada confirmed that the individual had not been selected to join CEIP. This individual had the same name and lived at the same address as the person invited to join CEIP and as such was able to bypass initial integrity checks. Once the error was discovered, more stringent data integrity checks were immediately implemented to prevent similar situations.

most IA enrollees was less than $20,000 with over half of the sample reporting income of less than $10,000.

- They were less likely to have long history of work experience or a long-term relationship with the industry in which they last worked.
- They were likely to have lived in Cape Breton for all their life.
- They were most likely to have small, dense, and homogeneous social networks like their EI counterparts.
- They were slightly less likely to report being in good health than EI sample members.

Detailed results for some measures are presented in the following sections, separately for EI and IA study members. A complete tabulation of all measures that were collected on the enrolment form appears in Appendix H.

# THE ENROLLED SAMPLE OF EI BENEFICIARIES

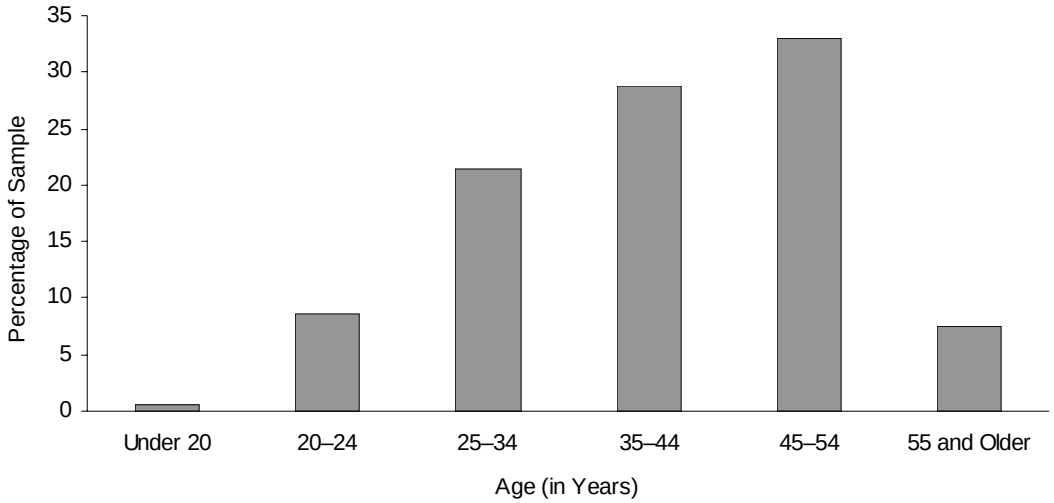
## Demographic Characteristics

This section begins by looking at EI volunteers according to their gender, age, education credentials, household composition, and household income.

### *Gender and Age*

Most EI sample members were men (58.4 per cent) and were between the ages of 25 and 54. Figure 6.1 shows the proportion of sample members in each age group. One third of the EI study sample was between 45 and 54 years of age. Only 9.3 per cent of the EI study sample were young workers (under 25 years of age) and 7.5 per cent were 55 or older. On average EI sample members were 40.3 years of age (not shown).

**Figure 6.1: Age of CEIP Volunteers From the EI Caseload**

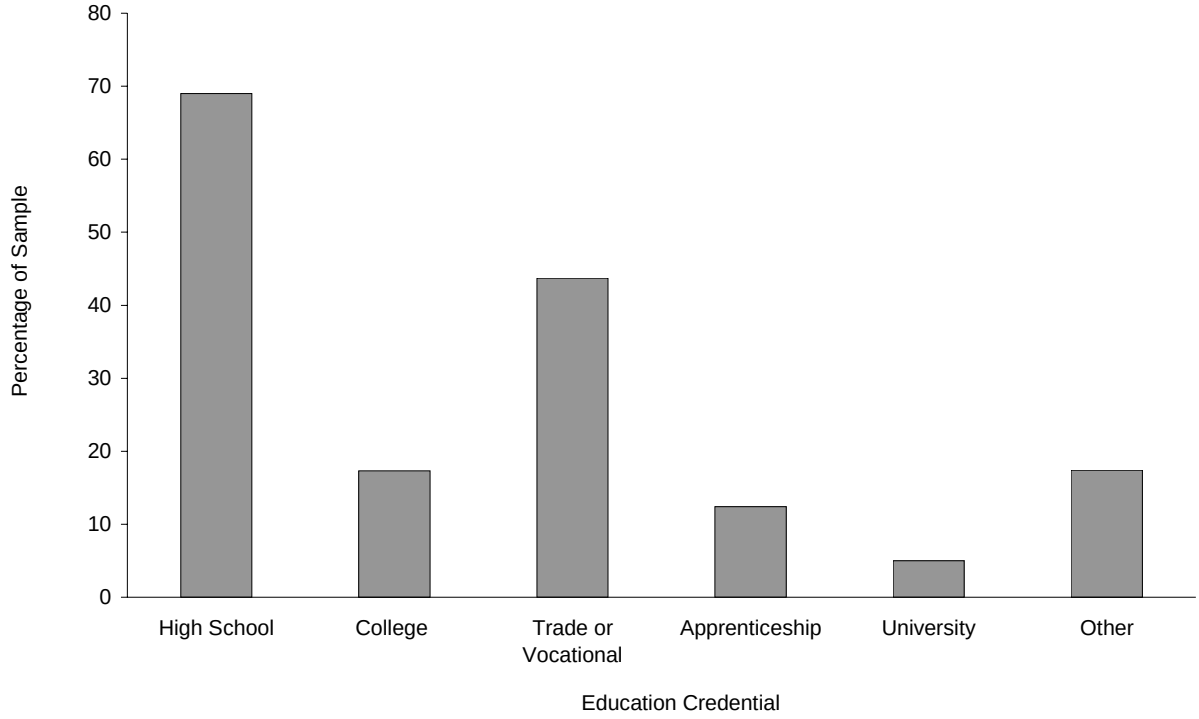



**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

### *Education*

CEIP volunteers from the EI caseload were generally high school graduates with only about one fifth having attained a college or university degree. For example, 69.0 per cent reported they had a high school diploma, 17.3 per cent a college diploma, and 5.0 per cent a university degree. A large proportion of the EI study sample, 43.7 per cent, had a trade or vocational diploma and 12.4 per cent had an apprenticeship diploma. The education credentials of EI volunteers are comparable to that of the general population of Cape Breton County. For example, according to Statistics Canada, 32.2 per cent of the Cape Breton County population aged 25 to 64 did not have a high school graduation certificate (Statistics Canada, 2003d). Similarly, 31 per cent of the EI sample said they did not have a high school diploma.

**Figure 6.2: Education Credentials of EI Study Sample**



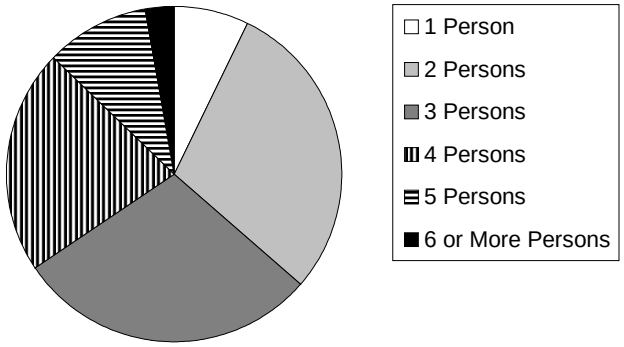

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

### *Household Composition and Household Income*

As shown in Figure 6.3, the vast majority of EI sample members lived in households composed of two or more persons. Only seven per cent of the sample reported living alone. More than half (55.3 per cent) of sample members lived in an adult-only household (not shown).

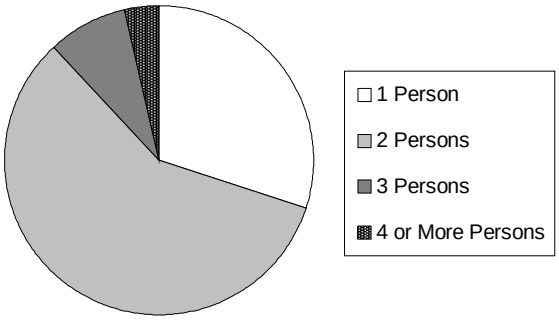
As shown in Figure 6.4, 30 per cent of the EI sample lived in households with one contributor to household income, and 58.2 per cent had two adult contributors to household income. Figure 6.5, which summarizes the distribution of household income for EI sample members, shows that this group was not financially well off. Sixty-five per cent of EI sample members were represented in households with an income level that was less than $30,000.

**Figure 6.3: Number of People in the Household, EI Sample Members**



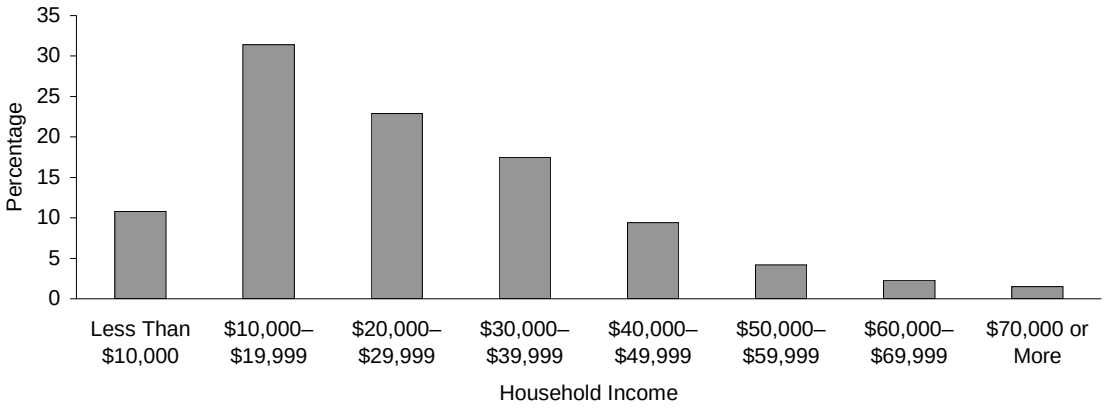

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Figure 6.4: Contributors to Household Income, EI Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Figure 6.5: Household Income of EI Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

## Employment Characteristics

There are clear indications that the vast majority of EI sample members have many years of labour force attachment. As shown in Table 6.1, 74.0 per cent reported that they had worked for 10 years or more since turning 16 years of age. The table also shows that a sizeable proportion of EI sample members had a long-standing relationship with a single employer and industry — 37.8 per cent reported that they worked for one company in the five years prior to enrolment and 43.0 per cent reported that they worked in the same industry for 10 years or more.

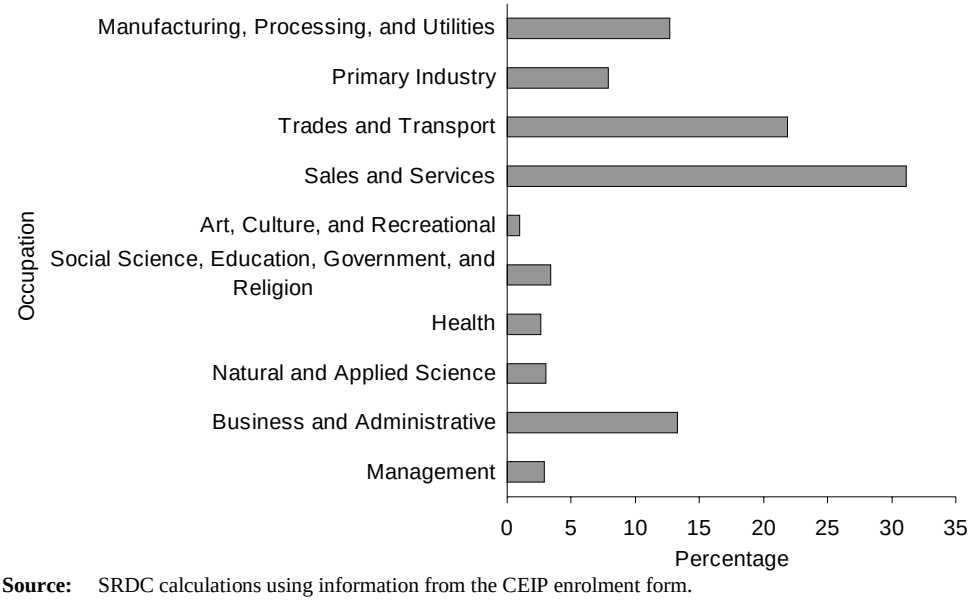
**Table 6.1: Employment History of EI Sample Members**

| Employment Characteristics of EI Sample Members | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of years worked in a paid job since 16 years of age** | |
| Less than a year | 3.7 |
| 1–2 years | 3.0 |
| 3–5 years | 9.4 |
| 6–9 years | 9.9 |
| 10 or more years | 74.0 |
| **Number of companies worked for in the past 5 years** | |
| Did not work in the past 5 years | 0.5 |
| 1 company | 37.8 |
| 2–3 companies | 43.9 |
| 4–5 companies | 13.7 |
| 6 or more companies | 4.0 |
| **Number of years worked in industry of last employment** | |
| Less than 1 year | 14.1 |
| 1–2 years | 16.0 |
| 3–5 years | 17.1 |
| 6–9 years | 9.9 |
| 10 or more years | 43.0 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

On average, EI sample members had earned $11.36 per hour in their prior job. As shown in Figure 6.6, the most common occupational groups were sales and service (31.1 per cent), trades and transport (21.9 per cent), and business and administrative (13.3 per cent).

**Figure 6.6: Occupation of EI Sample Members in Most Recent Job**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

### *Reasons for Job Loss and Recall Expectations*

As shown in Table 6.2, the reasons for loss of the most recent job were varied among respondents but were concentrated in four categories. The most often reported reason for job loss was non-seasonal layoff (27.8 per cent). Another 21.0 per cent said that their job had ended because of the seasonal nature of their work. End of contract or temporary job was mentioned by 16.1 per cent, and 15.0 per cent said it was because their employer had closed down or moved.

**Table 6.2: Reasons for Job Loss and Recall Expectations of EI Sample Members**

| | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| **Reason most recent job ended** | |
| End of contract/temporary job | 16.1 |
| Non-seasonal layoff | 27.8 |
| Seasonal nature of work | 21.0 |
| Own illness | 2.2 |
| Maternity/parental leave | 0.6 |
| Family responsibilities | 2.9 |
| Employer closed down or moved | 15.0 |
| Dissatisfied with job | 2.4 |
| Moved to new residence | 1.9 |
| Retired | 5.4 |
| Dismissal by employer | 0.6 |
| Labour dispute | 0.6 |
| Quit | 1.9 |
| Other | 2.9 |
| **Recall expectations** | |
| Expect to return to last employer | 31.2 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.
**Note:** Numbers may not sum exactly to 100 per cent due to rounding.

The data suggest that job loss was most likely a temporary situation for a large proportion of the sample — 31.2 per cent were expecting to return to their last employer sometime in the future. Most sample members who had recall expectations did not have a recall date, however. Given that CEIP allows participants to take unpaid leave for a non-CEIP job during their three-year eligibility period, and given the uncertainty around recall expectations, it is not surprising that many with recall expectations took advantage of the CEIP offer.

### *Willingness to Take Different Action Towards Finding a Job*

CEIP volunteers were asked a series of questions that probed their willingness to try new strategies to get a job. As shown in Table 6.3, almost every EI sample member expressed his or her willingness to get additional training (97.6 per cent) or work in a different occupation or industry (91.1 per cent). Only a small proportion expressed an interest in moving permanently outside Cape Breton (17.5) or moving for part of the year (28.6 per cent) in order to get a job.

**Table 6.3: Willingness to Take Different Action Towards Finding a Job, EI Sample Members**

| | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| Will take additional training to improve job prospects | 97.6 |
| Will work in a different occupation or industry in order to get a job | 91.1 |
| Will move permanently outside Cape Breton in order to get a job | 17.5 |
| Will move part of each year in order to get a job | 28.6 |
| Will work for a lower wage in order to get a job | 51.0 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

The majority of EI sample members (51.0 per cent) said they were willing to work for a wage that was lower than the wage of their most recent job in order to get a job. This is consistent with a reported average reservation wage of $9.55 (not shown), which is lower than the average wage at the most recent job.[2] The fact that they voluntarily signed up for CEIP is also an indication that they were willing to take, albeit for a short term, a lower-paying job.

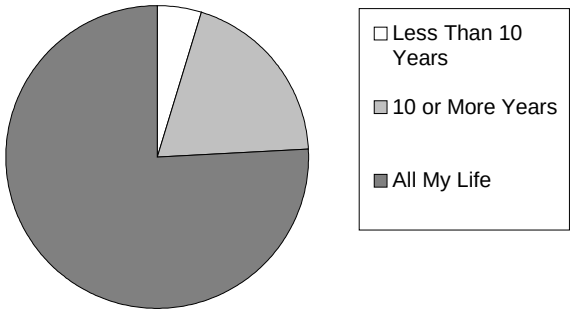
## Attachment to Community and Links to Others

The survey used various questions to query study members on their attachment to community and their links in the community. These included questions on length of residency in Cape Breton and at their current address, whether relatives resided in Cape Breton, and the number of contacts available to help in various situations.

### *Attachment to Community*

As depicted in figures 6.7 and 6.8, there are clear and striking indications of EI sample members' strong social bonds to Cape Breton. Slightly over three quarters of respondents had lived in Cape Breton their entire life, and an additional 19.6 per cent had lived there for 10 or more years. In total, over half had either lived at their residence for 10 years or more or all their life. Strong social bonds to Cape Breton are further demonstrated by the vast proportion of sample members who reported they had relatives besides those in their household living in Cape Breton (97 per cent, not shown).

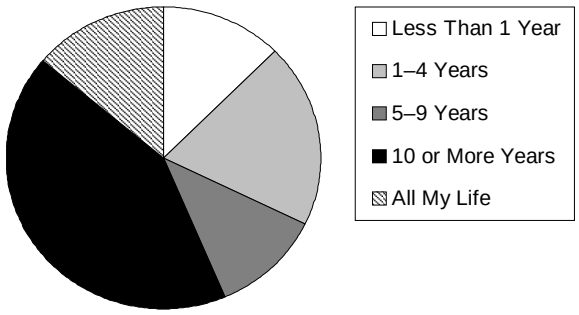
**Figure 6.7: Number of Years Lived in Cape Breton, EI Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

[2]The reservation wage is the minimum salary an individual will accept when deciding whether to accept a job. At enrolment, the baseline survey asked individuals for the minimum salary they were willing to accept on their next job.

**Figure 6.8: Number of Years at Current Address, EI Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

### *Social Network*

EI sample members reported that, on average, they had 10 contacts on whom they could call for various types of help. On average, they claimed there were six contacts on whom they could call for help with household tasks, three contacts for specialized advice, five contacts for emotional support, and four contacts who could provide help finding a job (see Table 6.4).

**Table 6.4: Social Network of EI Sample Members**

| Network Characteristics | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of contacts for help with household activities** | |
| None | 4.0 |
| 1–2 contacts | 24.6 |
| 3–5 contacts | 39.6 |
| 6–10 contacts | 21.5 |
| 11 or more contacts | 10.3 |
| **Average** | **5.6** |
| **Median** | **4.0** |
| **Number of contacts for specialized help (such as legal, medical, financial)** | |
| None | 12.4 |
| 1–2 contacts | 43.7 |
| 3–5 contacts | 33.5 |
| 6–10 contacts | 8.8 |
| 11 or more contacts | 1.6 |
| **Average** | **2.9** |
| **Median** | **2.0** |
| **Number of contacts for emotional help** | |
| None | 4.2 |
| 1–2 contacts | 26.1 |
| 3–5 contacts | 39.5 |
| 6–10 contacts | 20.6 |
| 11 or more contacts | 9.6 |
| **Average** | **5.5** |
| **Median** | **4.0** |

*(continued)*

**Table 6.4: Social Network of EI Sample Members (Cont'd)**

| Network Characteristics | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of contacts for help finding a job** | |
| None | 10.1 |
| 1–2 contacts | 30.8 |
| 3–5 contacts | 37.1 |
| 6–10 contacts | 17.2 |
| 11 or more contacts | 4.8 |
| **Average** | **4.2** |
| **Median** | **3.0** |
| **Total number of contacts** | |
| None | 2.2 |
| 1–2 contacts | 9.5 |
| 3–5 contacts | 29.4 |
| 6–10 contacts | 30.9 |
| 11 or more contacts | 27.9 |
| **Average** | **9.7** |
| **Median** | **6.0** |
| **How many of these contacts would you say know each other?** | |
| All of them | 36.7 |
| Most of them | 37.4 |
| Some of them | 21.0 |
| Very few of them | 1.6 |
| None of them | 1.5 |
| Can't say | 1.8 |
| **How many of these contacts would you say have the same political views as you?** | |
| All of them | 5.9 |
| Most of them | 14.8 |
| Some of them | 29.2 |
| Very few of them | 3.3 |
| None of them | 1.7 |
| Can't say | 45.1 |
| **How many of these contacts would you say have the same religious beliefs as you?** | |
| All of them | 15.8 |
| Most of them | 29.8 |
| Some of them | 26.2 |
| Very few of them | 3.8 |
| None of them | 1.9 |
| Can't say | 22.4 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

In general, the contacts of EI sample members knew each other — 36.7 per cent said all of them knew each other; 37.4 per cent reported most of them knew each other; 21.0 per cent said some of them knew each other. For CEIP, the interconnectivity of each respondent's contact is used as a measurement of density of his or her network connections (Johnson, 2003, p. 24). The above results thus indicate that sample members have relatively dense networks.

The homogeneity of each respondent's network was measured by questions that looked at how similar the CEIP volunteer was to his or her contacts. Two such questions asked about political views and religious beliefs. The responses demonstrate that most CEIP volunteers and their contacts share some similar characteristics. As Johnson (2003) posits, the

expectation is that with time CEIP would increase the size and diversity of each participant's network.

## Volunteering and Community Participation

Responses to questions on volunteer activities and participation in community groups show that EI sample members are engaged in the social economy in the CBRM. Fifty-two per cent (not shown) of the sample reported that they volunteered through a group or organization during the 12 months prior to enrolment in CEIP. Eighty-seven per cent (not shown) also provided help to others outside of their household, but not as part of an organization or group. A notable proportion, 47 per cent, also reported that they participated in a community group or organization during the 12 months prior to enrolment in CEIP (not shown).

## Health Status

The final section of the survey captured measures on the general health of the sample and whether they experienced any difficulty in performing various activities due to a health problem. As shown in Table 6.5, 81.6 per cent of the sample stated that, in general, their health was very good or excellent.

**Table 6.5: Health Status of EI Sample Members**

| Health Characteristics | Percentage of EI Sample |
|---|---|
| **In general, my health is** | |
| Excellent | 32.0 |
| Very good | 49.6 |
| Good | 16.5 |
| Fair/poor | 1.9 |
| **I have difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning, or doing any other similar activities** | |
| Sometimes/often | 21.7 |
| Not at all | 78.3 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do at home** | |
| Sometimes/often | 12.7 |
| Not at all | 87.3 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do at work or at school** | |
| Sometimes/often | 13.5 |
| Not at all | 86.5 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do related to other activities such as leisure and transportation** | |
| Sometimes/often | 12.5 |
| Not at all | 87.5 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

Only 1.9 per cent reported their health as fair or poor. Some sample members reported being sometimes or often burdened with physical or emotional problems. Over 20 per cent said that they had difficulty hearing, seeing, or communicating. About 13 per cent reported physical or emotional problems that limited the activity they could do at home, at work or school, or at leisure or related to transportation.

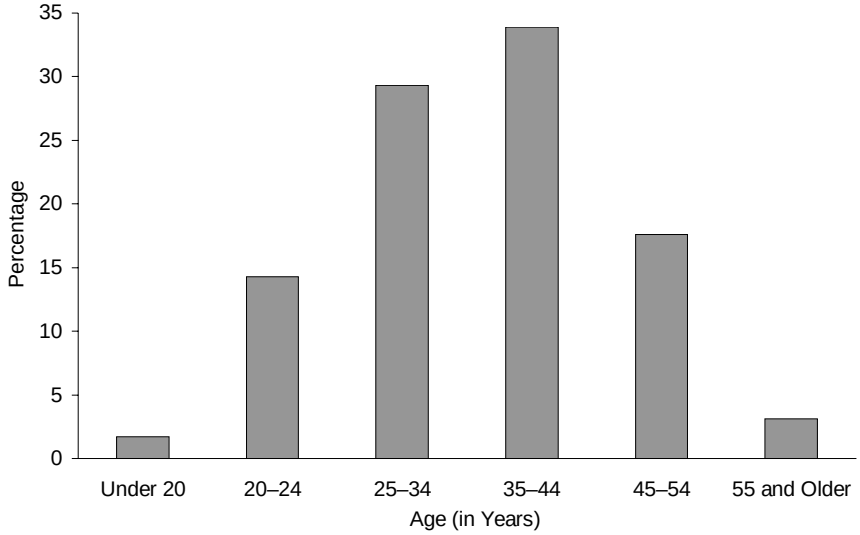
# THE ENROLLED SAMPLE OF IA RECIPIENTS

## Demographic Characteristics

### *Gender, Marital Status, and Age*

The individual characteristics of enrolled IA sample members are typical of what is known about IA caseloads in general. For example, the bulk of IA sample members enrolled in CEIP were women (61.8 per cent) living without a spouse or partner (81.4 per cent). The sample characteristics also showed that enrolled IA sample members were not primarily young adults. On average, IA sample members were 35.7 years of age and slightly over one third (33.9 per cent) were between 35 and 44 years of age (see Figure 6.9).

**Figure 6.9: Age of CEIP Volunteers From the IA Caseload**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

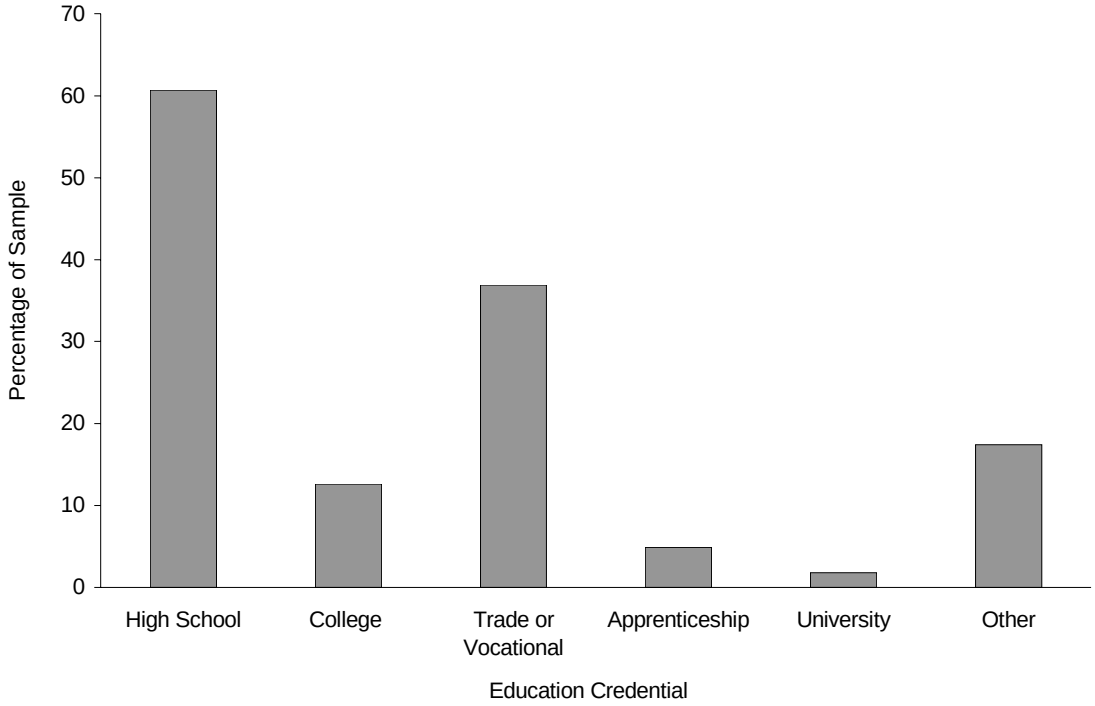
### *Education*

The education credentials of this group suggest that, in general, their future employment prospects are promising. Most IA sample members reported that they had a high school diploma (60.7 per cent), over one third (36.9 per cent) had a trade or vocational diploma, and one eighth (12.6 per cent) said that they had a college diploma (see Figure 6.10).

### *Household Composition and Household Income*

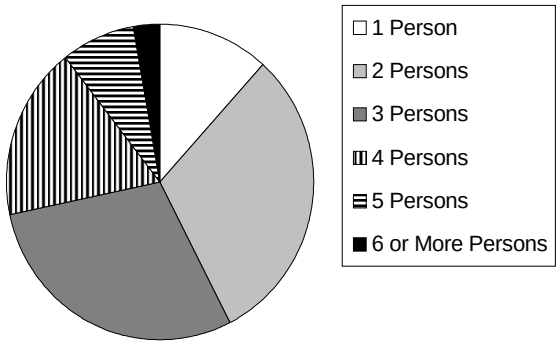
Because IA recipients tend to be individuals with dependants, it is not surprising that, as shown in Figure 6.11, a substantial proportion of the sample lived in households composed of two or more persons (88.3 per cent). On the other hand, an employment program like CEIP that does not provide a child-care allowance may be more attractive to single, able-bodied persons without dependants. However, only a small proportion of IA sample members (11.7 per cent) said they lived alone, which suggests that CEIP was attractive to a varied group of IA recipients.

**Figure 6.10: Education Credentials of IA Study Sample**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Figure 6.11: Number of People in the Household, IA Sample Members**

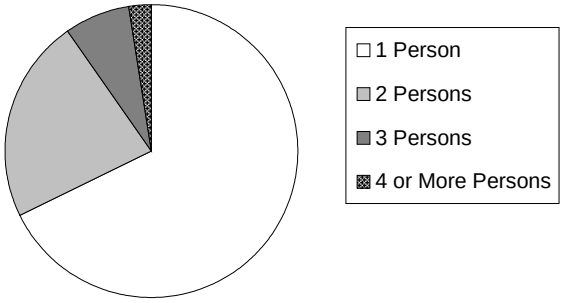



**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

Thirty-eight per cent reported that there were no children in the household. Sixty-two per cent said they lived in households with at least one child less than 18 years of age. And among households with children, for the vast majority the youngest child in the household was less than 13 years of age.

As shown in Figure 6.12, 68 per cent of IA sample members said there was a single contributor to their household income. Twenty-three per cent were living in two-income households.

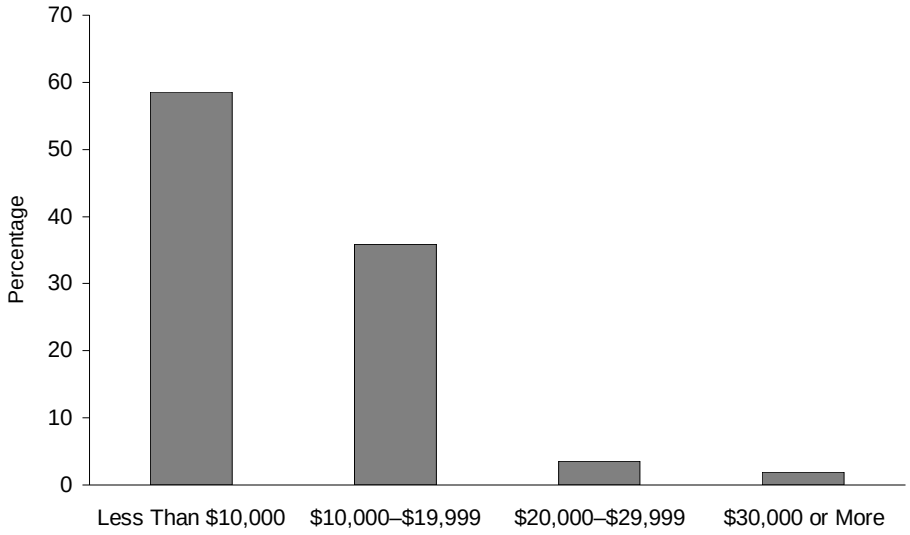
**Figure 6.12: Contributors to Household Income, IA Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

The distribution of household income unequivocally demonstrates that IA sample members are a very disadvantaged group. As shown in Figure 6.13, 95 per cent of IA sample members reported that their gross household income, including IA benefits, for the 12 months prior to enrolment was less than $20,000. More than half (58.6 per cent) had a household income of less than $10,000 in the 12 months prior to enrolment.

**Figure 6.13: Household Income of IA Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

## Employment Characteristics

As demonstrated in Table 6.6 below, a significant proportion of IA sample members (90.1 per cent) had some form of past attachment to the labour force. One fifth had worked for less than one year since turning 16 years of age and one third had worked for 10 years or more. The remaining sample is somewhat equally distributed between one and two years (10.5 per cent), three and five years (14.3 per cent), and six and nine years (12.3 per cent).

Respondents who had some attachment to the labour force since turning 16 years of age were asked to provide further information on the characteristics of their last job. For many

(32.0 per cent), their labour force attachment occurred more than five years prior to enrolment in CEIP. While 31.1 per cent said they worked for a single employer during the five years preceding enrolment, 25.5 per cent said they worked for two to three companies during that time.

**Table 6.6: Employment History of IA Sample Members**

| Employment Characteristics of IA Sample Members | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of years worked in a paid job since 16 years of age** | |
| Never worked | 9.9 |
| Less than a year | 20.1 |
| 1–2 years | 10.5 |
| 3–5 years | 14.3 |
| 6–9 years | 12.3 |
| 10 or more years | 33.0 |
| **Number of companies worked for in the past 5 years** | |
| Did not work in the past 5 years | 32.0 |
| 1 company | 31.1 |
| 2–3 companies | 25.5 |
| 4–5 companies | 8.0 |
| 6 or more companies | 3.5 |
| **Number of years worked in industry of last employment** | |
| Less than 1 year | 35.6 |
| 1–2 years | 21.2 |
| 3–5 years | 17.3 |
| 6–9 years | 7.6 |
| 10 or more years | 18.3 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

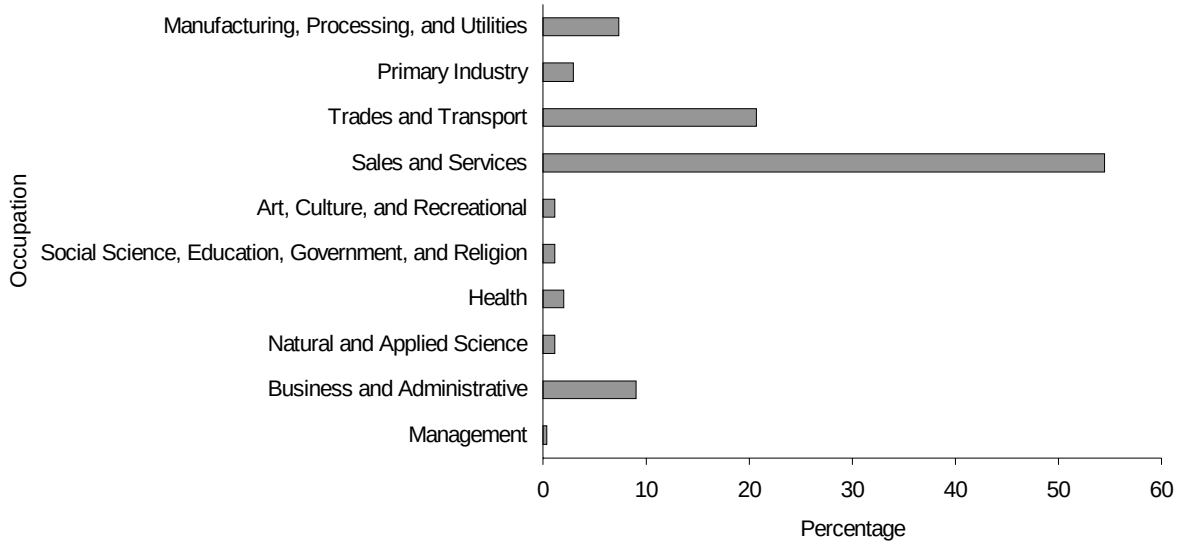
Among IA sample members who had some work experience, a noteworthy proportion had a short association with the industry in which they were last employed. Thirty-six per cent had worked in the industry of their last job for less than one year and 21 per cent did so for between one and two years.

As shown in Figure 6.14, the most common occupations among IA sample members with work experience were sales and services (54.5 per cent), trades and transport (20.7 per cent), and business and administrative (9.0 per cent).

### *Reasons for Job Loss and Recall Expectations*

On average, IA sample members with work experience were paid $8.06 per hour in their most recent job. As shown in Table 6.7, when asked why their most recent job ended, the most often mentioned reasons by IA sample members were non-seasonal layoff (19.7 per cent), end of contract or temporary job (19.1 per cent), and family responsibilities (10.0 per cent). Few who had worked in the past were expecting to be recalled by their last employer (7.1 per cent).

**Figure 6.14: Occupation of IA Sample Members in Most Recent Job**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Table 6.7: Reasons for Job Loss and Recall Expectations, IA Sample Members**

| | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| **Reason most recent job ended** | |
| End of contract/temporary job | 19.1 |
| Non-seasonal layoff | 19.7 |
| Seasonal nature of work | 5.4 |
| Own illness | 7.1 |
| Maternity/parental leave | 8.0 |
| Family responsibilities | 10.0 |
| Employer closed down or moved | 6.9 |
| Return to school | 3.5 |
| Dissatisfied with job | 6.5 |
| Moved to new residence | 4.8 |
| Dismissal by employer | 3.5 |
| Labour dispute | +++ |
| Quit | 2.6 |
| Other | 2.4 |
| **Recall expectations** | |
| Expect to return to last employer | 7.1 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Note:** Numbers may not sum exactly to 100 per cent due to rounding.
+++ indicates that the statistic was based on a sample size of less than five. To protect the confidentiality of individuals in the study, statistics based on sample sizes of less than five are not published by SRDC.

### *Willingness to Take Different Action Towards Finding a Job*

As shown in Table 6.8, IA sample members overwhelmingly expressed an interest in additional training (97.1 per cent) and the willingness to work in a different occupation or industry (82.4 per cent) to improve their job prospects. There was, however, not as much interest in moving outside Cape Breton in order to find a job. While 19.9 per cent said they were willing to move permanently outside Cape Breton, 24.7 per cent said they would move for part of the year in order to get a job. The option of working for a lower wage than at their last job was rejected as a viable choice by most IA sample members (61.9 per cent). Nonetheless, on average, the minimum acceptable wage at which they were willing to take a job ($7.71) is slightly less than the average last wage reported by those with work experience.

**Table 6.8: Willingness to Take Different Action Towards Finding a Job, IA Sample Members**

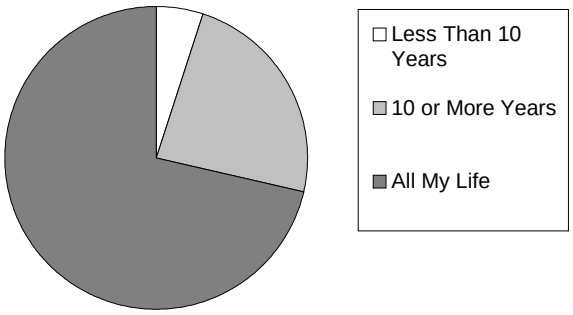
| | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| Will take additional training to improve job prospects | 97.1 |
| Will work in a different occupation or industry in order to get a job | 82.4 |
| Will move permanently outside Cape Breton in order to get a job | 19.9 |
| Will move part of each year in order to get a job | 24.7 |
| Will work for a lower wage in order to get a job | 38.1 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

## Attachment to Community

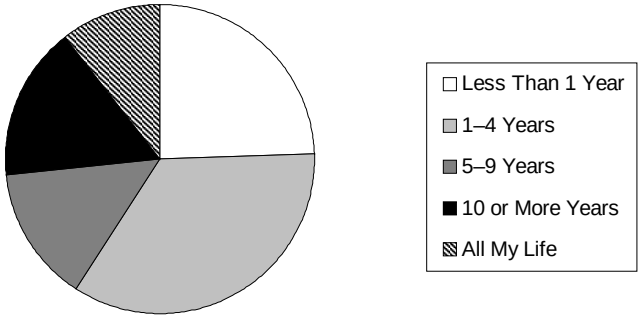
Figure 6.15 shows that IA sample members also exhibited strong attachments to their community. Seventy-two per cent indicted that they had lived in Cape Breton their entire life and 24 per cent had lived there for 10 or more years. The length of time at their current address, shown in Figure 6.16, was more wide-ranging. For example, 24.4 per cent lived at their current home for less than 1 year, 34.9 per cent for between 1 and 4 years, 14.2 per cent for between 5 and 9 years, and 15.9 per cent for 10 or more years, while 10.7 per cent said "all my life." Almost all IA sample members (97.3 per cent) acknowledged that relatives, excluding those in their household, resided in Cape Breton.

**Figure 6.15: Number of Years Lived in Cape Breton, IA Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Figure 6.16: Number of Years at Current Address, IA Sample Members**




**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

## Networks

As the results in Table 6.9 show, in general IA sample members had relatively small, dense, and homogeneous networks of contacts. On average, IA sample members claimed there were eight contacts on whom they could call for various types of help. They reported an average of four contacts for household help, three contacts who could provide specialized advice, five contacts for emotional support, and three contacts for help with finding a job.

**Table 6.9: Social Network of IA Sample Members**

| Network Characteristics | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of contacts for help with household activities** | |
| None | 5.8 |
| 1–2 contacts | 34.0 |
| 3–5 contacts | 41.2 |
| 6–10 contacts | 16.3 |
| 11 or more contacts | 2.7 |
| **Average** | **3.8** |
| **Median** | **3.0** |
| **Number of contacts for specialized help (such as legal, medical, financial)** | |
| None | 14.2 |
| 1–2 contacts | 46.6 |
| 3–5 contacts | 30.3 |
| 6–10 contacts | 7.0 |
| 11 or more contacts | 1.9 |
| **Average** | **2.6** |
| **Median** | **2.0** |
| **Number of contacts for emotional help** | |
| None | 4.5 |
| 1–2 contacts | 25.4 |
| 3–5 contacts | 38.5 |
| 6–10 contacts | 25.4 |
| 11 or more contacts | 6.2 |
| **Average** | **4.9** |
| **Median** | **4.0** |

*(continued)*

**Table 6.9: Social Network of IA Sample Members (Cont'd)**

| Network Characteristics | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| **Number of contacts for help finding a job** | |
| None | 13.8 |
| 1–2 contacts | 37.9 |
| 3–5 contacts | 35.2 |
| 6–10 contacts | 10.9 |
| 11 or more contacts | 2.1 |
| **Average** | **3.1** |
| **Median** | **2.0** |
| **Total number of contacts** | |
| None | 2.1 |
| 1–2 contacts | 11.1 |
| 3–5 contacts | 29.2 |
| 6–10 contacts | 33.3 |
| 11 or more contacts | 24.3 |
| **Average** | **8.2** |
| **Median** | **6.0** |
| **How many of these contacts would you say know each other?** | |
| All of them | 49.1 |
| Most of them | 29.5 |
| Some of them | 15.3 |
| Very few of them | 1.2 |
| None of them | 1.2 |
| Can't say | 3.7 |
| **How many of these contacts would you say have the same political views as you?** | |
| All of them | 13.3 |
| Most of them | 16.6 |
| Some of them | 23.1 |
| Very few of them | 2.5 |
| None of them | 2.2 |
| Can't say | 42.4 |
| **How many of these contacts would you say have the same religious beliefs as you?** | |
| All of them | 21.5 |
| Most of them | 31.1 |
| Some of them | 21.7 |
| Very few of them | 2.7 |
| None of them | 1.0 |
| Can't say | 21.9 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

The vast majority of the contacts of IA sample members knew each other — 49.1 per cent said all of them knew each other; 29.5 per cent said most of them knew each other; 15.3 per cent said some of them knew each other. Many of their contacts also shared their political views and religious beliefs.

## Volunteering and Community Participation

Like their EI counterparts, a high proportion of IA sample members were also engaged in the social economy. The rates of volunteering during the 12 months prior to enrolment in CEIP were 48.8 per cent (not shown) through a group or organization, and 85.2 per cent (not

shown) provided help to others outside of their household, but not as part of an organization or group. Forty per cent of the sample stated that they participated in a community group or organization, during the 12 months prior to enrolment in CEIP (not shown).

### Health Status

A number of IA sample members reported that their activities were at times affected by physical or mental conditions. While 26.1 per cent reported experiencing difficulty with hearing, seeing, or communicating, slightly less than 20 per cent of the sample reported experiencing activity-limiting physical and mental problems at home, at work or school, or at leisure or with transportation.

**Table 6.10: Health Status of IA Sample Members**

| Health Characteristics | Percentage of IA Sample |
|---|---|
| **In general, my health is** | |
| Excellent | 26.9 |
| Very good | 45.7 |
| Good | 23.8 |
| Fair/poor | 3.5 |
| **I have difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, walking, climbing stairs, bending, learning, or doing any other similar activities** | |
| Sometimes/often | 26.1 |
| Not at all | 73.9 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do at home** | |
| Sometimes/often | 19.5 |
| Not at all | 80.5 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do at work or at school** | |
| Sometimes/often | 18.5 |
| Not at all | 81.5 |
| **I have a physical condition or mental condition or health problem that reduces the amount or kind of activity I can do related to other activities such as leisure and transportation** | |
| Sometimes/often | 18.3 |
| Not at all | 81.7 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using information from the CEIP enrolment form.

## HOW REPRESENTATIVE IS THE SAMPLE OF ENROLLEES?

In summary, the results presented in the previous two sections show that both the EI and IA samples are made up of diverse groups of individuals. Both EI and IA sample members are disadvantaged groups with relatively low levels of household income, but IA sample members are undoubtedly much more impoverished than the EI sample and exhibited weaker ties to the labour force. Both study groups displayed strong ties to their Cape Breton community and, for the most part, expressed an unwillingness to move in order to improve their employment prospects. The assessment of their networks prior to joining CEIP shows that both EI and IA sample members have, on average, relatively small networks that are dense and homogeneous.

It is also important to know how the characteristics of the research sample compare with those of the broader population that was eligible to take part in CEIP. As shown in Table 6.11 the enrolled EI sample is similar in some respects to the population of eligible EI beneficiaries who received an invitation to take part in CEIP. For example, both samples have a higher proportion of men and, on average, most sample members were in their early forties. However, women were more likely to volunteer for CEIP than their male counterparts. CEIP volunteers were also more likely to have reported previous employment in a sales position.

**Table 6.11: Selected Characteristics of EI Sample Members at the Time of Sample Selection**

| Characteristics | Eligible EI Population | EI Research Sample |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender (%)** | | |
| Male | 67.4 | 58.5 |
| Female | 32.6 | 41.5 |
| **Age groups (%)** | | |
| Under 20 years | 0.0 | 0.6 |
| 20–24 years | 6.4 | 8.9 |
| 25–34 years | 23.0 | 21.8 |
| 35–44 years | 29.5 | 28.5 |
| 45–54 years | 26.8 | 32.8 |
| 55 years and older | 14.3 | 7.3 |
| **Average age (years)** | **42.2** | **40.8** |
| **Occupation (%)** | | |
| Skilled administrative and business | 2.8 | 3.0 |
| Clerical | 6.3 | 8.8 |
| Natural and applied science | 2.3 | 1.7 |
| Education, government, and religion | 2.8 | 2.2 |
| Sales and services | 21.2 | 30.0 |
| Trades and transportation | 40.0 | 26.8 |
| Primary industry | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| Manufacturing, processing, and utilities | 9.0 | 11.4 |
| Other | 10.6 | 10.7 |
| Average basic benefit rate ($) | 286.54 | 226.95 |
| Average rate for last payment received ($) | 277.66 | 227.65 |

**Source:** Statistics Canada calculations using information from the EI sample selection file and the CEIP enrolment form.

On average, the basic benefit rate and the last payment received was lower among CEIP volunteers, thus suggesting that those with benefit rates lower than the CEIP weekly payment were more likely to take up the CEIP offer.

Looking at Table 6.12, estimates on selected characteristics demonstrate that, with few exceptions, the sample who received cards from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services informing them of their eligibility for CEIP was similar to the sample of IA recipients who enrolled in CEIP. On average, both samples were approximately the same age and included mostly single women.

The data also show that male IA recipients were slightly more likely to volunteer and that volunteers for CEIP were more likely to be in the 35 to 44 age group. On average, both groups received similar amounts of basic benefits in the 12 months prior to being selected for CEIP. However, on average CEIP volunteers received substantially more per month in other types of assistance.

**Table 6.12: Selected Characteristics of IA Sample Members at the Time of Sample Selection**

| Characteristics | IA Mail-Out Sample | IA Enrollees |
|---|---|---|
| **Gender (%)** | | |
| Male | 33.2 | 38.2 |
| Female | 66.8 | 61.8 |
| **Marital status (%)** | | |
| Married or common law | 18.1 | 18.6 |
| Single, never married | 55.6 | 52.2 |
| Separated, divorced, or widowed | 26.3 | 29.4 |
| **Age groups (%)** | | |
| Less than 20 years | 3.3 | 1.7 |
| 20–24 years | 16.1 | 14.3 |
| 25–34 years | 30.6 | 29.3 |
| 35–44 years | 29.6 | 33.9 |
| 45–54 years | 15.5 | 17.6 |
| 55 years and older | 4.9 | 3.1 |
| **Average age (years)** | **35.6** | **35.7** |
| **Average monthly payments received in the 12 months prior to selection for CEIP ($)** | | |
| Basic | 501.11 | 507.53 |
| Other | 46.58 | 65.98 |

**Source:** Estimates for enrollees are based on SRDC calculations using information provided on CEIP enrolment forms and data from IA administrative files. Estimates for the mail-out sample are based on SRDC calculations using aggregate statistics provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services.

## DID RANDOM ASSIGNMENT WORK?

Assuming random assignment was successfully implemented, the measures for the program and control groups should be similar at baseline. However, statistically significant differences may occur by chance. A chi-square test for level of significance was applied to tabulations on baseline characteristics for the EI and IA group separately. The detailed results are presented in Appendix H. Differences were observed for a few characteristics in both the EI and IA group.

Among EI sample members, differences were observed on four characteristics at the 10 per cent level of significance (age of youngest child, university degree, recent job loss due to family responsibility, and health condition limiting activity at home); and three at the 5 per cent level of significance (occupation, job loss due to dissatisfaction with job, and relatives residing in Cape Breton).

For IA sample members, the characteristics defining occupation type and rate of participation in informal volunteer activities were statistically significant at the 10 per cent level of significance; and variables representing measures for family members living in Cape Breton, job loss due to dissatisfaction with job, and participation in formal volunteer activities were significant at the 5 per cent level of significance. However, there were no indications of systematic differences between the program and control groups for the EI and IA study samples. These results thus indicate that random assignment was successfully implemented for CEIP.

# Chapter 7:
# CEIP Take-Up

This chapter explores how eligible Employment Insurance (EI) and income assistance (IA) recipients responded to the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) offer. It focuses on two main questions: Did those who volunteered to take part in CEIP understand the offer? and Why did others not take advantage of the offer? The first question — did volunteers understand the CEIP offer — is addressed with data from the Information Session Follow-Up Survey (ISFUS) that was administered to a sample of CEIP volunteers.

The chapter begins by discussing the ISFUS methodology and whether findings from the survey can be used to estimate the level of knowledge of the full study sample. The first section ends with a look at whether volunteers understood the CEIP offer.

The focus of the second section is on non-volunteers. In particular, it looks at whether they understood the contents of the CEIP invitation letter, their reasons for not attending the information session or taking up the offer, and their characteristics. This section uses data from a non-volunteer survey that was administered to a sample of CEIP sample members who chose not to take up the CEIP offer.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In general, the following holds true for those who volunteered to take part in CEIP:

- Most were well informed about the main features of CEIP and made an informed choice to volunteer for CEIP.
- Most were aware that they had to relinquish their EI or IA benefits in order to be an active CEIP program group member.
- They, however, seemed less well informed on the process for community project approval and the supervisory role of project sponsors. Compared with those who did not take up the offer, EI volunteers were more likely to be separated, divorced, or widowed; to be between the ages of 45 to 54; and to have a trade or vocational certificate. However, they were less likely to be 55 years of age or older, to have worked for 20 years or more since turning 16 years of age, and to be employed at the time of the interview.
- Compared with IA non-volunteers, IA volunteers were less likely to be women, to be married or living with a common-law partner, and to have little or no work experience. The results also showed that IA volunteers were more likely to be divorced, widowed, or separated and were more likely to have attained a trade or vocational certificate than IA volunteers.

Findings for non-volunteers indicate the following:

- Most non-volunteers received their invitation to join CEIP and found the contents of the letter clear and easy to understand.
- Among EI eligible individuals, the decision to reject the CEIP offer was mainly because they thought the CEIP wage was too low or because they had found a job or were expecting to return to a previous job.
- The most common reasons mentioned by IA non-volunteers for rejecting the CEIP offer were related to personal, family, or health problems.

## THE ISFUS SURVEY

To ascertain whether CEIP volunteers were making an informed choice between taking up the offer of CEIP or remaining on EI or IA, a short telephone survey was administered to a sample of CEIP participants after they were enrolled in CEIP. The survey solicited responses related to participants' knowledge of CEIP's main features, the effect of participation in CEIP on the receipt of EI or IA benefits, reasons for termination and withdrawal from CEIP, and responsibility for project approval and supervision.

The target population for the survey was program group members who signed their consent form between April 2001 and June 2002. As shown in Table 7.1, a total of 501 individuals — 243 EI and 258 IA sample members — were targeted with the expectation of 380 completed surveys.[1] Interviews were successfully completed with 217 EI and 158 IA sample members, yielding a response rate of 89.3 per cent for EI sample members and 61.2 per cent of IA sample members.

**Table 7.1: ISFUS Sample Size and Response Rate**

| Caseload | Target Sample | Completed Surveys | Response Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| EI | 243 | 217 | 89.3 |
| IA | 258 | 158 | 61.2 |
| Overall | 501 | 375 | 74.9 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations based on information provided by Statistics Canada.

The lower than preferred response rate among IA sample members was primarily due to administrative problems experienced by Statistics Canada.[2] However, despite lower than expected response rates, Table 7.2 shows that there are very few characteristics for which the survey sample differs from the full sample by more than five percentage points. Measures for the number of children in the household and number of adults contributing to household income are the only characteristics that exhibit differences of more than five percentage points in the IA sample. Marital status is the only observed difference of more than five percentage points for the EI sample. This suggests that there are no systematic differences between the ISFUS sample and the full sample among either EI or IA sample members.

[1]The sampling rate was 74 per cent of program group members from the EI caseload and 100 per cent of program group members from the IA caseload during the sampling period.

[2]For example, among IA sample members, the survey was not fielded in time for 40 individuals to have the opportunity to respond, and Statistics Canada was late in sending contact information for 32 people to interviewers.

**Table 7.2: Comparison of ISFUS Respondents With the Study Sample**

| | EI | | IA | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Characteristics** | **ISFUS Sample** | **Full Sample** | **ISFUS Sample** | **Full Sample** |
| **Gender (%)** | | | | |
| Male | 63.1 | 58.4 | 39.9 | 38.2 |
| Female | 36.9 | 41.6 | 60.1 | 61.8 |
| **Marital status (%)** | | | | |
| Married or common law | 53.5 | 58.2 | 20.0 | 18.6 |
| Single | 32.3 | 26.8 | 53.6 | 52.2 |
| Separated/divorced/widowed | 14.3 | 15.0 | 26.5 | 29.3 |
| **Age (%)** | | | | |
| Less than 25 years | 11.5 | 9.3 | 15.2 | 16.1 |
| 25–34 years | 19.8 | 21.5 | 29.8 | 29.3 |
| 35–44 years | 24.4 | 28.7 | 34.8 | 33.9 |
| 45–54 years | 35.9 | 33.0 | 18.4 | 17.6 |
| 55 years or older | 8.3 | 7.5 | +++ | 3.1 |
| **Average age (years)** | **40.8** | **40.3** | **35.8** | **35.7** |
| **Education credential (%)**[a] | | | | |
| High school diploma | 67.7 | 69.0 | 60.5 | 60.7 |
| Trade/vocational diploma or certificate | 42.1 | 43.7 | 40.0 | 36.9 |
| Apprenticeship diploma | 13.7 | 12.4 | 7.1 | 4.9 |
| College diploma | 16.4 | 17.3 | 13.0 | 12.6 |
| University degree | 3.8 | 5.0 | +++ | 1.8 |
| Other education credentials | 19.5 | 17.4 | 15.1 | 17.4 |
| **Number of people in the household (%)** | | | | |
| 1 person | 6.9 | 7.3 | 12.1 | 11.7 |
| 2 persons | 27.2 | 29.0 | 30.6 | 30.9 |
| 3 persons | 29.0 | 29.2 | 28.0 | 29.1 |
| 4 persons | 24.4 | 21.7 | 18.5 | 17.9 |
| 5 or more persons | 12.5 | 12.8 | 10.8 | 10.5 |
| **Number of children in the household (%)** | | | | |
| No children | 59.0 | 55.3 | 45.2 | 38.1 |
| 1 child | 21.7 | 22.7 | 22.9 | 26.8 |
| 2 children | 15.2 | 15.7 | 22.3 | 22.5 |
| 3 or more children | 4.1 | 6.3 | 9.6 | 12.6 |
| **Number of adults contributing to household income (%)** | | | | |
| 1 adult | 30.1 | 30.0 | 60.1 | 67.6 |
| 2 adults | 54.2 | 58.2 | 25.3 | 22.6 |
| 3 adults | 10.7 | 8.4 | 10.1 | 7.2 |
| 4 or more adults | 5.1 | 3.5 | 4.4 | 2.5 |
| **Household income (%)** | | | | |
| Less than $10,000 | 13.8 | 10.8 | 57.0 | 58.6 |
| $10,000 to $19,999 | 30.0 | 31.4 | 34.8 | 35.9 |
| $20,000 to $29,999 | 25.4 | 22.9 | 5.7 | 3.5 |
| $30,000 or more | 30.9 | 34.9 | +++ | 1.9 |

*(continued)*

**Table 7.2: Comparison of ISFUS Respondents With the Study Sample (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | EI | | IA | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | ISFUS Sample | Full Sample | ISFUS Sample | Full Sample |
| **Number of years worked at a paid job since turning 16 years of age (%)** | | | | |
| Never | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.9 | 9.9 |
| Less than 1 year | 2.9 | 3.7 | 18.4 | 20.1 |
| 1–2 years | +++ | 3.0 | 10.5 | 10.5 |
| 3–5 years | 13.7 | 9.4 | 18.4 | 14.3 |
| 6–9 years | 9.8 | 9.9 | 12.5 | 12.3 |
| 10 or more years | 71.6 | 74.0 | 32.2 | 33.0 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using data from the CEIP enrolment form.

**Notes:** Respondents who failed to respond to an item were not included in the calculations.

+++ indicates that the statistic was based on a sample size of less than five. To protect the confidentiality of individuals in the study, statistics based on sample sizes of less than five are not published by SRDC.

[a]Categories do not add up to 100 per cent because some individuals have more than one education credential.

A multivariate regression analysis was also performed (results not presented) to test for statistically significant differences between the study sample and the survey sample, separately for EI and IA. The characteristics shown in Table 7.2 were specified as independent variables. The dependent variable was a dummy variable indicating whether the individual was in the ISFUS sample or only in the study sample. The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the survey sample and the study sample for only the EI sample and at the 10 per cent level of significance. Looking at Table 7.2, this may be due to observed differences in gender and marital status between the survey and study sample. The EI survey sample has a higher proportion of men (63.1 per cent versus 58.4 per cent) and a lower proportion of women (36.9 per cent versus 41.6 per cent) than the EI study sample. In addition, the proportion of single EI volunteers in the ISFUS sample is larger than that in the full study sample (32.3 per cent versus 26.8 per cent). However, this is not an indication of a systematic difference and does not compromise the applicability of the results to the full sample given the small size of the differences.

Results from the ISFUS survey demonstrate that respondents knew about the main features of CEIP. As presented in Table 7.3, when asked to name the main features of CEIP, two thirds of EI respondents and three quarters of IA respondents mentioned that it provided employment. Over one third of EI and half of IA respondents also mentioned that it was a three-year employment program. When respondents who did not mention CEIP's three-year eligibility were asked how long participants were eligible for CEIP, 95.6 per cent of the EI group and 94.9 per cent of the IA group provided the correct response.

Notwithstanding that respondents were less likely to name other CEIP features on their own, the vast majority were able to provide the correct response when asked directly about each feature. For example, 90.1 per cent of EI respondents and 79.6 per cent of IA respondents knew the weekly amount that was paid by CEIP for 35 hours of work. The vast majority also knew that CEIP provided short-term training, job-search assistance, time off for sickness and personal reasons, and optional medical coverage.

**Table 7.3: Knowledge About CEIP**

| Features | EI Sample | IA Sample |
|---|---|---|
| **Main features of CEIP reported without prompting (%)** | | |
| Employment | 67.3 | 74.7 |
| Employment for up to 3 years | 37.3 | 50.0 |
| Weekly payments of $285[a] | 12.0 | 28.5 |
| Training opportunities | 20.3 | 14.6 |
| Job-search assistance / portfolio development | 14.3 | 11.4 |
| Paid leave for sickness or personal time | 2.3 | +++ |
| Optional health benefits | 15.2 | 8.2 |
| New experience/skills | 23.0 | 12.0 |
| New contacts | 12.0 | 7.6 |
| Other | 18.9 | 4.4 |
| Among those who did not provide features of CEIP without prompting, per cent who knew when asked that | | |
| Participants were eligible for CEIP for 3 years | 95.6 | 94.9 |
| CEIP weekly payment amount was in the range of $280 to $300 | 90.1 | 79.6 |
| Participants can receive short-term training while in CEIP | 86.7 | 83.1 |
| Job-search assistance will be available to help find a job after CEIP | 65.6 | 68.6 |
| Participants will not lose pay for sick or personal time off from CEIP | 66.0 | 59.1 |
| Participants have an option for medical coverage while on CEIP | 89.7 | 86.2 |
| Per cent who reported the following main features with or without prompting | | |
| Employment for up to 3 years | 99.1 | 99.4 |
| CEIP weekly payments of $285 | 91.2 | 85.4 |
| Short-term training | 89.4 | 85.4 |
| Job-search assistance | 70.5 | 72.2 |
| Paid leave for sickness or personal time | 19.8 | 22.8 |
| Optional medical coverage | 91.2 | 87.3 |
| Per cent who reported with or without prompting | | |
| The first two features above | 90.3 | 85.4 |
| The first three features above | 80.7 | 73.4 |
| The first four features above | 57.6 | 57.0 |
| The first five features above | 12.0 | 12.7 |
| All six main features above | 11.1 | 9.5 |
| Per cent who knew that they can | | |
| Accept or decline the offer after being randomly assigned to the program group | 92.6 | 94.3 |
| Leave the program anytime after signing the Project Participation Agreement | 93.6 | 93.0 |
| **Weekly hours required for active participation** | | |
| Per cent who reported that the hours required per week are | | |
| Less than 35 hours per week | 2.8 | 1.9 |
| 35 hours per week | 82.5 | 74.1 |
| 40 hours per week/full-time | 11.1 | 17.1 |
| Other/don't know | 3.7 | 7.0 |

*(continued)*

**Table 7.3: Knowledge About CEIP (Cont'd)**

| Features | EI Sample | IA Sample |
|---|---|---|
| **The effect of participation on EI/IA benefits** | | |
| Per cent who knew | | |
| EI/IA benefits would be affected if they joined CEIP | 84.8 | 89.2 |
| That EI would not provide a top-up if EI benefits were higher | 71.9 | n/a |
| That they may be able to receive a top-up from IA | n/a | 36.7 |
| Among those who knew their benefits would be affected, per cent who reported | | |
| They must stop receiving regular EI or IA while on CEIP | 93.5 | 92.2 |
| **Terminations from CEIP** | | |
| Per cent reporting the following reasons why active CEIP status can be lost | | |
| Resume/begin to collect regular EI benefits | 28.1 | 24.7 |
| Resume/begin to collect income assistance | 7.4 | 23.4 |
| Unsafe or illegal behaviour (theft, assault, drug use, harassment) | 17.5 | 14.6 |
| Poor performance (repeated lateness, absenteeism) | 50.2 | 53.2 |
| Other | 25.4 | 9.5 |
| Per cent reporting that if an individual quits CEIP they are certain to be able to receive EI benefits | 24.0 | 15.2 |
| Among those who said EI was not a certainty if an individual quit CEIP, per cent who reported the following reason this may be so | | |
| Might be disqualified for quitting CEIP without just cause | 80.6 | 69.4 |
| No weeks of EI remaining on previous claim | 4.2 | +++ |
| Have not obtained sufficient hours to qualify for a new claim | 6.7 | 13.4 |
| Other | 9.1 | 3.0 |
| **Responsibility for project approval and supervision** | | |
| Per cent reporting project approval as the responsibility of | | |
| Local communities | 43.3 | 27.2 |
| CEIP office | 24.9 | 24.7 |
| Other | 16.1 | 17.7 |
| Per cent reporting participant's supervision as the responsibility of | | |
| The project sponsor | 38.3 | 40.5 |
| Other | 18.4 | 19.0 |
| Don't know/refused | 43.3 | 40.5 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using data from the Information Session Follow-Up Survey.

**Notes:** +++ indicates that the statistic was based on a sample size of less than five. To protect the confidentiality of individuals in the study, statistics based on sample sizes of less than five are not published by SRDC.

[a]Responses in the range of $280 to $300 were considered acceptable for this survey. The CEIP weekly payment increases whenever there is an increase in the Nova Scotia minimum wage. The CEIP payment started at $280 and is currently at $300 for 35 hours of work per week.

Further evidence of respondents' knowledge of CEIP is demonstrated by their responses to queries on the voluntary nature of CEIP and required weekly hours of participation. Almost everyone knew that CEIP was a voluntary program and that they could withdraw at any time.

When asked how many hours per week CEIP participants were required to work on CEIP, 82.5 per cent of EI and 74.1 per cent of IA sample members responded correctly that 35 hours per week were required.

Since CEIP is an alternative to EI and IA, it was important that participants understood the effect participation in CEIP would have on their benefits. The results suggest that, in general, respondents understood this feature and thus made an informed decision to join CEIP. Table 7.3

also illustrates that EI respondents were knowledgeable about the effects participation in CEIP would have on the receipt of EI benefits: 84.8 per cent knew that their EI benefits would be affected and 71.9 per cent knew that a top-up would not be available if their weekly regular EI benefit amount exceeded the CEIP weekly wage. Of those who knew that their EI benefits would be affected, 93.5 per cent knew that they had to stop receiving regular EI to participate in CEIP.

While IA respondents knew quite clearly that their benefits would be affected, they were less sure about the availability of a top-up. Consequently 89.2 per cent reported that participation in CEIP would affect their IA benefits and of these 92.2 per cent acknowledged that they must give up IA in order to do so. However, only 36.7 per cent of IA respondents were aware that they might be eligible for an IA top-up if they joined CEIP.

Respondents seemed less well informed on reasons for termination from CEIP and responsibility for project approval and supervision. When asked why someone might lose their status as an active program participant, respondents were more likely to mention reasons associated with poor performance on the job — 50.2 per cent of EI and 53.2 per cent of IA respondents. Much lower proportions mentioned resuming collection of EI or IA benefits. However, this does not imply that respondents were not aware of this feature. The vast majority had mentioned earlier in the survey that they had to give up their EI or IA benefits in order to participate in CEIP.

Most respondents were unaware that project approval is the responsibility of the community boards (57 per cent of EI respondents; 73 per cent of IA respondents) and that project sponsors are responsible for the supervision of participants on project sites (62 per cent of EI respondents; 60 per cent of IA respondents).

The findings presented thus suggest that ISFUS responses provide a valid measure of CEIP participants' knowledge about CEIP. Overall, participants were well informed about the various features of the project and were making an informed decision to forgo EI or IA benefits and volunteer for the chance to be work on CEIP projects.

Thus, in general, the following holds true:

- The survey sample and the full sample, for both EI and IA, appear to be similar in most characteristics.
- For both EI and IA, there are no systematic differences that would suggest inconsistencies between the samples.
- The findings from the survey can be used to estimate how much the full study sample, including both EI and IA sample members, knew initially about CEIP.

## THE NON-VOLUNTEER SURVEY

The previous section demonstrates that those who attended an information session and volunteered by completing a CEIP application form were well informed when they decided to join CEIP. This section explores the reasons why non-volunteers did not respond to the CEIP offer. Of the 6,784 individuals (5,980 EI beneficiaries, 804 IA recipients) who were invited to participate in CEIP, 1,522 (1,006 EI beneficiaries; 516 IA recipients) volunteered to join CEIP. Why did some eligible individuals not take advantage of CEIP? Was the CEIP wage too low? Did they find a job before the enrolment period? Did they expect to return to their previous

employer? To help answer these and other questions about non-volunteers, a non-volunteer survey was administered to a random sample of those who did not take up the CEIP offer.

The survey was comprised of five sections. The first four sections asked a series of questions to help understand why selected individuals did not volunteer for the study. The last section collected information on the demographic characteristics of the sample. The primary objective of the non-volunteer survey was to gain an understanding of why some eligible participants did not take up the CEIP offer. The information on demographic characteristics provides a profile of these non-volunteers.[3]

## The Sample

The non-volunteer sample consisted of a random sample of 1,092 eligible EI beneficiaries who received an invitation to join CEIP but did not take up the offer[4] and 173 eligible IA recipients who rejected the CEIP offer and for whom Statistics Canada had telephone contact information.[5] There were two categories of EI and IA non-volunteers: those who attended an information session but did not sign up for CEIP and those who did not attend an information session. As the results presented later show, the majority of EI and IA non-volunteers did not attend an information session.

Table 7.4 shows the response rate for the non-volunteer survey. Slightly more than 71 per cent of the EI non-volunteer sample responded to the survey compared with 65.3 per cent of IA non-volunteers. Given that the target sample consisted of individuals who had already indicated by turning down the offer that they had no interest in CEIP, the response rate is somewhat higher than might have been expected.

**Table 7.4: Non-volunteer Sample Size and Response Rate**

| Caseload | Target Sample | Responded | Response Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| EI | 1,092 | 780 | 71.4 |
| IA | 173 | 113 | 65.3 |
| Total | 1,265 | 893 | 70.6 |

**Source:** Statistics Canada calculations.

## Clarity and Understanding of the Offer Letter

Looking at the first panel in Table 7.5, the data reveal that the vast majority of non-volunteers received the information session invitation letters (91.0 per cent of EI non-volunteers; 89.0 per cent of IA non-volunteers). The table also shows that 93.7 per cent of EI and 100.0 per cent of IA non-volunteers who received the letter thought that it was clearly written. Almost all non-volunteers who received and read the letters found them easy to

[3]During the early phase of CEIP recruitment, the non-volunteer survey was also monitored for information that could be useful in informing program operators about the recruitment process.

[4]Due to administrative problems, the data for 15 EI non-volunteers who were sampled during the 15th month of selection were declared missing by Statistics Canada.

[5]As discussed in Chapter 5, eligible IA recipients were required to give consent to be included in the sample being selected to receive the CEIP offer. To do so they were required to return to Statistics Canada the card that they received from NS-DCS. Only IA non-volunteers whose cards contained a phone number or who visited the CEIP office and provided a phone number were contacted for the non-volunteer survey. As a result, the analyses presented regarding take-up of the CEIP offer may overstate the level of interest in CEIP among IA recipients, and it does not consider the reasons for non-interest among those who did not return the introductory card.

understand (92.2 per cent of EI non-volunteers; 95.8 per cent of IA non-volunteers). These results suggest that non-volunteers understood the offer and therefore that they made a clear and conscious choice not to participate in CEIP.

**Table 7.5: Characteristics of the Non-volunteer Sample**

| | EI Non-volunteers | IA Non-volunteers |
|---|---|---|
| **The invitation letter** | | |
| Per cent who reported receiving the information session invitation letter | 91.0 | 89.0 |
| Among those who reported receiving the invitation letter, per cent who | | |
| Said that they were clearly written | 93.7 | 100.0 |
| Said that the letters were easy to understand | 92.2 | 95.8 |
| **Visited the CEIP office and attended information session** | | |
| Per cent who visited the CEIP office | 14.3 | 26.8 |
| Among those who visited the CEIP office, per cent who attended a CEIP information session | 81.8 | 76.7 |
| Reasons for not attending the information session (%)[a] | | |
| Already working or recall expected | 57.5 | 18.4 |
| Taking education or training | 3.2 | 12.6 |
| Personal, family, or health-related | 7.2 | 31.0 |
| Was not interested in CEIP | 8.6 | 5.7 |
| Did not know about the sessions | 14.3 | 16.1 |
| Transportation problems | 5.2 | 8.0 |
| Not enough money | 1.5 | +++ |
| Away or about to leave the province | 2.8 | +++ |
| Retired / on pension / too old | 2.5 | +++ |
| Union helping with compensation and job search | 1.2 | +++ |
| Did not understand CEIP | 3.1 | +++ |
| Forgot about the sessions | 3.5 | +++ |
| Other | 29.7 | 17.2 |
| Changes needed to attend the information session (%)[a] | | |
| No change | 67.8 | 60.0 |
| More information with letters | 16.9 | 15.4 |
| More flexible session schedules | 3.5 | 7.7 |
| Session in community or help with transportation | 5.8 | 15.4 |
| Other | 10.1 | 12.3 |
| **Understanding of information session** | | |
| Among those who received the invitation letter and attended the information session, per cent who reported that information at the session was | | |
| Easy to understand | 96.7 | 95.7 |
| Very useful | 43.8 | 34.8 |
| Somewhat useful | 42.7 | 47.8 |
| Not very useful | 13.5 | +++ |
| Among those who received the invitation letter and attended the information session, per cent who reported that CEIP offers people | | |
| Employment | 94.3 | 100.0 |
| Education and training | 34.1 | 33.3 |

*(continued)*

**Table 7.5: Characteristics of the Non-volunteer Sample (Cont'd)**

| | EI Non-volunteers | IA Non-volunteers |
|---|---|---|
| **Reasons for not joining CEIP** | | |
| Among those who received the invitation letter and attended the information session, per cent who reported not taking the offer because[a] | | |
| Not enough money | 51.7 | 21.7 |
| Personal, family, or health-related | 14.6 | 30.4 |
| Already working or recall expected | 49.4 | +++ |
| Quality of jobs offered by CEIP | 6.7 | +++ |
| Retired / on pension / too old | 7.9 | +++ |
| Was not interested | 19.1 | +++ |
| Other | 29.2 | 56.5 |
| Among those who received the invitation letter and attended the information session, per cent who reported no changes to CEIP would make them join | 23.5 | 42.1 |

**Source:** Statistics Canada calculations using data from the non-volunteer survey.

**Notes:** Respondents who failed to respond to an item were not included in the calculations.

+++ indicates that the statistic was based on a sample size of less than five. To protect the confidentiality of individuals in the study, statistics based on sample sizes of less than five are not published by SRDC.

[a]Response categories do not add up to 100 per cent because some individuals gave more than one reason.

Panel 2 of Table 7.5 further demonstrates that the letter did not pique the interest of a large proportion of the eligible population enough to want to learn more about the CEIP offer. Although the letter made it obvious that more information about CEIP was available at the information session and that there would be no loss in benefits for merely attending the sessions, the vast majority of the non-volunteer survey sample (approximately 88 per cent of EI and 79 per cent of IA non-volunteers) chose not to attend.

## Reasons for Not Attending the Information Session

CEIP non-volunteers reported diverse reasons for not attending the information session. The most common reason reported by EI volunteers was that they were already working or expecting to be recalled by a previous employer (57.5 per cent). This suggests that many EI beneficiaries may have found employment shortly after being randomly selected to receive a CEIP information session invitation letter and that CEIP was not an attractive offer for many individuals who were expecting to return to a previous job.[6] In striking contrast, only 18.4 per cent of IA non-volunteers mentioned being already employed or expecting to be called back to work as the reason for not attending the session.

IA non-volunteers were more likely to report personal, family, or health-related reasons for not attending the CEIP information session to which they were invited. While 31.0 per cent of the IA non-volunteer sample reported personal, family, or health-related reasons for not attending an information session, only 7.2 per cent of the EI non-volunteer mentioned any of these reasons.

[6]Four or five weeks could have elapsed from the date Human Resources Development Canada identified recipients from the Cape Breton Regional Municipality who were in receipt of regular EI and the CEIP information session date. Detailed information on the process for sample recruitment is discussed in Chapter 5.

Although, as reported earlier, the overwhelming majority of non-volunteers reported receiving the invitation letters and said the letters were clear and easy to understand, a notable proportion of non-volunteers reported they did not know about the sessions — 14.3 per cent of EI and 16.1 per cent of IA non-volunteers reported being unaware of the sessions. This seemingly contradictory response may simply be because at the time of the interview some individuals may have forgotten about the session because they were not at all interested in the offer.

When asked what changes to the invitation letter would have made them attend the information session, the vast majority said that there were no changes that would have made them attend. However, some EI (16.9 per cent) and IA (15.4 per cent) non-volunteer sample members reported they would have attended an information session if the letters had included more information about CEIP. As discussed in Chapter 5, the invitation letters did not discuss CEIP in great detail; the primary purpose of the letter was to inform individuals about their selection and invite them to an information session where they could learn more about CEIP.

## Reasons for Not Joining the Study

As mentioned in Chapter 5, besides providing more information on CEIP, the information session was the only avenue through which eligible persons could join the study. People who attended the session are most likely those who had an initial interest in the program and wanted to hear more about its features in order to make a decision. Almost all of the EI and IA non-volunteers who attended an information session said that the material presented was easy to understand and useful. As expected, some individuals who attended the information session and heard what CEIP had to offer decided to join the study. But some did not.

Respondents to the non-volunteer survey who attended an information session mentioned several reasons for not joining. Among EI respondents, the most often mentioned reasons were "not enough money" (51.7 per cent) and "already working or expecting to be called back to a previous job" (49.4 per cent). In contrast, only 21.7 per cent of their IA counterparts said that the CEIP wage was the deciding factor. This suggests that many non-volunteers from EI and some from IA were not willing to work for a wage that was less than what they had earned at their previous job or that was less than the amount of benefits they were receiving from EI or IA. The fact that EI non-volunteers were more likely to mention "not enough money" as a reason compared with IA non-volunteers suggests that EI non-volunteers were more likely to have higher earnings and/or benefit payments than their IA counterparts.

A noteworthy proportion of the IA non-volunteers (30.4 per cent) reported personal, family, or health-related reasons for not joining CEIP. Only 14.6 per cent of the EI non-volunteer sample said these types of reasons influenced their decision. Both EI and IA non-volunteers mentioned a multitude of "other" reasons, but no single reason among these was mentioned by a large enough group of respondents to warrant reporting it as its own response category.

## Demographic Characteristics of Non-volunteers

Using simple cross-tabulations on selected characteristics, this subsection looks at whether volunteers are different or similar to non-volunteers.[7] The profile of non-volunteers

[7]Further comparative analyses using multiple regression or chi-squared statistics with cross-tabulations were not possible because of the agreement between Statistics Canada and respondents of the non-volunteer survey on the use of their data. According to this agreement, Statistics Canada could provide SRDC only with aggregate data for the non-volunteer sample.

also provides a better understanding of who might be interested in participating in programs like CEIP. The sample of non-volunteers consists of 780 persons selected from the EI caseload and 113 persons from the IA caseload (the respondents to the non-volunteer survey). The volunteer sample is identical to that presented in Chapter 6 — 998 EI and 516 IA volunteers. Table 7.6 presents tabulation results for both EI and IA non-volunteers and volunteers.

This subsection draws attention to characteristics that show the most striking differences between the samples of volunteers and non-volunteers. However, because of the small sample of IA non-volunteers, the results on differences between IA non-volunteers and their study counterparts should be viewed with caution.

Looking at columns 2 and 3 of Table 7.6, the estimates for EI non-volunteers and EI volunteers in the CEIP study reveal that EI non-volunteers were less likely than EI volunteers to be separated, divorced, or widowed (9.4 per cent of EI non-volunteers; 15.0 per cent of volunteers). They were also less likely to be between the ages of 45 to 54 (25.2 per cent of non-volunteers; 33.0 per cent of volunteers) but more likely to be 55 years of age or older (11.7 per cent of non-volunteers; 7.5 per cent of volunteers).

The proportion of non-volunteers who reported they had a trade or vocational certificate was lower than the proportion of volunteers. For example, 34.1 per cent of non-volunteers had a trade or vocational certificate whereas 43.7 per cent of volunteers reported having this education credential.

Notably, EI non-volunteers were more likely to have worked for 20 or more years since turning 16 years of age and more likely to be employed at the time of the interview than CEIP volunteers — 45.0 per cent of the EI non-volunteer sample reported that they were currently working and only 18.3 per cent of the EI study sample reported that they were currently working.

Columns 4 and 5 of Table 7.6 present the results for IA non-volunteers and volunteers and show that the IA non-volunteer sample has a higher proportion of women (75.2 per cent versus 61.8 per cent) and a lower proportion of men (24.8 per cent versus 38.2 per cent) than the IA study sample. IA non-volunteers were more likely to be married or living as common-law partners than IA volunteers (25.2 per cent versus 18.6 per cent). However, IA non-volunteers were less likely to be divorced, widowed, or separated than IA volunteers (20.7 per cent versus 29.3 per cent).

Like their EI counterparts, IA non-volunteers were less likely to have completed some form of trade or vocational training than IA volunteers — 24.0 per cent of non-volunteers compared with 36.9 per cent for the IA volunteers. This suggests that CEIP may have been attractive to individuals possessing a trades certificate due to the lack of employment for trade skills in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.[8]

[8]For example, in Cape Breton the service-producing sector has grown compared with the goods-producing sector during the last decade. Trade and vocational training would be most suited to the goods-producing sector. According to Human Resources Development Canada's 2001 *Cape Breton Labour Market Review*, in 1991 the service-producing sector in Cape Breton accounted for 71.3 per cent of employment compared with 28.7 per cent for the goods-producing sector (Human Resources Development Canada, 2003a). In 2001 the gap widened with the service-producing sector accounting for 80.3 per cent of employment compared with 19.7 per cent for the goods-producing sector.

**Table 7.6: Comparison of Selected Demographic Characteristics of Non-volunteers and Volunteers**

| Characteristics | EI | | IA | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Non-volunteer Sample | Study Sample | Non-volunteer Sample | Study Sample |
| **Gender (%)** | | | | |
| Male | 63.1 | 58.4 | 24.8 | 38.2 |
| Female | 36.9 | 41.6 | 75.2 | 61.8 |
| **Marital status (%)** | | | | |
| Married or common law | 60.8 | 58.2 | 25.2 | 18.6 |
| Single | 29.8 | 26.8 | 54.1 | 52.2 |
| Separated/divorced/widowed | 9.4 | 15.0 | 20.7 | 29.3 |
| **Age (%)** | | | | |
| Less than 30 years | 21.0 | 20.2 | 30.5 | 31.6 |
| 30–44 years | 42.1 | 39.3 | 51.4 | 47.7 |
| 45–54 years | 25.2 | 33.0 | 14.3 | 17.6 |
| 55 years or older | 11.7 | 7.5 | 3.8 | 3.1 |
| **Education credential (%)[a]** | | | | |
| High school diploma | 67.2 | 69.0 | 57.1 | 60.7 |
| Trade/vocational diploma or certificate | 34.1 | 43.7 | 24.0 | 36.9 |
| Apprenticeship diploma | 6.9 | 12.4 | +++ | 4.9 |
| College diploma | 10.8 | 17.3 | 10.6 | 12.6 |
| University degree | 6.7 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 1.8 |
| Other educational credentials | 4.1 | 17.4 | 6.9 | 17.4 |
| **Number of people in the household (%)** | | | | |
| 1 person | 9.1 | 7.3 | 12.6 | 11.7 |
| 2 persons | 29.2 | 29.0 | 33.3 | 30.9 |
| 3 persons | 29.4 | 29.2 | 34.2 | 29.1 |
| 4 or more persons | 32.3 | 34.6 | 19.8 | 28.3 |
| **Number of adults who contribute to household income (%)** | | | | |
| 1 adult | 31.2 | 30.0 | 67.6 | 67.6 |
| 2 adults | 55.7 | 58.2 | 25.2 | 22.6 |
| 3 or more adults | 13.1 | 11.9 | 7.2 | 9.7 |
| **Number of years worked at a paid job since turning 16 years of age (%)** | | | | |
| None | 0.0 | 0.0 | 21.1 | 9.9 |
| Less than 2 years | 1.2 | 4.1 | 5.5 | 24.1 |
| 2–4 years | 5.1 | 8.5 | 11.9 | 16.7 |
| 5–9 years | 12.7 | 13.4 | 20.2 | 16.3 |
| 10–14 years | 13.1 | 15.1 | 12.8 | 10.7 |
| 15–20 years | 14.2 | 19.8 | 12.8 | 12.5 |
| 20 or more years | 53.5 | 39.2 | 15.6 | 9.9 |
| **Years living in Cape Breton** | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 1.5 | 1.7 | 0.0 | +++ |
| 1–9 years | 2.5 | 2.9 | 6.6 | 4.5 |
| 10–14 years | 1.8 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 2.5 |
| 15–19 years | 3.0 | 2.0 | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| 20 or more years | 91.3 | 91.9 | 88.7 | 88.2 |
| Currently employed | 45.0 | 18.3 | 28.4 | 16.7 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations using data from the CEIP enrolment form and Statistics Canada calculations using data from the non-volunteer survey.

**Notes:** Respondents who failed to respond to an item were not included in the calculations.

+++ indicates that the statistic was based on a sample size of less than five. To protect the confidentiality of individuals in the study, statistics based on sample sizes of less than five are not published by SRDC.

[a]Categories do not add up to 100 per cent because some individuals have more than one education credential.

Another remarkable result shown in Table 7.6 is the proportion of IA non-volunteers who had no or little work experience compared with IA volunteers — 21.1 per cent of non-volunteers said they never worked and 5.5 per cent said they worked for less than two years since turning 16 years of age. In contrast, only 9.9 per cent of IA volunteers said they had never worked and 24.1 per cent said they had less than two years of work experience. However, non-volunteers from the IA caseload were also more likely to have 20 or more years of work experience than were volunteers (15.6 per cent of IA non-volunteers; 9.9 per cent of IA volunteers).

## CONCLUSION

The results from the ISFUS and non-volunteer surveys demonstrate that participants and potential participants of CEIP understood the CEIP offer. However, while some individuals saw participation in CEIP as an attractive alternative to government benefits (EI and IA) and therefore signed up for CEIP, others did not. Those who signed up for CEIP were knowledgeable about the main features about CEIP. Those who did not sign up did so for diverse reasons. Among EI non-volunteers, the most often mentioned reasons were that the CEIP wage was too low or that they had already found a job or were expecting to return to a previous employer. On the other hand, IA non-volunteers reported that personal, family, and health reasons were the main reason they decided not to join CEIP.

The characteristics of non-volunteers and volunteers demonstrate that the EI non-volunteers were different from their volunteers in some respects. Non-volunteers were less likely to be separated, divorced, or widowed. They were also less likely to be between the ages of 45 and 54 and to have a trade or vocational certificate. But they were more likely to be 55 years of age or older, to have worked for 20 or more years since turning 16 years of age, and to be employed at the time of the interview. The profiles of IA volunteers and non-volunteers show that non-volunteers were more likely to be women, to be married or living with a common-law partner, and have little or no work experience. The results also show that IA non-volunteers were less likely to be divorced, widowed, or separated and less likely to have attained a trade or vocational certificate than IA volunteers.

# Chapter 8:
# The CEIP Office

This chapter discusses the establishment of the service delivery centre for the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP). It is important to keep in mind that the most significant element of the program that was delivered to CEIP program group members was the opportunity they had to work on projects developed and operated in the communities. This component of CEIP is not discussed in any detail here; it will be dealt with in the next CEIP report. The description in this chapter covers the delivery of services from recruitment through to the matching of participants to project placements.

The successful implementation of CEIP required a program with a unique set of services and delivery partners. The process of engaging local organizations is described in this chapter, as is the selection and development of a consortium of local delivery partners. The chapter then provides a detailed description of the program services provided by the CEIP office staff and their associated operating activities. This review covers the operations that were implemented following the recruitment of CEIP participants, including the orientation process, the provision of post-orientation program services, job matching and participant management activities, and project approval and monitoring. The chapter ends with a description of the management information and payroll systems that were implemented to maintain research data, facilitate program operations, and process payments for participants.

## ENGAGING LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

There was significant potential for CEIP to benefit from tapping into existing community networks. Involving organizations with a pre-existing public profile and extensive operational experience in the community would quickly establish credibility for the project. In addition, existing organizations with well-developed contact networks in the community could be engaged in an effort to mobilize the communities in the study area.[1]

With the decision made to look to the community for support in the delivery of CEIP, the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC) issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in September 1999. The RFP solicited proposals from individuals and organizations interested in providing delivery services for CEIP including skill assessments, job-search and other training services, overall management of project participants, and the provision of community development expertise for the community groups.

The RFP produced 13 responses from organizations with a presence in the study area, which were reviewed by SRDC and rated on their understanding of the research design, their prior related experience, the capacity of the organization, and their innovative approach to service delivery. Proponents that had submitted viable proposals were scheduled for a second round of in-person evaluation meetings. During those meetings,

[1]Ultimately, this did not become a responsibility of the CEIP office or the consortium partners.

SRDC gained a better understanding of the strengths that each organization offered to the delivery of CEIP.

SRDC was pleased with the overall quality of the proponents that were selected for the final round of the RFP evaluation process. However, the in-person meetings identified two major concerns for SRDC. The first concern was that although most of the organizations had submitted comprehensive proposals designed to provide all of the required services, in some cases there were questions as to the capacity of these organizations to deliver a comprehensive service without encountering some of the same project start-up issues that SRDC would have faced if it had decided to operate the CEIP delivery system directly. In other words, it was apparent that SRDC could not tap into the existing capacity of the organizations; they were already running at full capacity.

The second concern was that a few of these organizations carried a very high profile in the community and there was a danger that CEIP could be viewed by the public as merely a small part of one organization's activities. There was a consensus that CEIP, as an entity in its own right, should have its own high profile in the community.

## BUILDING THE CEIP OFFICE CONSORTIUM

SRDC saw potential in all of the finalist organizations to contribute to CEIP. Each of the finalists was perceived by SRDC to be strong in a specific set of functions that were complementary to one another and, if partnered together, could form the backbone of a strong stand-alone CEIP service delivery office.

The consortium approach offered three important advantages: the project could access the resources of several organizations, reducing the possibility that any one of them would be over stretched; the project would help to build the capacity of local organizations; and by bringing several organizations together under the CEIP name, the identity of the project would be enhanced.

Building a consortium to run the CEIP office could act as a demonstration of one theory that CEIP was designed to investigate — that groups within the community could come together around a cause and produce tangible benefits for the community at large. That several organizations could come together to build and staff the CEIP delivery office would demonstrate a broad acceptance and support for the aims of the project.

Each of the RFP finalist organizations was presented with a proposal from SRDC to participate in CEIP as a partner in the consortium that would operate the CEIP office. The CEIP office would deliver services directly to participants and act as the coordinating body that would match participants to sponsored employment opportunities that had gained the approval of the community boards. All of the organizations agreed to accept the roles proposed by SRDC, and contracts were drawn up detailing the extent of the involvement of each organization in terms of staff commitments and specific tasks. Excluded from the selection of consortium partners was a provider of community development expertise.[2]

[2]SRDC judged that the selection of a partner to provide community development expertise was premature at that stage. CEIP did not want to be seen to be imposing this service on the project communities until they defined their needs.

The organizations that agreed to form the "four corners" of the CEIP consortium are listed below with a summary of the role that they agreed to perform within the CEIP office.

- **The Cape Breton Family YMCA.** This community-based non-profit organization agreed to four key responsibilities: office management, coordinating enrolment, participant management, and the provision of training activities.
- **Breton Business Center (BBC).** A local employment placement agency, BBC agreed to undertake the "job-matching" responsibilities.
- **Breton Rehab Services (BRS).** A local business that specializes in assessing individuals in a rehabilitation setting, BRS was given a mandate to conduct employability assessments of CEIP program group members.
- **Atlantic Coastal Action Program – Cape Breton (ACAP-CB).** A non-profit organization that conducts large-scale environmental protection projects, ACAP-CB agreed to manage the transitional project activity designed to provide participants with meaningful activities when they were between community-sponsored project assignments.

## THE CEIP OFFICE

The consortium partners came together in December 1999 to begin planning for the opening of the CEIP office. Working as a team, the partners worked on a series of initial tasks including the preparation of an office location, implementation of office policies and procedures, development of the information scripts and routines to be used in the presentation of the CEIP opportunity to recruits, and the testing of the project management information system (PMIS).

The location chosen for the CEIP office was the vacant ground floor of a building on the main downtown street in Sydney. It was chosen because it met most of the important search criteria: it was available, centrally located within the study area, accessible by public transportation, and large enough to allow for the processing of large groups of participants during the recruitment and orientation phase of the project.

By the end of August 2000 the CEIP office was officially opened and the recruitment process was underway. The initial staff complement consisted of five employees including an office manager, one participant manager, an assessment coordinator, a training coordinator, and a job-placement coordinator. As the recruitment intensified during 2001, the increased pace of enrolment created demands for more space to house the participants involved in information and orientation sessions. In January 2002 the CEIP resource centre was opened. This facility provided additional space in support of the recruitment activities and also housed participants taking part in training sessions and a portion of the transitional work projects. By mid-year 2002 the CEIP office staff complement had grown to 10 with the addition of three participant managers, a project registrar, and a project-site monitoring officer.

## CEIP OFFICE OPERATIONS

Although the CEIP office operations began with the recruitment of the CEIP research sample in July 2000, the CEIP office was officially opened in August of 2000 and played a

central role in the recruitment process alongside Statistics Canada (which conducted random selection, managed baseline sample data, and carried out random assignment). Following the initial outreach letters to the randomly selected sample, the CEIP office was the point of first contact, where potential participants could call to learn more about the study. Staff responded to initial queries and arranged CEIP information sessions, which they would subsequently facilitate. During the information sessions, staff carried out the crucial role of introducing CEIP and obtaining informed consent from those interested in participating.

In addition to coordinating the outreach and information sessions, the CEIP office was responsible for follow-up with potential participants during their eight-week eligibility period to join the study. The CEIP office also managed participant data during this period, forwarding consent forms to Statistics Canada in preparation for random assignment. Rigorous administrative batch shipping procedures were carried out to maintain participant confidentiality and ensure accurate processing of consent and baseline research data.

Chapter 5 discusses elements of this recruitment process, which led to random assignment. The focus of the remainder of this chapter is on the operations of the CEIP office that occurred following random assignment. In the first instance, this involved informing study participants whether they were assigned to the program or control group and inviting those assigned to the program group to an orientation session where they could complete their enrolment in the program. For participants who completed their enrolment, a two-week orientation period was provided in which participants received an employability assessment and both transferable skills and job-readiness training.[3]

The majority of CEIP office operations, however, are conducted after the orientation period, when participants are eligible for CEIP work placements and other program services. The next subsection describes the services and operating procedures associated with participant management including the job-matching process, the administration of disciplinary procedures, and the provision of transferable-skills training; and a final subsection discusses the operations associated with managing community and transitional projects, the maintenance of a project registry, and monitoring sponsor activity.

## Notification, Orientation Sessions, and the Completion of Enrolment in CEIP

Participants who signed a consent form following the information session were randomly assigned to either the program group or the control group. The CEIP office was responsible for informing participants to which group they had been assigned. Immediately following random assignment, the CEIP office was sent an encrypted file from Statistics Canada, which contained the names and addresses of those who were randomly assigned to the program and control group. The file was uploaded to the PMIS and notification letters were generated for both program and control group members, alerting them to their program status. Participants who had been assigned to the program group were also mailed a letter inviting them to an orientation session. Program group members had five weeks from the date on their notification letter to attend an orientation session and sign a Project Participation Agreement (PPA) or their program eligibility would expire.

[3]The first participants went through orientation during the week of October 2–6, 2000. Orientation was initially provided in a single week and was focused on the employability assessment. In January 2002 an additional week was added, during which elements of job-readiness and transferable skills training were provided. Participants who had gone through orientation prior to its expansion were invited back to attend the additional week of training.

It was important to maximize the number of program members who followed through and began to actively participate in CEIP. The CEIP office implemented procedures for tracking and follow-up of program group members during their five-week window for completing enrolment in the program. After the initial notification and invitation letters were sent, CEIP office staff telephoned program group members to encourage them to attend the scheduled sessions. Group sessions were rescheduled when necessary and individualized sessions were also made available.

In addition to coordinating orientation sessions and managing contacts with program group members, the CEIP office also responded to inquiries from the control group. Control group members could contact the CEIP office or SRDC to ask questions about the notification letter that they received and, more generally, about their eligibility for CEIP. Although the control group notification letter contained an SRDC contact number for inquiries, some members of the control group contacted the CEIP office. Given the importance of keeping control group members in the research sample, procedures and scripts were developed for handling these inquiries. Staff could confirm control group member status through the PMIS and explain that the individual was ineligible for CEIP services. The process of random assignment would be reiterated, the eligibility for other non-CEIP services explained, and the importance of the control group reaffirmed.

### *The Orientation Session*

The purpose of the orientation session was to inform participants about the rights and obligations of program participation, in an effort to ensure participants fully understood the offer, and to complete the enrolment process by obtaining a signed PPA and other essential program documents. The orientation session provided participants with a detailed description of the obligations and benefits associated with program participation, explained the role of the CEIP office, and, most importantly, introduced the PPA. It was explained to participants that program eligibility was dependent upon signing the PPA.

A detailed review of the agreement was conducted at each session where participants' questions and concerns were addressed. Each section of the PPA provided the basis for summarizing the major issues that were relevant to program group members who were considering whether to become active participants in CEIP. Each section of the agreement was covered, including participant responsibilities, compensation, eligibility, workplace behaviour and disciplinary procedures, liability, and information sharing. Following discussion of the main document, the accompanying schedules on participant responsibilities and disciplinary procedures were reviewed. Participants were also advised that program eligibility required a criminal records check to be completed; however, the results would be taken into consideration only in deciding how, not whether, to place participants.[4]

Program group members were given an opportunity to sign the PPA and complete their enrolment in CEIP. Although individuals were encouraged to sign the PPA at the session, the opportunity to take home the agreement for subsequent return was available. In these

[4]Confidentiality of the criminal records check was maintained. Access to the specific results of the record search was restricted to the CEIP office manager and staff involved in job matching. The records search was performed to aid in the job-matching process and avoid placements that were unsuitable for participants with a history of particular criminal offences.

instances, staff reminded participants of the five-week expiry date and conducted follow-up procedures subsequent to the session to encourage the completion of enrolment.

#### *Completing Enrolment in CEIP*

For those who chose to join the program by signing the PPA, the completion of a number of additional administrative documents was required. These related to the administration of CEIP payments, the optional health plan, and the criminal record search. Participants were required to complete a TD1 form for taxation purposes and to provide banking information if they requested direct deposit of their CEIP wages. Those interested in the CEIP health plan completed applications and selected a specific type of medical coverage (i.e. individual or family coverage). Finally, each participant was required to complete an authorization for the criminal records search.

Following each orientation session, follow-up contact was made with each program group member who failed to attend as well as with those who attended but took the PPA home for subsequent return. CEIP staff also updated, in the PMIS, the status of each program group member who attended the session, and they prepared to activate CEIP payments for those who joined the program. Active participation in CEIP generally began in the week following the date that a participant completed the PPA and submitted all required documentation. Key documents were processed following the sessions and were forwarded to the appropriate third-party service providers, for example health benefit applications were sent to Atlantic Blue Cross and criminal records checks were sent to the Central Division of the Cape Breton Regional Police Service. Finally, formal notification was sent to participants' Human Resources Centre of Canada and to Nova Scotia Department of Community Services offices to notify them of the onset of each participant's three-year period of CEIP eligibility.

### CEIP Orientation Period

Upon signing the PPA, participants took part in a two-week orientation period. In most cases, orientation began the first Monday after the PPA was signed and was the start of formal program activity for participants. The orientation was designed to introduce participants to CEIP, conduct a detailed assessment of their employability, and provide some transferable-skills and job-readiness training. The implementation of each of the key components of the orientation is described in more detail below.

#### *Employability Assessment*

The employability assessment was an important part of the orientation. It was necessary for participants to be job-ready prior to being placed in community projects. The employability assessment also provided a profile of participants that would be useful in coordinating their work placements. Hence, the employability assessment had two primary purposes: to identify participants with serious behavioural or skill deficits that precluded their employability and to document participant skills and abilities, education, and interests in order to facilitate the job-matching process and initiate the development of a portfolio.

Professional assessment facilitators conducted employability assessments.[5] The assessment process consisted of a variety of self-assessment and testing exercises, followed by a one-on-one interview with an experienced assessment facilitator. Three primary assessment instruments were utilized: the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT), the Self-Directed Search (SDS), and a Transferable Skills Module.

The CAAT was the main testing tool used in the assessment. It measures an individual's aptitude in mathematics, reading, and language and is designed to test cognitive ability. The transferable skills component was divided into two exercises: the "Working Scales" and "Surveying Our Skills" modules, which were included in order to assess workplace competencies beyond academic or technical skills and knowledge. Low measures on the CAAT or in these key competency areas are indicators of skill or behavioural deficits. The SDS is a career interest inventory used to identify an individual's dominant personality categories, which can predict their degree of fit with different occupations. This self-assessment tool was included primarily to aid the job-matching process.

The mixture of testing and self-assessment allowed the office staff to determine whether there were inconsistencies between individuals' self-assessments and their test results. The results of the testing exercises were discussed with participants and compared with their self-assessments in the assessment interview. The assessment facilitator played down the testing aspect of assessment. Participants were told the assessment was not a screening device but an aid to help place them in suitable projects.

The testing and self-directed exercises generally took three full days to complete. The CAAT test itself required about a day, though individuals were given extra time to complete the test if required. There were times when the CAAT was interspersed with the transferable skills exercises, while at other times it was completed prior to the transferable skills modules.

Results of the CAAT, transferable skills exercises, and the SDS were summarized in a Participant Assessment Report (PAR), which was completed by the assessment facilitator. The PAR represents the summation of assessment work throughout the week. Key results were then transferred from the assessment report to the PMIS, to be utilized by participant managers in arranging any required job-readiness training modules and by the placement coordinator for the subsequent job-matching process.

### *Assessment Interviews*

Participants met for a one-on-one interview with the assessment coordinator upon completion of assessment procedures. Each interview required 15 to 25 minutes to complete. Individuals completed the assessment exercises at varying times; consequently interviews occurred at various times throughout the first week of the orientation period.

The purpose of the interview was to supplement the formal testing instruments with the observations of an experienced assessment facilitator. In this interview, participants were told for the first time of their results on the testing exercises and outcomes were compared with participant self-assessments during the interview. Ultimately, the interview and testing results

[5]The assessors were employees of Breton Rehab Services. There was one primary assessor; three other employees of Breton Rehab Services helped with the assessment process during holidays and when numbers required. There were times when as many as three assessors were working at once.

led to a formal decision and recommendations from the assessment coordinator regarding the participant's need for job-readiness training.

### *Placement Interviews*

Participants also met for a one-on-one interview with the placement coordinator during the orientation period. However, as enrolment increased the feasibility of such an arrangement was not always possible. Participant managers began conducting placement interviews when the volume of participants became too large for the placement coordinator to complete them exclusively.

During the interview participants were asked a series of 14 questions. They were asked to discuss their strengths and weaknesses, describe their attitudes toward jobs and training, and to comment on hypothetical situations that may arise in the workplace. Placement interviews were designed to provide CEIP with the requisite information, in conjunction with other tests and interviews, to place participants into projects that were a good fit with their personal skills and characteristics. Each interview required 15 to 25 minutes to complete. Placement interviews were usually conducted after assessment interviews and also occurred throughout the first week of the orientation period. Details of the placement interview were captured in hard copy on a Participant Data sheet and subsequently transferred to the PMIS for use in job matching.

### *Transferable Skills Training*

CEIP is not a training intervention; rather it is a community employment program. However, CEIP does offer some transferable skills training. During the first week of orientation, a CEIP staff member provided an overview of the training that is available to participants throughout their CEIP eligibility period. Participants were provided with a training summary and selection sheet, which contained a list of transferable skills training modules that they could express an interest in receiving. This allowed office staff to judge the level of interest and coordinate the delivery of the various training modules.

Participants received some of the transferable skills training during the orientation period. An Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) workshop, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training, and CPR / first aid training were provided to all participants. Subcontractors delivered these training modules during orientation.[6] Participants could also enrol in computer training through CEIP, however this training was not delivered during orientation; it was generally made available to participants during their three-year eligibility period between community work placements. Participants received a computer training enrolment form that they could fill out and return to the CEIP office if they were interested in taking the training. The form included an assessment to determine their proficiency level and which the CEIP office used to determine whether the participant required a one- or two-week course. Computer training courses have been running with seven participants in each session.

[6]The Nova Scotia Department of Labour delivered the OHS training, St. John Ambulance delivered the first aid / CPR training, and Jerry's Safety Training delivered WHMIS training.

### *Portfolio-Building Overview*

Participants were introduced to portfolio building during the orientation period. Staff introduced the concept of a portfolio, discussed how to develop a portfolio, and emphasized its usefulness in the context of a job search. The portfolio was described as a collection of materials representing an individual's skills, activities, and past work experiences.

Participants completed a portfolio-building worksheet following the introduction. The worksheet collected information on past work experiences, educational attainment, and volunteer work completed. It serves as a baseline for the ongoing development of the participant's portfolio throughout their CEIP eligibility period.

### *Job-Readiness Training*

The second week of orientation was comprised of job-readiness training. Two workshops were developed using selected job-readiness training modules and were delivered to all participants. They were organized around themes of "Survival in the Workplace" and "How to Be a More Effective Person."[7] Both were designed to provide information to participants to help them in both their personal and professional life. Although the original project design called for job-readiness training to be provided based on the results of the employability assessment or subsequently identified performance problems, CEIP office staff judged participation in the two workshops to be beneficial for all participants prior to their first placements.

The "Survival in the Workplace" workshop was comprised of five sessions delivered over a two-day period: two sessions on Day 1 (time and stress management) and three sessions on Day 2 (communication in the workplace, problem solving and decision making, and conflict resolution). The workshops were structured around individual exercises and video presentations. Two staff from Breton Rehab Services (including the CEIP assessment coordinator) delivered the "Survival in the Workplace" workshop. Two separate subcontractors delivered the "How to Be a More Effective Person" workshop over a daylong session, more loosely structured without the use of videos or exercises. Both workshops were held in the CEIP Resource Centre.

Although not provided as part of the formal job-readiness workshops during the orientation period, the Christopher leadership course is offered to interested participants throughout their eligibility period. The course provides individuals with tools and knowledge required to be more effective communicators and builds self-confidence and self-esteem and improves public-speaking skills. The Christopher leadership course, as offered through CEIP, is a 10-week program, consisting of a one half-day session per week. Volunteers from the Cape Breton chapter offered the course, while some CEIP participants have become Christopher leaders and are able to deliver courses.

## Managing Participants After Orientation

Each participant is assigned to a participant manager while in CEIP and has ongoing contact throughout the period of program eligibility. The participant manager has regular,

[7]The job-readiness training program compiled by the CEIP office consisted of 36 modules. The "Survival in the Workplace" workshop consisted of 15 of the 36 job-readiness modules. An additional 10 modules were included in the "How to Be an Effective Person" workshop.

scheduled contact with participants to ensure their needs are being met. This involves, at a minimum, phone contact every three months and a site visit every six months. The six-month site visit involves a one-on-one meeting that allows managers to assess the experiences and needs of participants. Participants are asked a series of questions about their experiences and expectations. A record of the interview is placed in their file, which may be used later in developing a portfolio. Participants may also have unscheduled contacts with their participant managers, as they are encouraged to contact their manager if they have needs or concerns that need to be addressed.

As enrolment grew, additional participant managers were hired; however, the caseload of participant managers grew during the period of enrolment. At the peak of enrolment, participant managers were responsible for slightly over 500 participants, which gave each manager direct responsibility for approximately 120 participants.[8] The caseload will decrease as participants exit the program.

### *Disciplinary Procedures*

The project sponsor has responsibility for managing, supervising, and controlling all project activities. However, all corrective actions are the responsibility of the CEIP management team and SRDC staff. In the event of any performance or behavioural problems, CEIP staff are responsible for taking corrective action. In the event of disciplinary problems, sponsors send written reports to the CEIP office. When written reports are received from sponsors, the relevant participant manager fills out an incident report and determines the appropriate corrective action.

There are five levels of corrective action: participant counselling, verbal warning, written warning, suspension, and, finally, termination from CEIP. Participants can be terminated immediately in serious situations such as criminal offences. The decision to terminate is made as a last resort and must be authorized by SRDC.[9] However, prior to termination for behavioural reasons, every effort is made to deal with the situation.

### *Job Matching*

The placement coordinator is responsible for managing the job-matching process throughout the program and maintaining contact with project sponsors to understand their needs. Upon signing the Project Sponsor Agreement (PSA),[10] each sponsor meets with the placement coordinator to review their responsibilities and the procedures for requesting CEIP participants and fulfilling their obligations for supervision. Prior to receiving any participants, sponsors are asked to complete a job order form for each different position. The job order form includes details on the type of position requested, the hours of work, the duties that the participant will be expected to perform, as well as the job requirements and other skills useful for the position. The intent is to match participants to the most suitable assignments based on their skill set and interests. The job order form is the main tool used by the placement coordinator, in conjunction with the participant profile created from the assessment.

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[8]Although the goal was to enrol 750 program group members, some individuals voluntarily left the program while others took temporary leaves of absence. The training coordinator also managed a small group of participants.

[9]As of March 31, 2003, there had been nine individuals terminated from CEIP.

[10]The PSA and responsibilities of project sponsors will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

Before each project begins, the CEIP staff, together with the project sponsor, give a brief project-specific orientation to each participant. This session can take place individually with each participant or with a group of participants; it can also be delivered in person or by telephone. While it is preferable for the project sponsor to be present and to lead the session in a group, it is recognized that time commitments may not allow this. In such an event, the project registrar[11] meets with the sponsor first to ensure that the relevant information is provided to participants. The session includes information on the following matters:

- address and contact name
- duties and responsibilities
- hours of work
- expectations of the project sponsor
- dress code
- whether there is a cafeteria on site
- safety needs
- other issues as required

The placement process is a collaborative effort between the placement coordinator and various participant managers. Participant managers are most familiar with participants' skills and interests, thus making their input in the placement process valuable. Once participants are placed, their participant manager then determines whether they are benefiting from placement experiences. Participant managers may recommend an alternative placement for participants based on information obtained in the phone contact or on-site interviews. In this regard, participant managers assess the needs and progress of participants throughout their program eligibility and suggest a variety of placements to participants that may enhance their skills and networks.

Approved projects are placed on an open projects list and are maintained by the project registrar. The open projects list is updated on a weekly basis and displayed at the CEIP resource centre to advise participants of the various types of placement opportunities that are available. Participants who see projects on the list that they believe would benefit them discuss the placement opportunities with their participant managers and, if they are judged appropriate, a referral is arranged.

### *Portfolio Building*

Participants accumulate a variety of experiences and skills throughout their three-year eligibility period in CEIP. Participants are introduced to portfolio development during the orientation period, and information related to their project experiences and training taken is compiled throughout their program eligibility. During six-month site visits, participant managers review participants' experiences and note any new skills obtained. This material

[11]The responsibilities of the project registrar and placement officer were initially assigned to one CEIP staff member. As enrolment and project development proceeded, there was enough work for an additional staff member and the responsibilities were shared. The project registrar focuses primarily on the maintenance of the project registry and handles contacts with sponsors for project-specific activities. The placement officer is involved in job matching, coordinating contacts with both sponsors and participants.

will later be used in the development of participant portfolios. Participants will be supported in the development process as part of the CEIP exit strategy. Portfolio building will begin in earnest shortly before participants begin to leave the program as their eligibility expires.[12]

### *Self-Directed Projects*

For the most part, community projects are sponsored by local organizations. However, participants, or groups of participants, are given the opportunity to develop their own ideas for projects. For those who chose to pursue this option, participants are given 12 weeks to develop their ideas into projects. To take part in self-directed project development, participants must first take part in a one-week entrepreneurial training course. After that, the CEIP office staff monitors an 11-week project development phase. Project development activities take place in the CEIP resource centre where an additional resource person is available to participants one day a week during the 11-week period to provide advice and encouragement.

Participants seeking approval for self-directed projects must follow the same proposal submission approval process as local organizations that wish to sponsor projects. To date, no self-directed projects have been launched, however the option remains open to each CEIP participant.

### *Transitional Jobs Projects*

Given that the pace of project development within communities is somewhat uncertain, there may be periods of time when not enough community-based project assignments are available to accommodate all CEIP participants. During these periods, unassigned participants are either involved in transferable skills training or are placed in transitional jobs projects administered by ACAP-CB, one of the CEIP consortium partner organizations.

The CEIP placement coordinator coordinates the referral of participants to transitional jobs with the assistance of the transitional jobs project coordinator.[13] Although transitional jobs projects are generally time-insensitive, meaning that participants can be accommodated with little warning, the transitional jobs project manager can better serve the participants with as much advance notice of their placement as possible. In addition to receiving notice of upcoming placements, the transitional project manager needs to receive details regarding the participants' work experience and skills in order to assign them to suitable positions within the various transitional projects.

Procedures were developed to facilitate the process of referral to transitional jobs and to coordinate it with referrals to community-based project placements. Community-based projects are given priority over transitional jobs in the receipt of CEIP participants. As a result, the placement coordinator monitors the availability of community-based project assignments and recalls participants from transitional projects when necessary. This may occur when new projects and/or participant placements are created or when another participant vacates a current community assignment temporarily.

[12]The first set of participants will reach the end of their three-year eligibility period in October 2003.
[13]The primary base of operation for the transitional project coordinator is the ACAP-CB office.

## Liaison With Project Sponsors

### *Project Approval*

Community boards approve project applications according to principles set out in their strategic plans.[14] An SRDC operations staff member and the project-site monitoring officer review project applications, and if applications contain any inconsistencies, they are sent back to the board for clarification. When an application is approved, the project-site monitoring officer contacts the sponsor to review the PSA, which formalizes the relationship between the sponsor, SRDC, and the CEIP office.

The PSA is a formal agreement between SRDC and the project sponsor, which lays out the rights and legal responsibilities of CEIP sponsors. The sponsor has the responsibility for assuring the project is in compliance with the governing guidelines. The project sponsor agrees to supervise CEIP participants assigned to its project and provide the CEIP office, SRDC, and the community board with participant evaluations and reports on the progress of their projects when requested. The sponsor also agrees, upon request, that SRDC researchers may have access to sites where projects are being carried out and agrees to meet with representatives of SRDC if requested.

Once the PSA has been signed, the project is placed on an open projects list maintained by the project registrar, and the community project registry is updated in the PMIS. The sponsor then meets with the CEIP placement coordinator to review procedures and responsibilities. This discussion is facilitated by using a sponsor job kit, which provides an introduction to the specific processes and mechanisms by which sponsors obtain CEIP participants and fulfill their management and supervisory responsibilities. The sponsor is first required to complete a job order form, which provides specific details of the project's participant needs to facilitate the job-matching process. Once participants have been referred to the project, a sponsor is required to submit biweekly time reports and to submit participant evaluation reports every six months and at the end of the project. All the necessary forms are included in the sponsor job kit.

### *Project Monitoring*

Project monitoring is conducted by the CEIP office throughout the project to determine whether sponsors are complying with the terms of the PSA. The project officer ensures sponsors abide by the terms of the PSA and are submitting the required paperwork consisting of job orders, timesheets, and evaluations when necessary.

The project site-monitoring officer also conducts site interviews with sponsors to determine if the conditions of the PSA are being met and to decide if there are any issues that require attention.[15] A consistent interview template is used to conduct all monitoring interviews. Monthly project monitoring reports, which summarize issues arising from ongoing monitoring efforts, site visits, and sponsor interviews, are completed and submitted to SRDC and the various community boards.

[14]Each community board was required to complete a strategic plan outlining their priorities and to have that plan approved by the Project Implementation Committee.

[15]SRDC conducted the initial project monitoring visits. However, the monitoring was taken over by the CEIP office.

## SYSTEMS AND PAYROLL

All of the activity described in the previous section produced information that was important to the functions of job matching and participant management, as well as for general use in the research database. The PMIS and a participant payment administration system were developed to assist staff to manage the data they collected and to produce information required to manage the CEIP participant payroll.

### PMIS

The PMIS is a computer network that was designed and built by EDS Canada to provide an electronic framework for managing the project communications and research data collection activities of the staff working in the CEIP office in Sydney. At the heart of the system is a software application that was designed to capture all of the information related to CEIP participants and their project experiences as well as information on the various community employment opportunities that were produced by project sponsors.

The PMIS was designed to do the following:

- **Control the intake process.** The system was designed to ensure that participants could not be enrolled in CEIP unless they had been randomly assigned to the program group.
- **Support staff-participant contact.** The system provided for the production of contact letters and the management of time-sensitive rules related to how long program group members had to respond to the offer to attend an orientation session and to agree to participate in the project.
- **Register project opportunities.** The PMIS was designed to support the administrative processes surrounding the registration of the community employment opportunities that were presented by project sponsors.
- **Create and manage participant profiles.** The system was designed to capture data on program group members including personal identifiers, skills and interests, payroll information, and project assignments. Staff had the capability to update these participant profiles to reflect the experiences of CEIP participants.
- **Facilitate the matching process.** A report-writing feature was included in the PMIS to allow CEIP staff to query the database to report on information related to the project opportunity specifications and the skills and interests of the program group members.
- **Track the status of projects and participants.** The PMIS also provided the ability to track the life span of each community employment project and report on the status of program group members assigned to projects.
- **Ensure quality service delivery.** The PMIS provided a participant journal tool that permitted the participant managers to record notes relating to their contact with the participants. This ensured that any staff person could provide service to a participant while having access to the participant history and the most recent observations of a CEIP office colleague.

- **Ensure compliance with the PSA and the PPA.** Participants and project sponsors both had obligations with respect to their respective project agreements. The system was designed to capture the work site attendance data from the timesheets submitted by project sponsors and to report on any delinquent sponsors or participants with deficient work hours.

## The Payment Administration Process

Discussions during the project design phase included an assessment of the alternatives for making payments to the participants. There was an acknowledgment that the payment system must serve the needs of two distinct groups of participants. Employment Insurance claimants were used to a system that paid them two weeks in arrears, while the income assistance recipients were familiar with a system that paid them one month in advance. In addition, the degree to which participants would move in and out of "active" status and the degree to which some participants would be absent from the work site without approval was unknown during the design phase. It was important that the design of the CEIP payment system not produce inappropriate positive or negative impacts on the recruitment process. SRDC did not want to risk potential participants foregoing participation in CEIP due to cash flow concerns.

The decision was made to adopt a biweekly payment system, where participants were paid one week in arrears and one week in advance, based on their commitment to work 35 hours per week. Reported absences without prior-approved leave would result in a loss of pay for the time missed. This meant that the payment system had to include provisions for making payroll adjustments to allow participants to pay back overpayments for days that they did not work in a previous pay period. It was also possible for a participant to leave CEIP after being paid in advance and not work all the days covered by the advance. The consequences of the design warranted the building of administrative management tools because the alternative would have required the payroll to be based on strict adherence to timesheets as the primary confirmation of attendance at the work site. With no guarantee that project sponsors (many of whom were volunteers) would be able to comply with strict timesheet submission standards, a compromise that required more intense effort in payroll administration was preferable to a system that could create financial hardship for a participant as a result of missing timesheets — a factor that was beyond their control.

From the beginning of the project, SRDC planned to make use of established, market-tested payroll software to run the CEIP payment system rather than incur the expense of building a full-fledged payroll system into the PMIS. The product chosen was the ADP/PC Payroll for Windows system (PCPW). The choice of PCPW meant that limited programming was required in the PMIS to produce an extract file that could be accessed by PCPW through an automated link and used as the data source for PCPW to process the regular CEIP payroll.

The payment information that was to be processed in PCPW represented a key source of research data. It was important to have the payroll records for each participant linked to the other participant data maintained in the PMIS. The PMIS was designed to generate a payroll extract file that would serve as the pay data import file in PCPW. After processing the payroll, PCPW would export a reconciliation file to the PMIS that would update the payroll records within that database, all of this through the automated link with the result being a comprehensive set of participant records held in one system, the PMIS. Before the first CEIP pay run in October 2000, a series of technical problems affected the implementation of this

feature. Problems related to cross-platform compatibility of the PMIS and PCPW software and the remote communications process that was required to manage the extract and reconciliation files resulted in a change to the process as it was originally conceived.

The payment process that was developed involved the CEIP office staff in Sydney as the data input source and SRDC staff in Ottawa as the processing, or payment output, source. The CEIP office staff were responsible for compiling all of the PMIS information relating to the initiation of new participants, adjustments to participant hours, and changes to participants' project status, and they were responsible for sending that information to the PCPW operator at SRDC in Ottawa. The SRDC staff person performed data input functions and produced the CEIP payroll. This manual process was refined over time in a manner that resulted in an efficient payroll input/output process. Attempts to overcome the technical and compatibility difficulties waned as SRDC realized that the payroll system, as it had been operating from the beginning, was successfully paying participants accurately and on schedule. Since other methods were available to integrate the PCPW payroll records with the PMIS participant records to ensure a comprehensive research database, the automated link between the two systems was never implemented.

## CONCLUSION

The CEIP office is integral to the functioning of the project. The office is responsible for introducing CEIP to potential participants and provides the necessary program services to program group members. The services provided by the CEIP office staff and their associated operating activities were described in this chapter. The chapter did not, however, provide an analysis of the implementation of such services. The next chapter provides an analysis of program implementation and draws out lessons learned during the process.

# Chapter 9:
# Assessing Intake and Early Program Operations

This chapter begins to address one of the primary goals of implementation research — *to assess whether the program as implemented matched the intended program model*. If the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) as implemented differs markedly from the design, then it can be argued that CEIP itself has not been tested. Whatever the eventual constituents of the program, there will be a need for information on actual services delivered that will help explain the individual and community outcomes. In addition, implementation research provides operational information — describing how services are organized and delivered — which can inform ongoing adjustments to the program delivery and later replication or implementation elsewhere. Problems encountered and corrective actions taken form the basis of *lessons learned*, which will be invaluable for any future implementation of CEIP.

In accordance with these goals, this chapter has the dual aim of comparing the implementation of CEIP program services with the intended program design and its objectives, while also elucidating lessons learned from the process of service delivery. It assesses only the recruitment process and the implementation of the early CEIP program services and operations, including

- sample selection,
- outreach and information sessions,
- random assignment,
- orientation sessions,
- employability assessments,
- job-readiness training,
- CEIP payroll, and
- the project management information system (PMIS).

The scope of this chapter is limited to an assessment of the recruitment activities as well as the early project operations mentioned above. Although sample selection, intake, and random assignment are not formally part of the CEIP program model, an assessment of these activities is crucial to ensure that the randomly selected sample reflects the target groups of the study, that sample members were fully informed about CEIP in making their decision to join, and that random assignment was conducted fairly with appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the experiment. Given the data sources available to date, the chapter then proceeds to evaluate only the orientation process and some of the early program services and operations. Implementation research is ongoing with respect to program services, information systems, and operations associated with elements of the community implementation of CEIP, including the job-matching process and maintenance of a registry of community-based projects, monitoring project and sponsor activity, alternative work assignments (transitional

jobs and self-directed projects), participant management, project-specific and transferable skills training, and portfolio building. A more detailed assessment of the implementation of these program operations activities will be the subject of a future implementation report.

## SAMPLE SELECTION

The goal of sample selection is to identify and select potential research sample members for CEIP based on specified *eligibility criteria* from a population of Employment Insurance (EI) claimants and income assistance (IA) recipients in Cape Breton. The plan called for the pace of sample selection to conform to a predetermined two-year sample-loading plan, while allowing for adjustments in the timing to account for changes in the resource requirements of community-based projects.

The primary role of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services (NS-DCS) offices was to assist in identifying eligible participants for CEIP from their respective caseloads. A number of potential problems exist for programs that rely on referrals from administrative files, including inadequate information or inconsistent application of eligibility criteria, delays in the referral process leading to slower than expected sample build-up, and excessive administrative burden caused by the selection and referral process.

The approach to sample selection for CEIP, described in Chapter 5, helped to avoid many of these potential problems inherent in a *referral-based* process where *caseworkers* are applying eligibility criteria. The fact that Statistics Canada applied eligibility criteria with administrative data records helped to minimize the risks. However, an assessment of the intake process still needs to consider the possibility of problems in these areas and, if any occurred, highlight the adjustments or corrective measures that were used.

### Was sample selection conducted as planned, with the consistent application of criteria for the CEIP target populations?

As described in Chapter 5, although the selection process for EI beneficiaries was conducted as planned, the selection of individuals from the IA caseload underwent a number of changes before sampling began. A two-step process was created to address the individual concerns of both NS-DCS and SRDC. NS-DCS required that its clients provide consent to the release of information before being considered for selection for CEIP. At the same time, SRDC had an obligation to protect the identity of those who refused to participate or subsequently withdrew from the study so that they would suffer no penalty from NS-DCS as a result of that choice. Therefore, NS-DCS was required to make the first contact with eligible participants, seeking their consent to be included in the eligible list. However, Statistics Canada, not NS-DCS, was responsible for selecting the individuals to receive the CEIP offer. The drawback of this two-step approach was a lengthy enrolment process for IA recipients and some limitations in the available data for analyzing CEIP non-volunteers among the IA population.

To ensure that selection criteria were applied appropriately and consistently, a number of procedures were put in place to monitor the selection process. These procedures permit a series of additional implementation questions to be answered, which highlight the effectiveness of these processes and their implications for research and for the operations of

study partners. Several data sources were used to assess sample selection, including monthly sample build-up reports, minutes of meetings, and various memos on data processing issues.

- **What evidence is there to suggest that the selection criteria were in fact applied appropriately and consistently over time?**

The selection criteria for each population were developed in coordination with representatives from the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), HRDC, NS-DCS, and Statistics Canada. They were developed with the target population of the research design in mind and with the statistical and practical considerations of the available data sources. The consistency of the criteria and the underlying variable definitions within the source data sets was confirmed.

Statistics Canada provided monthly reports that summarized not only the selections, but also the characteristics of the populations from which they were drawn. SRDC was able to monitor any unusual changes in the underlying populations that might have arisen due to changes in the variable definitions.

For the selection of EI sample members, HRDC prepared a monthly derivative of the EI Status Vector File (SVF). The contents and variable definitions within the SVF are quite static and do not change over time. For the selection of the IA sample, NS-DCS administrative records underwent extensive scrutiny and processing to ensure there would be a similar degree of consistency.

There is no evidence of changes in the underlying EI variable definitions or the selection criteria. EI selection criteria were applied appropriately and consistently throughout the selection period, leading to a randomly selected sample that is highly consistent with the target groups of the research design. Similarly, the underlying IA variable definitions were, for the most part, consistent throughout the intake period, and the selection criteria were applied appropriately. However, there is some evidence to suggest that the employability criterion for selection of the IA sample was not applied as rigorously and consistently as hoped, resulting in the inclusion in the research sample of a small number of individuals with severe employability concerns. This situation arose because the NS-DCS employability definition or its screening procedures were not fully effective in identifying those with severe employability deficits.

SRDC anticipated some challenges in selecting an employable IA sample, given the reliance on NS-DCS definitions and screening procedures during sample selection. This was part of the rationale for including an employability assessment, to be conducted after random assignment, as part of the CEIP program model.

- **Were there delays in the selection process resulting in a slower than expected sample build-up?**

Sample selection proceeded largely as intended, consistent with the two-year sample-loading plan. Flexibility was required given the uncertainty in the level of interest in the offer, the capacity of the CEIP office to coordinate the enrolment process, and the speed of project development within the participating communities.

Other than a lower-than-expected take-up rate for the EI caseload, there were no unexpected delays due to problems with the selection process. Although the delayed

recruitment of the IA sample was planned for, due to the later involvement of NS-DCS in the study, gaining access to IA administrative records took somewhat longer than anticipated.

- **Did the sample selection require any changes in staff organization for SRDC, HRDC, or NS-DCS? Did this produce any undue disruptions or excessive administrative burden?**

A temporary SRDC office was opened in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in order for a researcher to coordinate the access, analysis, and preparation of IA administrative records for sample selection. Extensive support was required from one NS-DCS contact during the preparation phase for selection. Relative to a program that recruits sample members through local office referrals, the CEIP selection process entailed few disruptions for the study sponsors.

## OUTREACH AND INFORMATION SESSIONS

Outreach procedures were designed to notify individuals of their possible eligibility following random selection and to invite them to a prescheduled information session to learn more about the project. These procedures included established time limits for participants to respond to the offer as well as follow-up and tracking procedures to ensure offers were made only to those who were eligible.

The information session was the first detailed introduction to CEIP that participants received. The purpose of the sessions was to provide a thorough and consistent overview of the CEIP offer and to obtain informed consent and baseline information from those interested. Administrative batch shipping procedures were also designed to ensure accurate, timely, and confidential processing of informed consents and baseline data in preparation for random assignment.

### Were outreach procedures and information sessions conducted as planned and were the key messages delivered consistently?

An assessment of the outreach and enrolment process that was described in Chapter 5 should consider the extent to which the procedures were implemented as intended and whether they met the underlying objectives. For example, outreach procedures should have ensured that only randomly selected individuals were invited to information sessions and that appropriate timelines were adhered to for the delivery and acceptance of the CEIP offer. The key messages that were delivered at information sessions should have been consistent with the design, and individuals should have understood these messages in order for consent to be truly informed.

Several data sources were used to assess the intake process from each of these perspectives including monthly sample build-up reports; memos and meeting minutes; the CEIP operations manual; observations of information sessions; implementation research interviews with CEIP staff; and data from the baseline, non-volunteer, and Information Session Follow-Up Surveys.

- **Were effective procedures implemented to ensure that only randomly selected individuals were invited and admitted to information sessions?**

Statistics Canada was responsible for mailing the introductory notification letters and CEIP information session invitations to research sample members. Although coordination with the CEIP office was required in the scheduling of information sessions, Statistics

Canada managed the initial outreach and contact. Protecting the confidentiality of potential sample members required Statistics Canada to conduct introductory contacts, however centralizing the initial outreach also ensured that only randomly selected individuals were sent invitations. A direct link between sample selection and initial notification was maintained.

Strict attendance and monitoring procedures at information sessions also ensured that only eligible sample members were allowed to attend and sign up for the study. Staff conducted several checks before admitting individuals to the sessions, including the requirement to present the original copy of the invitation letter sent from Statistics Canada and two pieces of identification (including one piece of photo identification). Staff confirmed that the individual's name, address, and date of birth, which was encoded in the reference number of the letter, matched the individual's identification.

Staff interviews, information session observations, and memos on data processing issues confirm that these procedures were effective in ensuring that the CEIP offer was made only to randomly selected individuals. There is only one instance where an offer was made inappropriately to an individual who was not randomly selected.[1] The individual was subsequently excluded from the research sample, although the individual's eligibility for the program was maintained. In four additional cases, sample members were inadvertently selected and sent invitation letters twice,[2] though neither instance resulted in a change in the sample members' status.

- **Were appropriate timelines adhered to for the delivery and acceptance of the offer?**

Individuals were issued notification letters immediately following random selection and were required to attend an information session and submit a signed consent form within eight weeks of the date on their initial letter. Group sessions were pre-scheduled and the dates were clearly indicated on the initial letters. Individuals were also encouraged to request an individual session or reschedule the group session if they could not attend the one that was indicated. A reminder letter was sent after four weeks to individuals who had not attended a session or called to reschedule. All reminder letters clearly listed the final expiry date of the offer.

The prompt notification and response of potential sample members was essential to ensure that the status of the sample would change little and would resemble the characteristics at the time of selection. Sample build-up reports indicate that Statistics Canada promptly issued notification letters following each selection cycle. Although the CEIP office monitored the eight-week expiry date when confirming attendance at information sessions and when rescheduling sessions, Statistics Canada also confirmed that consent forms were signed within the eight-week period before proceeding with random assignment.

[1]The individual had the same name and address as the intended recipient of the invitation letter. As a result of this confusion, the date of birth of randomly selected individuals was added to the invitation letters and included in the attendance check by CEIP staff at the start of information sessions.

[2]These individuals were randomly selected from both the EI and IA caseloads. Statistics Canada implemented a cross-reference check on earlier sampling runs, however limits on the available data prior to consent, due to confidentiality, meant that it was possible for some individuals to be selected twice.

These procedures were effective in ensuring that there were no significant breaches of the eight-week time limit. Some flexibility was allowed in instances where individuals took the consent form home following an information session to consider their decision. These individuals had up to a week to return the consent form following the session. A small number of individuals attended sessions in the final week of their eligibility and submitted a signed consent form in the following week.

- **Were the key messages presented consistent with the design and were they delivered consistently at each session over the two-year intake?**

Observations were undertaken to assess how CEIP staff conducted information sessions. An established format of observational protocols were used, which were derived from what researchers believed were the important variables, for example the equipment used, the delivery of oral information, the accuracy of oral and written information, the environment, and the appearance and behaviour of the attendees.

An analysis of research observations and supporting presentation materials (for example visual aids on walls, a flipchart, and a PowerPoint presentation) reveals that the sessions delivered key messages that were consistent with the design. At each session an overview of the project was given, including information on the funders, partners of the consortium, and the intent and design of the project. Key parameters of the CEIP offer were reviewed including the nature of CEIP work placements, the wages and associated benefits, and other services available through CEIP.

Central to each information session was the review of the CEIP consent form. Following the background and key parameters of CEIP, session facilitators reviewed the consent form in detail. This began with a complete reading of the consent form, followed by a question-and-answer discussion of relevant topics. The fundamental issues regarding confidentiality and the use of personal information were reviewed, and the voluntary nature of CEIP participation was made clear.

Observations conducted throughout the two-year recruitment period revealed a high degree of consistency in most key messages, including the CEIP background, most parameters of the offer, and issues surrounding informed consent. There is some evidence to suggest that discussion of work placements may have evolved somewhat throughout the recruitment period as more information became available on the nature of community projects and their work requirements.

- **Is there evidence to suggest that participants understood the key messages? Was consent truly informed?**

To ascertain whether CEIP volunteers were making an informed choice in taking up the offer, a short telephone interview was administered to a sample of CEIP participants after being enrolled in CEIP. The Information Session Follow-Up Survey (ISFUS) asked respondents about the main features of CEIP, the effect of participation in CEIP on the receipt of EI or IA benefits, reasons for termination and withdrawal from CEIP, and responsibility for project approval and supervision.

Chapter 7 reviews the results of the ISFUS in detail and reveals that most CEIP volunteers were well informed about the main features of CEIP and thus made an informed choice to volunteer for CEIP. They were aware that they had to relinquish their EI or IA benefits in

order to be an active CEIP program group member. Volunteers were also aware of the voluntary nature of the CEIP offer as well as the fact that they could withdraw from the study at any time before or after random assignment. Some volunteers seemed less well informed about the process for community project approval and the supervisory role of project sponsors.

- **Were there any particular challenges or difficulties for staff in delivering the sessions (for example resource constraints and training needs)?**

There is some evidence to suggest that the CEIP office experienced some staffing constraints during the recruitment period as the number of active participants increased. The placement coordinator managed many of the contact and outreach activities, while participant managers were largely responsible for facilitating information sessions. As the number of active participants grew, it became somewhat more difficult for staff to manage intake along with their primary responsibilities, for example job matching, project monitoring, information systems management, and participant management. Given the immediate urgency of sample intake, priority was given to recruitment activities and, consequently, recruitment was not compromised. However, some of the regular responsibilities of these staff members were postponed or became secondary activities during the intake period. For example, some of the project- and sponsor-monitoring activities were delayed until recruitment had been mostly completed.

## RANDOM ASSIGNMENT

After eligible volunteers agreed to participate, they were randomly assigned to either the program or control group. The validity of CEIP's estimates of individual impacts will depend on this process being fair. That is, there should be no systematic differences between these two groups in measurable pre-random assignment characteristics. The validity of impact estimates also depends on the ability of SRDC to maintain the integrity of the experiment. The receipt of CEIP services by control group members (crossovers) is the primary threat to the integrity of the experiment.

### Was random assignment conducted as planned, in a fair manner with appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of the experiment?

Statistics Canada executed the random assignment process on SRDC's dedicated random assignment software application. The process itself was relatively straightforward. Statistics Canada prepared a text file with anonymous CEIP identifiers for those individuals who were ready for assignment (those who had provided completed and signed CEIP enrolment forms). Once the file was ready, Statistics Canada logged on to the SRDC system and initiated the process. A software application on the SRDC system assigned the individuals and generated a file that contained the program and control group assignments. Statistics Canada examined the results in order to confirm that the assignment was completed without error. Finally, Statistics Canada prepared an additional file for transferring the results of the assignment to the PMIS at the CEIP office.

The following implementation questions can be answered to indicate the effectiveness of random assignment and the procedures that protect the integrity of the experiment.

- **What procedures were put in place to ensure only eligible volunteers were randomly assigned? How effective were these procedures?**

As described above, strict procedures were implemented to ensure that only eligible volunteers were admitted to information sessions and given the opportunity to complete an enrolment form to join the study. Information sessions were followed by strict batch processing and shipping instructions for the handling of completed enrolment forms.

Once Statistics Canada received the forms from the CEIP office, additional checks were completed, cross-referencing with the original list of those randomly selected, to ensure the forms were for sampled individuals. These additional checks were completed prior to random assignment. Staff interviews, information session observations, and monthly sample build-up reports from Statistics Canada confirm that these procedures were implemented and were effective in ensuring only eligible volunteers were randomly assigned.

- **What procedures were put in place to ensure that volunteers were randomly assigned before receiving any CEIP treatment? How effective were these procedures?**

CEIP office procedures for orientation and activation of CEIP eligibility ensured that no one could receive program services prior to random assignment. Invitations to orientation sessions were generated only for program group members whose names had been entered into the PMIS. The PMIS was designed to help maintain the integrity of the experiment by strictly controlling the initial transfer of sample data. Program group members cannot be added to the system manually.

Strict attendance procedures were also implemented at orientation sessions. Program group members had to bring their eligibility letters and photo identification before being admitted to orientation sessions and being given the opportunity to sign the Project Participation Agreement (PPA). There was no chance for a research sample member to attend sessions or to receive subsequent CEIP services before they were randomly assigned. There is no evidence to suggest any members have done so.

- **What procedures were instituted to monitor and prevent receipt of CEIP services by control group members? How effective were these procedures?**

Program and control group members are clearly distinguished in the PMIS and their research group status is completely restricted and closed to editing. Control group members cannot gain access to orientation sessions without proper credentials.

Individuals cannot access CEIP wages without being included in the PMIS database. Data transfer and editing restrictions prevent this. Access to community placements themselves is similarly unlikely given that the matching process is conducted using the PMIS. Although, it may be possible for a control group member or any other community member to gain access to CEIP training sessions, that is highly unlikely to occur given attendance procedures and the familiarity of CEIP staff with eligible participants. CEIP participants were also issued photo identification cards in order for sponsors and those less familiar with participants to identify them as CEIP eligible and as designated referred workers.

- **Were there any systematic differences in baseline characteristics between the two groups?**

If random assignment was successfully implemented, measured characteristics at baseline for program and control group should be similar, although a few statistically significant differences may occur by chance. Chapter 6 and Appendix H present a detailed review of the sample characteristics of both CEIP research groups. Results indicate that there are no systematic differences between the program and control group in either the EI or IA study sample. This represents sufficient evidence to suggest that random assignment was successfully implemented for CEIP.

- **Were there any particular challenges or difficulties in carrying out random assignment?**

There were some initial challenges for Statistics Canada in setting up their dial-up access and occasional difficulties with coordination of the connection given the time difference between Statistics Canada's office in Ontario and their office in British Columbia, where SRDC's random assignment system resides. Otherwise, the process was completed with little difficulty.

## ORIENTATION

The primary purpose of the orientation sessions was to provide a detailed overview of the project and obtain signed PPAs, along with other administrative documentation, from program group members who were interested in becoming CEIP participants.

Immediately following random assignment, the CEIP office received a data file from Statistics Canada, which contained the results of the assignment along with other selected information about research sample members. The assignment file updated the PMIS with the new sample members, and notification letters were then generated for both program and control group members. In addition to the notification letter, program group members also received an invitation to a CEIP orientation session.

### Were orientation sessions delivered as planned and were key messages delivered consistently?

An assessment of orientation sessions should consider the extent to which the procedures were implemented as intended and whether they met the underlying objectives. For example, key messages delivered at orientation sessions should have been consistent with the research design and elements of the PPA. Outreach and tracking procedures should have maximized the number who attended orientation sessions and took up the offer by signing a PPA, and appropriate timelines should have been adhered to for the delivery and acceptance of the offer.

Several data sources were used to assess orientation sessions from each of these perspectives, including PMIS data, memos and meeting minutes, the CEIP operations manual, observations of orientation sessions, analysis of accompanying presentation materials, and interviews with CEIP staff.

- **Were the key messages delivered consistent with the design and were they delivered consistently at each session over the two-year intake?**

As with information sessions, observations were undertaken to determine how orientation sessions were delivered throughout the two-year recruitment period. An analysis of these observations and supporting presentation materials reveal that the sessions delivered key messages that were consistent with the design and largely consistent across sessions throughout the recruitment period. At each orientation session a more detailed review of the project was given than at the information sessions. Elements of the PPA were central to each presentation, including the roles and responsibilities of participants, sponsors, and the CEIP office; compensation in terms of the CEIP wages and associated benefits; CEIP eligibility; and expectations regarding workplace behaviour. A detailed review of accompanying schedules was also conducted, including participant sanctions and disciplinary procedures.

- **How many eligible participants accepted the offer by signing a PPA?**

Of the 761 program group members recruited and randomly assigned during the two-year intake period, only 99 subsequently declined to participate or allowed their offer to expire after attending an orientation session. In addition, there are a number of participants who, after starting CEIP, moved between active CEIP participation and an inactive status, during which they remained off of regular EI and did not receive IA benefits as their primary source of income, and thereby maintained their CEIP eligibility.

- **Were appropriate timelines adhered to for the delivery and acceptance of the offer?**

Sample members were to be issued notification letters after random assignment, immediately following the data transfer of the research sample file to the PMIS. Program group members had five weeks from the date on their notification letter to attend an orientation session and sign a PPA or their CEIP offer would expire. Again, prompt notification and response of program group members was required to ensure a limited time over which changes in their employment or benefit statuses could occur between the time of selection and their commencement of active participation in CEIP.

The PMIS was designed to automatically trigger this eligibility expiry after five weeks, unless a program group member's status was changed by CEIP staff to reflect acceptance of the CEIP offer. As a result, significant breaches of this time frame were unlikely. However, the system allowed for a manual reissuing of the notification letter to reactivate the eligibility period in the event that a sample member did not receive a notification letter (for example if it was lost in the mail) and was not reached during follow-up contact. Notification letters were reissued in only a small number of cases.

Although, the five-week expiry period was strictly controlled and monitored through the PMIS, any delays in the initial data transfer of the PMIS file following random assignment would result in delays in notification. This could result in longer periods between random assignment and take-up of the offer. Sample build-up reports and interviews with staff reveal that in a small number of cases there were significant delays in notification following random assignment. Technical difficulties in the data transfer of the random assignment file resulted in delays of over a month in preparing notification letters and delivering orientation sessions. The problem was limited to two monthly recruitment cycles, which affected only about

40 participants. These participants still received a five-week window to attend an orientation and join CEIP, though the offer came several weeks later than dictated by the design.

- **Were there any particular challenges or difficulties for staff in delivering the sessions (for example resource constraints and training needs)?**

Similar to outreach and information sessions, the orientation, tracking, and processing of program documents may have contributed to some staffing constraints as the number of active participants increased during the recruitment period. Participant managers were largely responsible for facilitating sessions and follow-up with program group members. As the number of active participants increased, it was challenging for staff to manage orientation along with their primary responsibilities for active participants.

Implementation research questionnaires and interviews with CEIP staff also covered orientation sessions. There were differing opinions among staff regarding the effectiveness of some elements of these sessions. A few acknowledged that more information on actual projects would have been useful. They felt it would have helped alleviate the impression that CEIP was simply another government-sponsored grant program. The difficulty of providing accurate project information was due to the changing nature of projects. One staff member suggested it would have been advantageous to have projects approved prior to intake. This would have allowed participants to make informed decisions about project participation. If projects were pre-approved, there would have been no reason why such information could not have been given to individuals in the information session. In contrast, there were staff who believed the orientation did provide an accurate picture of future work opportunities and this only improved as the project proceeded so that a more complete picture of realistic project opportunities could be presented.

## EMPLOYABILITY ASSESSMENTS AND JOB-READINESS TRAINING

Employability assessments and job-readiness training were important features of the CEIP design. It was important to ensure that participants were employable prior to their referral to community project assignments, and an assessment could provide useful information for the process of matching participants to community assignments. Hence, there were two objectives for the employability assessment:

- To identify participants who had a serious skill or behavioural deficit that would negatively affect their employability and to recommend job-readiness training to be taken prior to community-based project assignments
- To document participant work experience, education, skills and abilities, interests, and transferable skills to facilitate the job-matching process and initiate the development of a participant portfolio

Job-readiness training was then meant to improve the skill or behavioural deficits identified by the assessment. The design acknowledged that a period of monitoring and follow-up assessment might need to occur, where participants would be assigned to transitional projects before being placed on community-based projects.

The key question for implementation research in this area is understanding whether the employability assessments and job-readiness training are meeting these basic design objectives.

Implementation research should also provide information about what particular aspects of the assessment and job-readiness training are most successful and which elements are less useful. Although implementation research in this area is ongoing and will be the subject of a future report, several data sources were available for a preliminary evaluation of the employability assessment and job-readiness training including interviews with CEIP staff, observations of assessment and placement interviews, assessment and placement summary sheets, minutes of meetings, PMIS documentation, and the CEIP operations manual.

### Were employability assessments implemented as planned and did they meet the basic CEIP design objectives?

As described in Chapter 8, the employability assessment consisted of the administration of three primary assessment instruments (the Canadian Adult Achievement Test, the Self-Directed Search, and a Transferable Skills Module) and an interview with the assessment facilitator. The purpose of the one-on-one interview was to supplement the assessment tests with the observations of an experienced assessment facilitator.

However, while developing procedures in the early stages of the implementation, the CEIP placement coordinator (responsible for job matching) felt that the assessment alone would fail to capture some of the job-specific skills and experience essential for the matching process. A placement interview and participant data sheet were designed to collect additional details related to work experience and job-specific skills. The placement interview, attended by the placement coordinator and/or the participant manager was added as an extension to the one-on-one interviews between the participant and assessment facilitator. Given that the assessment, job-matching, and portfolio development processes were all interrelated, a joint meeting would ensure that each staff member was aware of the relevant issues concerning the participant. It also provided the opportunity for a degree of joint evaluation and for the coordination of a consistent strategy for participant development. However, in practice, given staffing constraints, joint interviews were not always possible and a placement interview was often held separately from the interview with the assessment facilitator.

Following the assessment interview, the assessment facilitator completed an assessment report, which summarized the results of the assessment tests and made recommendations on job readiness. Although the employability assessment appears to have been implemented in a way that is largely consistent with the design, the extent to which it met the *design objectives* and *whether its outputs were in fact utilized as intended* are separate issues. These are best addressed by a series of additional questions:

- **Did the employability assessments successfully identify participants with serious skill or behavioural deficits? Did many with deficits go undetected?**

Serious deficits, which would affect participants' employability, were successfully identified by the assessment conducted with some participants. However, CEIP staff reported that many participants had problems that were less obvious, which only became apparent after a period of employment on community-based projects. In some cases, participants themselves raised concerns with their participant manager that could be addressed by some of the job-readiness training modules (for example "Gaining Confidence at Work" and "Building Assertiveness Skills"). In other cases, the project sponsors raised concerns with the placement coordinator (regarding absenteeism or lateness), which also required job-readiness

training (for example “Understanding Workplace Culture” and “Satisfying Employer Expectations”).

- **Did the employability assessments make clear recommendations for specific job-readiness training needs?**

Although the assessment reports generally included recommendations for addressing job-readiness concerns, staff reported that the specific needs were not always linked clearly to the list of available job-readiness modules. During the design and early implementation of CEIP, participant managers developed a list of potential job-readiness training modules in coordination with the assessment coordinator. Some modules would be delivered in-house (for example, as part of the contracted responsibilities of the Cape Breton Family YMCA) while others, if required, would be subcontracted to local training suppliers. Although, there was coordination in developing this list, it appears that there was still some difficulty in linking specific modules to training needs identified by the assessment. In some cases, necessary modules were not originally specified, while in others there were multiple modules that were potentially applicable.

- **Did the employability assessment facilitate the job-matching process by creating an inventory of participant work experiences, education, skills and abilities, interests, and transferable skills?**

A preliminary evaluation of the assessment process as it pertains to job matching suggests that placement interviews and supplementary data collection worksheets were more useful than assessment tests in obtaining specific details on job-specific skills and prior work experience. However, the formal assessment instruments did help to identify educational deficiencies, transferable skills, and participant interests that were useful in narrowing the range of relevant assignments. Staff also reported that output from the assessment instruments was useful in providing an overall picture of a participant’s situation.

- **Which parts of the employability assessment were most useful for identifying training needs and facilitating the job-matching process?**

The Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT) was designed to identify serious educational or cognitive deficiencies by assessing each participant’s current functional level in mathematics, reading, and language. The Transferable Skills module and “Working Scales” component were included in order to assess workplace competencies beyond academic or technical skills and knowledge. Low measures on these key competency areas are indicators of skill or behavioural deficits. The Self-Directed Search (SDS) — a career interest inventory — identifies an individual’s dominant personality categories, which are then used primarily to predict their degree of fit with different occupations. The SDS instrument is more relevant to the matching process than to identifying employability deficits.

Ordinal rankings in key educational, competency, and interest areas from these three instruments were consistently recorded in the PMIS for use in participant management, job matching, and for research purposes. The degree to which these outputs were valued by staff and by participants and the extent to which they were actually utilized to identify training needs and appropriate work assignments is the subject of ongoing implementation research.

### Was job-readiness training implemented as planned and did it meet the basic CEIP design objectives?

The CEIP design implied a clear link between the employability assessment and job-readiness training. Participants who had employability deficits identified by the assessment would receive the appropriate job-readiness training prior to being referred to community projects. Job-readiness modules were also expected to be useful throughout the program in the context of participant management and disciplinary procedures.

During the operational design and early implementation of CEIP, participant managers proposed a total of 36 job-readiness training modules that participants might require. An additional 12 modules for transferable vocational skills training were identified. Over the first several months of recruitment, additional modules were added on an as-needed basis. The job-readiness modules span a range of categories similar to those areas covered in the assessment where potential problems may be identified. However, as mentioned above, specific training needs were not always readily identified by the assessments and some needs became more apparent following a period of community placements.

During the first year of implementation, staff reported that the job-readiness training modules were delivered in a way that was consistent with expectations of the design — strictly on an as-needed basis either linked to the outcomes of the assessment or as part of participant management following a period of community placements. However, as reported earlier, in January 2002 CEIP staff added an additional week to the orientation period for new participants. Following the initial assessment week, a subset of the complete list of 36 job-readiness training modules was delivered to all newly enrolled participants. Furthermore, participant managers began a process of "reach-back" where participants enrolled prior to the implementation of the two-week orientation period were given the opportunity to receive the same set of training modules.

The rationale and value of the additional up-front training is the subject of ongoing implementation research, which will explore the extent to which the demand for this additional training was a sponsor-, participant-, or staff-driven phenomenon. However, the question of consistency with the design and its research implications can already be addressed. First, the design clearly distinguished between job-readiness and transferable skills training. The latter was expected to be utilized more liberally, open to participants either at the start of the study or throughout their eligibility period in between community placements. Early indications are that there was a higher degree of integration of job-readiness and transferable skills training than initially expected. The potential to coordinate the delivery of these two types of training may partly explain the more extensive provision of job-readiness training and is not necessarily inconsistent with the CEIP design. Furthermore, participants may benefit from receiving job-readiness training along with transferable skills training even in the absence of serious skill deficits.

However, the provision of training, up-front, to *all* newly enrolled participants (starting in January 2002) regardless of assessment results, *is* a departure from the original design. The provision of training prior to placement on community assignments may affect subsequent workplace performance, which in turn mediates participant outcomes of interest. Although differences in outcomes between those who received training during orientation and those who received it later in the eligibility period are unlikely, a cohort analysis may be useful in distinguishing these effects.

The fact that all participants have *the option* to receive the same training modules, at some point during their eligibility, is also an important element of the design. Training is in fact a very small part of the CEIP treatment, so it is easy for participants to forget what is available to them. As part of ongoing participant management, staff try to ensure that all participants are aware of the training modules and therefore have equal training opportunities available to them. Future implementation research will reveal if this has been the case in practice. Finally, the issue of whether job-readiness training is meeting the design objectives — improving serious employability deficits in participants — and is valued by participants and sponsors will also be addressed in a future implementation report.

## PMIS AND CEIP PAYROLL

The PMIS was designed to support the CEIP office in the administration of participant and project data and to enable prompt payments to participants via a service provider. It also maintains accurate and reliable data for research purposes. The system is critical to the success of CEIP, as it is the primary means of recording and accessing program data.

Failure to develop a user-friendly and bug-free information system may have consequences for the implementation of CEIP. There are several ways in which this could affect the implementation process. Frequent system failures or a system that users find difficult to operate could be disruptive to the operations of the CEIP office and result in implementation delays. The implementation research attempts to document whether any system problems resulted in implementation delays or challenges.

The key functional areas of the PMIS discussed earlier are being evaluated as part of the ongoing implementation research efforts in the areas of participant management, project administration, and the job-matching process. However, the early implementation of the system can be reviewed, including installation, facilitation of participant intake and early tracking, and the establishment of the CEIP payroll system. Data sources for evaluating systems implementation include interviews with CEIP office staff, minutes of meetings, PMIS design and training documents, and PMIS research extracts.

### Was the PMIS implemented as planned and has it been meeting the key design objectives?

The introduction of the PMIS was planned through a series of releases, adding additional functionality as it was designed. The gradual release of the system was required primarily due to time constraints during the operational design phase of the project. The initial release, in the fall of 2000, contained the base application and the majority of participant management functionality. This was followed by the second release in the spring of 2001, which added functionality for tracking community projects, assignments, and the job-matching process. Additional scope was also added for participant management. A final release was also planned, which would see the full integration of CEIP payroll and the PMIS through a reconciliation process. However, as mentioned in the previous chapter, technical and procedural challenges circumvented the final release. The implementation of key functions surrounding each of the planned releases will be discussed in turn below.

- **Does the system provide adequate functions for controlling intake and tracking program group member status through the period of the offer?**

The initial release was designed to help maintain the integrity of the experiment by strictly controlling the initial transfer of sample data. Program and control group members are clearly distinguished and their research group status completely restricted and closed to editing by the CEIP office. The system allows staff to track the status of program group members during the period of the offer, leading up to their eligibility. A rejected or expired offer can be clearly identified and reflected in a program group member's status. Once a program group member has signed a PPA, the system activates his or her eligibility for CEIP payments, and the system then supports participant management by tracking the participant's ongoing status in the program.

Interviews with CEIP staff were held in order to confirm whether the system as designed met the objectives of intake control and tracking. Staff members clearly understood that the system identifies and controls participant research group status. Tracking of participant status through the period of the offer was consistent and reliable. A system-generated expiry ensured that program group members had only five weeks to accept the CEIP offer. System-generated and manually generated events successfully tracked participant status throughout the period of the offer and orientation period (e.g. orientation attended, PPA-signed/rejected/expired, criminal record check completed, active: ready for placements). However, some staff felt frustrated with the manual processing of some events that they thought should have been system-generated or prompted events in order to make data input easier.

- **Does the system provide adequate functions for tracking participants, projects, and assignments through the period of CEIP eligibility?**

The second release of the PMIS provided extensive functions for tracking projects, job orders, and actual participant placements. This included detailed descriptive data on projects and assignments and their start and end dates. Additional functions were added for tracking participant time reports and training activities. Initial CEIP staff interviews confirmed that the tracking and querying functions were of considerable value. Staff reported that the PMIS is adequate to track participant activity within CEIP. The system clearly indicates a participant's status in the overall study (e.g. active, inactive, withdrawn, suspended) as well as their project assignment status (e.g. where, when, and how long they have been assigned). However, they suggested that there were limitations in tracking changes in participant skill sets and any work activities outside of CEIP. There was also frustration with limitations on note-taking functions, for example the restrictions on note length were too short and notes were required for too many activities, making queries time consuming.

Further evaluation of PMIS tracking functions throughout the eligibility period will be presented in a subsequent implementation report in the context of participant management, job matching, and monitoring project activities.

- **Are there any systems constraints in the CEIP office's ability to collect data for operational needs?**

In addition to some of the tracking and administrative limitations of the PMIS mentioned above, there are additional areas where system constraints may have affected operations. First, the planned implementation of the PMIS in a series of releases rather than a single application may have contributed to some early implementation challenges. Specifically, two

crucial aspects of participant management were not part of the initial PMIS release: the functions for tracking participant time reports and training activities. In addition, all functions for tracking projects and the job-matching process were available only in the second release. Although participant recruitment and project development was relatively slow in the period between the first and second release, the absence of these key functions necessitated the reliance on manual procedures in these areas. Furthermore, it created a backlog of data entry work once the second release became available.

Beyond the gradual release of some functions, constraints also arose in areas where particular functions were not created, even in subsequent releases. The CEIP staff have drawn attention to two key areas: the tracking of CEIP-earned leave allocations and the integration of payroll processing with the PMIS time-reporting and pay adjustment systems. First, although the use of approved leave is tracked through the time-reporting functions of the PMIS, deriving the amount of earned leave credits can be awkward in the application. The calculations are simple for researchers working with the research extract, but they can be problematic from an operational standpoint for CEIP staff. Second, the fact that full payroll and PMIS systems integration was never achieved in a final release of the system led to the development of supplementary payroll adjustment systems. The implications of these additional processes are discussed below.

### Are CEIP payroll systems administered as planned and are they meeting the key design objectives?

The description of the current payment administration system presented in the previous chapter illustrates that implementation decisions had to balance several competing objectives. Of particular importance was the need to avoid financial disincentives during recruitment, in particular for the IA group, while maintaining an appropriate level of accountability on the part of participants. Both the study design and implementation decisions implied three fundamental requirements that the CEIP payment and PMIS systems would need to meet:

- Given that participants can move in and out of active status at any time in their eligibility period, the CEIP payment system would need to have *flexible payment cycles* in order to provide quick payments to all participants. The design called for CEIP payments of $280 per week with increases linked to the provincial minimum wage. Payments were taxable and EI and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) insurable. Any payment system used would also need to be flexible enough to allow for simple *changes in the wage amount* or adjustments in payroll taxes.
- Participants are paid based on their commitment in the PPA to be available for community placements or other approved activity for 35 hours per week. Systems would need to monitor and track the hours of participant involvement in CEIP through *time reporting* functions. CEIP also provides up to 15 days of approved leave per year, which means that payment or information systems also need to *track leave credits* earned and taken.
- The decision to adopt a biweekly pay period, where participants were paid one week in advance, meant that some overpayments would inevitably result as participants moved in and out of active status. As a result, the system would need to track overpayments and allow for single or multi-period *payment adjustments* to recoup outstanding amounts.

The implemented payment system is evaluated in terms of each of these key objectives.

- **Has the CEIP payment system been flexible enough to provide quick and reliable payments to all participants?**

The flexible two-cycle payment system has provided speedy payments to participants under a range of varied circumstances. The system has processed partial payments, without delay to participants, when they have resulted either from overpayments or changes in a participant's program status in the middle of a pay period. Participants who return to active CEIP participation can switch payment cycles if necessary to minimize the delays and the associated disincentive effects.

The system easily accounted for changes in wage amounts based on increases in the provincial minimum wage. The wage amount was increased three times from $280 to $300 per week, rising each year from 2000 to 2002 on October 1.

- **Has the system maintained accountability by monitoring and tracking the participants' hours of involvement in CEIP?**

CEIP office procedures were developed to monitor and track the hours of participant involvement within CEIP activities. When a participant is engaged in activities related to assessment, participant management, training, or transitional project assignments, the participant manager, placement coordinator, and/or the transitional project manager are responsible for monitoring the attendance and hours requirements. However, when participants are assigned to community-based projects, project sponsors are responsible for monitoring attendance, hours worked, and performance. As a result, an additional set of procedures was required to monitor and track participant activities while on community assignments.

Project sponsors are required to submit weekly time reports to the CEIP office for all participants assigned to their projects. The placement coordinator and/or participant managers review these reports, discuss discrepancies with sponsors, and record the data in participant files both in hard copy and in the PMIS. The CEIP office manager then uses this information to coordinate the payroll runs with SRDC.

Although implementation research in this area is ongoing, early evidence suggests that procedures for monitoring and tracking participant time reports have faced several challenges. First, the compliance of project sponsors with the requirement to submit prompt and precise time reports has been more difficult to obtain than expected. A minority of sponsors have submitted late or inaccurate reports. Ultimately, these project sponsors risk withdrawal of CEIP participants from their projects under the terms of the Project Sponsor Agreement. Procedures are in place to ensure sponsors understand their obligations and to encourage their compliance before this has to occur.

Second, the initial release of the PMIS did not include functions for maintaining time reports. It was not until the second release in the spring of 2001 that these functions were available to CEIP staff. Although recruitment was still in the early stages during this initial period and few participants were enrolled, staff may have become used to less rigorous, manual procedures. A backlog of work was also created, as time sheet data eventually needed to be entered into the PMIS.

Third, initial resource constraints within the CEIP office may have contributed to lax procedures for monitoring sponsor obligations. During the early implementation, the primary focus of the majority of CEIP office staff was on outreach, intake, and participant orientation rather than project sponsor activities.

- **Has the payment system and accompanying procedures facilitated the tracking of overpayments and the required payroll adjustments?**

The PMIS includes functions for generating a list of payable participants (based on their program status) and adjusting payments by tracking and recouping overpayments. The CEIP office manager uses a combination of PMIS-automated functions and supplementary procedures for generating weekly payroll entitlements, which are then transmitted to SRDC to complete the pay runs through the service provider.

Supplementary procedures for tracking overpayments and initiating payment adjustments were necessitated due to several factors. First, longer-than-expected lags in the receipt of participant time reports and lax monitoring procedures meant that adjustments were not being recorded in the PMIS in a timely fashion. Overpayments and adjustments were noted in the participant's hard copy file and transmitted within a temporary manual system to SRDC. The adjustment function within the PMIS was not being utilized. Second, the planned integration of PMIS and CEIP payroll functions never occurred due to technical problems. Difficulties in cross-platform compatibility meant that it was easier and more cost-effective to develop supplementary procedures rather than integrate the systems. However, from an operational perspective, the implication was that PMIS adjustment functions became redundant once the supplementary systems were in place. Finally, resource-staffing constraints within the CEIP office likely contributed to the elimination of the PMIS adjustment functions from payroll procedures. Though initially important for research, a redundant procedure from an operational standpoint is difficult to maintain in the context of resource bottlenecks and competing demands.

From a research standpoint, actions were taken to ensure data from the supplementary systems were accurately captured in the research extracts. However, the higher-than-anticipated incidence of missing or delayed time reports and the need to develop supplementary payroll systems resulted in an unacceptably high number of participant files without complete documentation to fully support the payments that had been made. As a result, administrative practices were reviewed, which led to an increase in the number of administrative staff in the CEIP office and changes to some of the administrative procedures.

## LESSONS LEARNED: INTAKE AND EARLY PROGRAM OPERATIONS

This section summarizes, based on the preceding discussion, some of the key lessons of the CEIP implementation with respect to the intake process, random assignment, orientation sessions, the employability assessments and provision of job-readiness training, and the implementation of the PMIS and CEIP payroll.

## Intake, Random Assignment, and Orientation

- **Evidence suggests that both EI and IA selection criteria were applied appropriately and consistently throughout the selection period.** This led to a randomly selected sample that was highly consistent with the target groups of the research design. However, the employability criterion for selecting the IA sample was not applied as rigorously and consistently as hoped, resulting in the inclusion in the research sample of a small number of individuals with severe employability concerns.
- **Sample selection proceeded largely as intended, consistent with the two-year sample-loading plan.** Relative to a program that recruits sample members through local office referrals, the CEIP selection process resulted in no excessive administrative burden and entailed few disruptions for the study sponsors.
- **Volunteers were well informed about the main features of CEIP and made an informed choice to join the study.** Key messages delivered at information sessions were consistent with the research design, and evidence suggests that volunteers understood the offer. Effective procedures were implemented that ensured only randomly selected individuals were invited and admitted to information sessions. Furthermore, appropriate timelines were observed for delivery and acceptance of the offer.
- **Random assignment was implemented fairly with appropriate procedures to protect the integrity of experiment.** There were no systematic differences between program and control group members for either the EI or IA study samples. Procedures were also effective in ensuring that only eligible volunteers were randomly assigned, that they were assigned before receiving CEIP services, and that control group members did not gain access to the CEIP treatment.
- **The CEIP office may have experienced some staffing constraints during the recruitment period, as the number of active participants increased.** Given the immediate urgency of sample intake, recruitment was not compromised. However, some of the regular responsibilities of staff may have been postponed or become secondary activities during the intake period.

## Employability Assessment and Job-Readiness Training: Early Lessons

- **The employability assessment may be able to recognize participants with the most serious deficits, however many with less severe problems are difficult to identify.** CEIP staff report that in many cases participants with less serious concerns — yet who would still benefit from job-readiness training — were not identified through the assessment itself. The assessment process may be better at measuring job-readiness on a continuum rather than as a discrete indicator. Furthermore, the extent to which a behavioural or skill deficit actually hinders job-readiness varies based on the individual, the underlying concern, and the job in question. In many cases, this means that an absolute determination is difficult to make.
- **Many employability concerns are not apparent until the participants are in work assignments.** In some cases, project sponsors raised concerns about participants with the placement coordinator after assignments had begun. In other cases, participants

themselves mentioned workplace or personal concerns to their participant managers, and these issues were best addressed with specific job-readiness training modules.

- **The assessment may also not be as successful as expected in linking employment deficits to the established list of job-readiness training modules.** In many cases, specific training needs became clear to the participant managers and placement coordinator only after placements had begun and they were able to discuss concerns with participants and sponsors. The extent to which this was a problem inherent in the program design will be explored in subsequent research on training and participant management.
- **Job-readiness training was provided at the beginning of program eligibility to a much wider group of participants than originally expected.** Training was provided during the second week of the orientation period for many participants. Furthermore, training modules initially classified as job-readiness modules were being delivered in conjunction with transferable skills training. The view of the participant managers was that participants could benefit from job-readiness training modules, similar to transferable skills training, even in the absence of serious behavioural or skill deficits. The extent to which the demand for training was a sponsor-, participant-, or staff-driven phenomenon will be explored further in subsequent implementation research.

### PMIS and CEIP Payroll Systems: Early Lessons

- **The PMIS helped to maintain the integrity of the experiment by strictly controlling the initial transfer of research sample data and tracking sample members' status throughout the period of the offer.** However, CEIP staff noted some system limitations that may have resulted in some operational constraints.
- **The planned introduction of the PMIS in a series of releases rather than one functional application may have contributed to some early implementation challenges.** Specifically, two crucial aspects of participant management were not part of the initial PMIS release: the functions for tracking participant time reports and training activities.
- **The flexible two-cycle payments system has provided speedy and reliable payments to participants under a range of varied circumstances.** Participants who return to active CEIP participation can switch payment cycles if necessary to minimize the delays and the associated disincentive effects.
- **The compliance of project sponsors with the requirement to submit prompt and precise time reports for all participants has been more difficult to obtain than expected.** Although the majority of sponsors submit timely and accurate reports, some are more negligent in meeting these responsibilities.
- **Initial resource constraints and competing demands of participant intake activities within the CEIP office may have contributed to lax monitoring of project sponsor obligations.** During the early implementation, the primary focus of the majority of CEIP office staff was on outreach, intake, and participant orientation activities. Monitoring and follow-up with project sponsors was not conducted consistently in the early stages of the implementation.

- **Difficulties in cross-platform compatibility meant that the planned integration of PMIS and CEIP payroll functions never occurred.** It was easier and more cost-effective to develop supplementary procedures rather than integrate the systems. As a result, the overpayments and adjustments functionality in the PMIS was replaced with supplementary systems.

# Chapter 10:
# Talking With Program Group Members

This chapter differs from the others included in this report. It examines the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) from the viewpoints of program group members based on a series of one-on-one interviews conducted about six months after enrolment.[1] In the interviews, participants were asked to discuss their experiences both on work placements and with CEIP staff and services as well as their views toward the program model and supplementary benefits. Finally, participants were asked to discuss their expectations of CEIP. It was hoped that participants would reveal information about their experiences on the project that would not be gathered by other sources. It was believed that understanding the aspects of CEIP that were beneficial and not beneficial for participants might help in identifying problems with the delivery of program services or concerns of participants. Such knowledge could aid in the implementation research and provide valuable knowledge on how to deliver such programs in the future. It was also believed the interviews might reveal elements of the program that could be contributing to the early effects, thus aiding the future impact analysis.

The interviews were held at the CEIP office and each participant had been in CEIP for six months at the time of the interviews.[2] It is important to acknowledge that the results of the interviews represent only the early impression of an unfolding story.

## FINDINGS IN BRIEF

For the most part, participants appeared to view their CEIP participation in a positive light. The employment security offered by CEIP was a relief to many participants who were not accustomed to much labour market security.

The participants who were generally satisfied with their CEIP experiences at the time of the interviews tended to view CEIP as a stepping stone to future employment. These participants expected to enhance their future employability through program participation. Many believed that CEIP afforded them an opportunity possibly to learn new skills through on-the-job training opportunities and to enhance their social networks. In some cases, expectations were not being met at the time of the interviews. However, for the most part, participants whose expectations had not yet been met believed they would be met before their program eligibility expired.

[1]Three sets of interviews were conducted. The first two sets consisted of 10 interviews and the last set consisted of 8. The first set was conducted in November 2001. The second set was conducted in June 2002 and the third set was conducted in February 2003.

[2]For practical purposes, the interviews were held in conjunction with the six-month review participants have with their participant manager. Ordinarily participant managers visit participants on site for their six-month review. For the purposes of this research, participants had their six-month review at the CEIP office.

Overall, the interviews suggest the following:

- Most participants are fairly optimistic about CEIP.
- In most cases, the positive aspects of program participation outweigh the negative aspects.
- Participants joined CEIP for three years of secure employment; the supplementary benefits were not a powerful incentive to join CEIP.
- In some cases, participants reported that taking part in CEIP improved their self-esteem.
- CEIP placements are not seen as being sustainable beyond the project, leading many to view CEIP as a stepping stone to future employment.
- Many expect to gain meaningful on-the-job skills and enhance their social networks.

## TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

A standard interview guide was used when conducting the six-month interviews with participants. The guide contained five main subject areas which participants were asked to discuss:

- work placement experiences, whether positive or negative
- experiences with staff and services offered through CEIP
- views towards aspects of the program model — aspects they found beneficial and not beneficial
- views regarding supplemental program benefits, whether they were an incentive to join
- expectations of CEIP — what they hoped to gain from program participation

One interviewer was present during all the interviews. Participants were relaxed during the interviews, speaking openly about their CEIP experiences and, in many cases, about their past employment experiences as well. The interviews were recorded and subsequently analyzed using qualitative software.

## RECRUITING THE PARTICIPANTS

The sample of participants was chosen from anonymized files containing their identification numbers and stratified based on age, gender, location, time of recruitment, and type of benefit received (Employment Insurance (EI), income assistance (IA)) prior to joining CEIP. Participants were contacted by CEIP participant managers who asked them if they would agree to be interviewed by an SRDC researcher following their regularly scheduled six-month review.

Prior to participating in the six-month interview process, participants were asked to sign an informed consent form. The consent form outlined the type of information researchers were seeking. It also notified participants that the process was strictly confidential and

anonymous. CEIP participant managers administered the informed consent prior to the interview being conducted. A copy of each signed consent was placed in the relevant participant's file. Participants were reminded at the commencement of the interview of the confidentiality of the process.

## EXPERIENCES WITH WORK PLACEMENTS

Did the self-esteem of participants increase from their program involvement? What type of relationship did participants have with sponsors and how important was that relationship to their program experiences? How did participants view the types of placements offered and the organizations that sponsor them?

Prior to being selected for CEIP, participants were collecting EI or IA benefits. Repeated use of such programs can negatively affect individuals' confidence and sense of self-worth. CEIP provided an opportunity to these individuals to join the labour market and make a positive contribution to developing community. One participant described the effect CEIP had on her confidence this way, "I am glad to be out working. You do feel like you are contributing if you are out working. It does give you confidence. You feel good about yourself [and have] confidence and self-esteem if you are out working and part of your community. I have been very blessed to be back in my community. Things are coming together."

Another participant described how moving into the labour force affected his self-esteem in the following way: "Being on unemployment is not a happy thing. You kind of get to the point after rejection after rejection, after sending out so many resumes, [that] you are feeling like a beaten person. It is pretty bad. [Getting a job] is definitely an esteem-builder. I found myself a more happier person." A social assistance recipient described the effects the program had on his self-esteem this way, "I got my self-esteem back. I got my get-up-and-go [and] I got my drive back. I lost that for a while."

Many participants felt empowered as a result of their placement experiences. In various instances, project sponsors have given participants a great deal of responsibility in their work placements. One participant described his early placement experiences this way:

> *The first couple of times* [the sponsor] *would tell me what he wanted. I would do up something on Word or do up a memorandum or something and give it to him. He might take it back and have one of his secretaries do it professionally . . . . Lately, in the last month or so, I used to run to him all the time especially in matters of money and stuff.* [But] *no more. He said, "You are the administrator. It is your decision. Do not come running to me. You are here this long, you know what we need . . . . People come to you looking for money for this or that* [and] *it is up to you. You give them money and if we fall short it falls on you."*

### Relationships With Sponsors

The relationship between sponsors and participants will ultimately affect both parties' views of the program. It became apparent from the interviews that many participants had excellent working relationships with sponsors. Where sponsors displayed support and guidance, participants appeared satisfied and content with their placements. In many placements, the relationship between the two seemed to be built on trust and mutual respect.

One participant described the relationship with his supervisor as a supportive and productive one:

> *He led me a stage at a time: "This is how we have to do it . . . ." He has offered me a course . . . there is a management course coming up. He said* [to me], *"We will pay for it if you want to take it. If it is going to benefit you, it is going to benefit us." He encouraged me. It's been 100 per cent all the way.* [When I had] *problems with some of the . . . accounting software,* [and there were] *some things I could not figure out, he said, "Call an accounting company and get an accountant in. We don't mind spending a bit of money if it is going to benefit you* [and] *it is going to benefit us." It's a great place to work.*

Another participant described her views about being recognized and valued by her sponsor in this way:

> *We were at the annual general meeting last night. Every one of us were mentioned individually, how the centre would not be functioning as well without us there. That was really, really nice in front of the board members and the whole deal . . . . I was expecting it. We were told ahead of time it would probably happen. Everybody just looked around at each other with a smile on our face* [because] *that was nice,* [it was] *nice to be appreciated . . . .*

Not all participants had such praise for their sponsors; some reported negative experiences. Project sponsors are responsible for supervising participants while on work placements. Despite this responsibility, some participants have acknowledged that their placements were disorganized. One participant felt that there was a lack of communication between her project sponsor and the CEIP office. In this instance the CEIP office was not aware participants were working out in the community. She described the situation this way: "I went up to the office, actually, when I found out . . . . I asked [my supervisor] why she did not call over here [to the CEIP office] to let them know . . . where we were at. She did not feel she had to. To send a crew out . . . for three or four days, the head office should know. Some of [the work placements] are not organized enough. They should be looked into."

Another participant believed his work responsibilities were not clear and referred to his placement as a "pretty disorganized place." He described his placement responsibilities this way: "You don't know what you're [supposed to be] doing, or [it could be] you were supposed to be doing [something that day] and [the sponsor] decided to change [the work responsibilities] totally . . . ."

Many participants considered it important to be appreciated by their project sponsor; however, there were instances where participants felt under-appreciated. The lack of appreciation, in some cases, led to a negative work experience. One participant articulated how the lack of appreciation affected her experience:

> *It does not matter where I work,* [it's] *just* [that] *where I am now I don't find* [the job] *rewarding to me . . . but I like being appreciated for all the work I do. I get none of that . . . . It does not make me happy that way. I like it when somebody compliments me on all the work I do,* [but] *nobody does that.* [When I am complimented on my work], *that makes me feel better about what I am doing . . . . I am at the point where I wake up in the morning and do not want to go to work.*

In the instance described above the relationship between participant and sponsor deteriorated to a level where trust was no longer present. The participant believed the sponsor wilfully withheld information:

> *They are to provide transportation. I was there for two months,* [then] *they said, "You will have to start using your own vehicle . . . ." They said, "You are going to have to . . . . Everybody else did it when they worked here." I said, "You are employees, I am not. That contract said you guys provide transportation." She let it drop then and just brought it up again last month. She said, "No, you have to* [use your own vehicle], *no ifs ands or buts about it . . . ." They did not tell me they were selling the vehicle* [that I had been using].

Another participant felt her sponsor did not treat employees properly and this contributed to an unpleasant work environment. "It was not a pleasant project to work on a lot of [the] time. The people in charge did not seem to know how to treat employees. [It] was not always pleasant to be out there."

In many instances, participants experiencing strained relations with sponsors requested another placement. The experiences did not appear to change expectations and perceptions of CEIP. Participants who experienced strained relations with sponsors continued to believe CEIP to be a good forum in which to acquire valuable work-related experiences and skills and to enhance networks.

## Relationships With Regular Employees

A variety of organizations can sponsor projects, providing they meet established guidelines. In some projects, CEIP participants are on a job site with regular employees. There were instances where friction existed between CEIP participants and regular employees. One participant described his relationship with regular employees in the following manner: "It is not bad sometimes, but sometimes it has a tendency [to become a tense situation]. The way they get mad at you [and it is as if] they [are saying], 'Look at the grant workers . . . .' I won't get into conflict with them . . . . It gets on your nerves [and] a few times I felt like saying something to them."

CEIP offers benefits to participants, such as 15 days of personal time to cover sickness and vacation, that regular employees may not have. The fact that benefits are accrued to participants has led to some tension between CEIP participants and regular employees. The same participant quoted above explained his situation this way: "[As for] holidays, we get every holiday off. [A regular employee] told me, '[If] you don't want to work, you take your holidays off.' I told him, "If it were your holiday[s] you would take them off too.'"

Another participant who felt tension between her and regular employees over CEIP benefits described her situation in this manner:

> *Sometimes* [there is tension], *and it's not so much the program itself, it's the regular employees. Sometimes* [they] *have a bad attitude toward the CEIP, like* [you are] *kind of a temporary fixture* [and] *you are not really an employee here . . . . Sometimes I feel that way,* [but] *not a whole lot. But sometimes I get that* [treatment]. *Like where we have 15 days* [of vacation], *they are like, "*[We] *wish we had that"* [with regard to] *the benefits we have.*

## Views Towards Sponsoring Organizations

The majority of CEIP project sponsors are non-profit organizations. In many cases, CEIP has increased the capacity of such organizations. Several participants acknowledged the limited financial capacity of non-profits and the implications this will have on their employment opportunities at the end of CEIP. Participants appeared to accept what they believed to be a program limitation. One participant described her views towards non-profits in this manner:

> *The way their money situation is from year to year, they do not know if they will be open next year . . . or like* [in] *the summer* [they say], *"Sure we will hire you a few months in the summer,"* [but] *once the money dries up you are* [not offered a job]. *That's what they seem to do — they hire people seasonally because they cannot afford to pay people in the winter.* [This means that you have to be claiming] *unemployment* [insurance] *in the winter* [and] *working in the summer, which I am trying to get away from.*

Another participant described his realization regarding non-profits this way:

> *At the beginning I thought, "Hey, this would be good opportunity to possibly come out with a job at the end of it." A short time into it I realized* [that there] *was not so much an excellent opportunity* [of] *getting a job out of it because the placements were non-profits and so forth . . . . I guess I always knew it in the back of my mind* [that] *these places* [are] *run on volunteers; it is their lifeblood, it is who they are . . . . As far as getting a job at the end,* [that] *is not so much a reality.*

The work placements at non-profit organizations are likely to end when CEIP ends. Many participants seem to be aware of this possibility. This awareness has led participants to attach more importance to developing on-the-job skills and enhancing their social network.

## Community Perception

Many participants believed that their placements were useful and afforded them opportunities to enhance their employability. Yet, they noted that many community members and other participants perceive the CEIP to be a "glorified grant."[3] This perception is not surprising because CEIP exists in an economically depressed area with a history of government intervention to strengthen the labour market. The general perception had troubled one participant in particular who had a positive placement experience and felt the project has been unfairly labelled a "government grant."

> *I just listen to other people talking about this program. A lot of people consider it a glorified grant, and I don't consider it that at all. Here . . . we work from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. We are not sitting around doing nothing. People will come up to you and say, "You are on that CEIP and do nothing all day."* [And I say,] *"No. I am sorry. You can come and visit me at my work site any time you want. If you think I don't do anything, you'd be sorely mistaken." I don't like the way some have a negative opinion about* [CEIP] *because some of* [the participants] *do not treat* [their placement] *as a job because they come and go as they want. I am not saying* [that is what it is like] *where I am at, but in other positions where* [other

[3]Government job programs, commonly referred to as "grants" by many in Industrial Cape Breton, are largely seen as temporary make-work projects. Although the CEIP is a multi-year research demonstration project, some see it as simply another temporary make-work program.

> participants] *are at, you hear* [that participants do] *not* [treat their placement as a job]. [That is] *not* [the way it is] *were we are at.*

Participants who do not take their project obligations seriously can affect public perception. The public perception may worsen if CEIP participants are seen standing around on job sites. The participant quoted above noted that some members of the public have complained about the work done on CEIP placements: "I have heard people complain, ' . . . our lawn was supposed to be done, [but] it is nothing but a joke.'" When asked how such views made her feel, she said, "The hair stands up on the back of my head to start off with. This is a job [that could last] for years . . . . [But, as] in any [job], you are going to get people . . . who just take a position to accept a paycheque after two weeks." The comments by this participant are interesting in that they appear to advocate personal responsibility, suggesting that is up to participants to take advantage of the CEIP offer.

## EXPERIENCES WITH CEIP STAFF AND PROGRAM SERVICES

How important is the CEIP office staff to the experiences of program participants? What views did participants hold of program services offered in CEIP and what effect, if any, did this have on their outlook on the program?

Participants have close contact with CEIP staff throughout their program experience. CEIP staff is responsible for managing participants throughout their eligibility and participants have ongoing contact with their participant manager while in the program. This involves phone contact every three months and site visits at six-month intervals. Throughout the interviews, participants acknowledged the supportiveness and professionalism of CEIP staff. Referring to the professionalism of CEIP staff a participant stated: "They are [professional]. The thing that gets me every time is that they always remember your name . . . . And they have always been extremely helpful and get things done . . . right when you ask them to. They are right on the ball . . . . They seem to meet your needs, and right away."

The intangible support offered by the CEIP staff was widely acknowledged in the interviews conducted. Many participants acknowledged the warm atmosphere that existed at the CEIP office. One participant characterized such support as follows:

> *The way they made you feel when you were here* [was that] *they made you feel like you were important and they are trying to work to get you into a full-time job . . . . They are friendly and outgoing.* [This] *makes you feel welcome, I guess you could say. They make you feel very welcome.* [It] *made the week easier to deal with,* [because] *you didn't know what you were coming into when you came in, like "What am I going to deal with here?" They made you comfortable right from the start.*

The support offered by staff established a comfort level between the staff and many participants. A participant illustrated this comfort when he stated, "[I've] never known a group to be so nice . . . . If I had a problem, any kind of problem whatsoever, I would not hesitate to call anybody."

Participants in CEIP go through an assessment period prior to taking part in community employment. Many participants acknowledged the usefulness of this employability assessment. One participant characterized the assessment in the following way: "The

assessment is very important because there is a lot of people who do not realize what they are capable of. The assessment brings it out." Another participant described the most beneficial aspect of the program this way, "Early on, [by] getting to know what your strengths and weaknesses are, that way you can improve on them."

Performing well on the assessment tests helped improve the self-esteem of many participants. One participant was surprised by her results on the assessment, and this improved her self-esteem. "I always lacked confidence. Since I got in this program, starting off we had the tests. I did really well in the tests. So I was I thinking, 'I am smarter than I thought I was.' Then when you are going out and meeting a lot of different people and you are working with different people, the whole experience builds up your confidence."

The CEIP Resource Centre was opened to host the activities of an additional week of orientation. It was also the location of some of the transitional jobs projects. There were criticisms expressed about some of the activities occurring at the resource centre and about the physical nature of the building. Commenting on his experience in a transitional job in the resource centre, one participant stated:

> *I found* [that] *at the resource centre it was just long dragged-out days. It did not seem like anybody in the place wanted to be there anyway. It just seemed like they were struggling to get through the day themselves . . . . At the end of it I did not want to be there. I'd rather be out on the road at least moving, doing something. You can only bang a hammer so many times in an hour, look at a hole that you* [made], *put in a piece of rubber that is three inches long by half an inch.*

The physical nature of the centre was also mentioned. One participant stated, "The building over there is not the greatest. I was in there for two months [and] there are no windows. [It's] pretty gloomy. [I] just had to get out of there, get on a placement . . . . [It's] not the funnest thing cutting rubber every day . . . . [I] just wanted to get into a placement, do something different."

## VIEWS TOWARD ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM MODEL

Were there aspects of the program design that were not beneficial for participants or aspects that participants disagreed with? If so, what effect did this have on their overall program experience?

To be eligible for CEIP, individuals had to be receiving EI or IA and be randomly selected. There were varying perceptions of the selection process. There were participants who believed that the selection process for CEIP should be needs-based rather than random. Several participants interviewed found it unsettling that individuals receiving pensions could be eligible for CEIP. A participant described her view this way:

> *I did not know* [about the selection process] *until I started . . . . When I first started out here,* [another participant] *was going on about making $2,300 a month. I did not know anyone then at the time; we were all split up after orientation. He was a coal miner or whatever . . . I was thinking* [that] *this guy makes $2,300 a month* [while] *my brother does not make $500 a month on unemployment . . . . It just did not make sense to me . . . . It really bothered me that somebody could be making that kind of money and working through CEIP and it not affecting their income for the month, and there are people out there making $500 a month.*

Others felt random selection was a fair way to choose individuals for the program. A participant stated, "I thought it was pretty fair. I got a letter and mailed it in. [It was the] luck of the draw." Another participant acknowledged that the selection process was as fair a way as any to select people for the program: "I think it was fair. They can only do so much for so many people. I think that was probably the best way to do it: random pick. I can't picture any other way of doing it with so many people. That was the fairest way to do it."

Some participants reported finding the selection process nerve-racking. Participants who sign the consent form have an equal opportunity to be part of the program group and take part in community-based employment or to be part of the control group and not take part in community-based employment. Participants who signed the consent form were notified by mail to which group they were assigned. Regarding the selection process, a participant stated:

> *The scariest part about the selection process is that, even though I* [wanted] *to join, I was not sure I would get hired on because it can go either way . . . . I was sort of hoping to get hired on and not be part of the* [control group]. *Once I was hired on* [in the program group] *I was happy.*

Some participants found transportation to be a problem. Many participants requested placements in their community to reduce their need to travel. Some communities do not have many CEIP placements, thus limiting the opportunities for those lacking access to reliable transportation. A participant explained his situation this way:

> *I am limited, too, with my transportation because I don't have a license, so* [my placement] *has to be something in Sydney, and . . .* [it] *is difficult to get anything* [in Sydney]. *It's hard to get around. Public transportation in this area is not very good: a couple of buses run a day and that's it. If you worked in the evening it would cost you 20 bucks a day.*[4]

Another individual with transportation problems found a placement outside his own community that he felt would benefit him, and he decided to take public transportation despite the difficulties. He described his situation this way:

> *The travel is another thing. I am from Sydney and there* [are] *barely* [any job opportunities] *in Sydney. Now I'm over in Sydney Mines* [and] *I am getting the bus over and back. I have a car,* [and] *I am waiting to get my car on the road — that is why I took* [the job in Sydney Mines]. *It is costing me $7 a day to get work right now. I like what I am doing; that is why I am doing it.*

Many participants are placed in their home community and they acknowledge the convenience and desirability of such a situation. As one participant stated, "I just live down the street from where I work most of the week. I can walk back and forth to work if I want." Describing the location of her placement, another participant expressed the proximity in a similar manner: "It is just down the road [so] I can just walk to work. It is really easy, flexible."

## SUPPLEMENTARY BENEFITS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

What role, if any, did the supplementary benefits play in the decision to join CEIP? What were participant views of such benefits and did they believe they were adequate or could be improved?

[4]Sydney is not one of the CEIP communities, so few sponsored projects would be located there.

The health plan and annual leave were seen as an added bonus of program participation, yet many would have joined in the absence of such benefits. Participants were quick to acknowledge that they joined CEIP first and foremost because it offered secure employment for three years. As one participant stated, "[CEIP] gave me work when I had no work."

While acknowledging the benefits as an added bonus, participants also pointed out what they believed to be lacking in the program's supplemental benefits. For example, some interviewees acknowledged the health plan as beneficial, but several were disappointed that a dental plan was not included.

The majority of participants interviewed enrolled in the health plan. The affordability of the plan made it attractive to participants. One participant said, "I never really expected to use it. I have not used it yet. Basically for what we are being charged for it . . . . it is worth to have for that kind of money." For others, the health plan was useful. One participant said, "Oh yes, definitely [the health plan] came in great for me . . . it covered my pills. It does not cover a lot of other stuff, but my other [plan] did not either. It was just great. The way they set [the CEIP health plan] up, we were only here a week and [received the plan] . . . . I think everybody was pleased with that." Another participant also found the plan beneficial to her and her family:

> *My husband is working and does not have a benefit plan. Believe you me it came in handy. It has been very good. People need* [a benefit plan]. *A lot of people like myself* [want] *to make more money, but when you get some benefits out of* [your job], *it makes it easier to deal with* [even] *when it is not* [earning you] *as much money as you would like to have. So these benefits work out great for me. We have four in our family who wear glasses, so every so often you need to* [spend a lot of money on new glasses]. [The benefit plan] *does not cover the full cost, but it is a help.*

One participant believed the addition of a dental plan would be beneficial because of what she sees as inadequacies in her existing coverage:

> *For me, personally, the medical coverage does not help. We are pretty healthy people, and I have been* [looking] *into it and I am thinking maybe I should not be* [covered] *because I used it* [only] *once in six months. If I* [could suggest] *something to improve on with CEIP, I would say the addition of a dental plan would be very beneficial to us* [because] *we have none.* [For] *my kids, they will only cover one visit when we need two —* [this is] *MSI* [insurance coverage] *I am talking about . . . . Even if we had to pay more* [for a dental plan] *it would be well worth it.*

Program participants receive 15 days of paid leave annually. Many participants in CEIP acknowledged the approved leave time as beneficial. Participants can also choose to receive a payment in lieu of leave time. One participant described her feelings regarding leave time in the following manner:

> *It's a very big help. There are times* [when] *I had a mother that was ill.* [It is] *just* [when] *things that come up like that, you know you can take a personal day if you need it for an emergency or something and you know you will get paid for that day. I guess* [it is] *a bit of security. You know you would not lose a day*['s] *pay if you have to go to the doctor or something.*

Although acknowledged as beneficial, the availability of leave time did not appear to influence participants' decision to join CEIP. As one participant explained, "[It] wasn't that important. It was good, a good idea, but was not that important. There are jobs out there

where you may not get any vacation [and] if you do, it is very little. So 15 days is a lot, and I thought it was good, but it is not anything that helped me make my decision to join or not to join."

## EXPECTATIONS OF CEIP

What could CEIP offer individuals looking for work in the future? If a gap existed between expectations and reality, how did participants view such a gap?

CEIP offers participants an opportunity to enhance their skills and social networks. Some transferable skills training is offered through CEIP, and participants also have the opportunity to acquire on-the-job training. The opportunity to enhance social networks is available due to varying placement opportunities available to participants.

Participants believed acquisition of additional skills would aid them in their quest for future employment and felt that CEIP would help them gain such skills. As a participant explained, "My expectations were high. There was a lot of emphasis on skills." CEIP provides Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) training and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) training to participants as part of orientation. This training is designed to improve the job-readiness of individuals and participants have acknowledged its benefits:

> *They were kind of eye-openers in a way. I always wanted WHMIS* [training] *but never had the opportunity to get it.* [WHMIS training] *helps me in my everyday life, the jobs I usually do in the regular workforce, and now here through CEIP and on project placements.*

In one specific case, an individual acquired some of the transferable skills training prior to joining CEIP. Although this individual had taken such training in the past, the participant acknowledged the usefulness of a reorientation: "[The skills training courses] were really good. I had the WHMIS before [but if you take the course again] you are still learning different things. You will forget something . . . [so] it is good to take over again."

CEIP also offers computer training and the Christopher leadership training. This training is not given to participants during their two-week orientation; participation is voluntary and scheduled later for those who are interested in taking it. The majority of participants who were interviewed had not yet had a chance to take these training modules, but many were interested in doing so. One participant characterized her expectations regarding the training in the following manner:

> *You can sign up for what you are interested in. The Christopher leadership* [training] *I would really like to take because now on my job if I had that I would be more comfortable . . . . I actually had to do two presentations* [during] *which I almost died. I'm like "Oh no, don't make me do this . . . ." I probably, I know I, would have been more at ease and also probably would have done a better presentation if I had a little bit of experience of the Christopher leadership* [training]*, so I was hoping a lot for that. And* [training related to] *computers,* [now that I am in a job] *where I am doing some office work, it would have really come in handy . . . . I do not know anything* [about using computers]. *I am bugging people* [by saying]*, "What do I do now?"*

Despite the optimism expressed by many participants regarding available transferable skills training, there were those who expressed disappointment at the lack of formal training opportunities. Participants acquire some transferable skills training, but formal training was not intended to part of the CEIP program model. Although the purpose and guidelines of CEIP were clearly explained to participants, some felt disappointed that they could not obtain formal training through CEIP. A participant explained his expectations on acquiring formal training this way: "[I would] take more courses, if [CEIP] would give you some kind of substantial courses." He acknowledged that his expectations of CEIP may have been too high in this regard.

Although there were differing opinions regarding training opportunities offered by CEIP, most participants believed the program offered excellent opportunities to enhance social capital. Acknowledging the opportunity of enhancing networks through CEIP participation one participant stated:

> [CEIP] *keeps you in the workforce where you can meet more contacts for employment. That's what I like about the program . . . . You meet contacts and maybe later on that will help with employment.*

The potential to enhance social networks proved a powerful incentive to join CEIP in some cases. In an effort to enhance her network, one participant accepted the CEIP offer despite having a higher EI claim than the CEIP community wage:

> *I lost quite a bit* [of money] *going from unemployment to this* [program], *and to me it was worthwhile in the end to go and . . . have the three years* [of] *full-time employment. Plus I have all the professional contacts that I want to make. It was more of a security feature because I figured after the three years I could go find another job . . . . This gives me all the professional contacts that I am missing.*

## CONCLUSION

The program experiences, in some cases, have not met participant expectations. In such cases participants believed that their expectations would be met at a future date and, for this reason, remained generally positive in their attitudes toward CEIP and the opportunities it afforded them. A participant expressed this view in saying, "The good [points] overwhelm the bad ones [in] CEIP. What I am going to gain? I might not be gaining new skills right now, but I know somewhere in the three years . . . I am going to gain new skills. I have that to look forward to."

The interviews from which these comments are drawn were an attempt to get some early feedback from participants on their attitudes and experiences. Research activities designed to obtain the perspectives of participants — as well as the views of those who served on community boards or sponsored community projects — will continue throughout CEIP. This information will be important in identifying delivery lessons and in helping to interpret the results on program impacts.

# Appendix A:
# The EI Program

The Employment Insurance (EI) program[1] provides income support to those who are attached to the workforce and is governed by the *Employment Insurance Act*, which came into force on July 1, 1996, replacing the *Unemployment Insurance Act*.

People who have paid EI premiums, most often through payroll deductions, and who have had an interruption of earnings can apply to receive EI benefits. The type of EI benefits for which a person may apply is determined by the cause of the applicant's loss of, or inability to participate in, employment. Regular benefits are available to those who lost their job through no fault of their own — for example due to shortage of work, seasonal or mass layoffs, or voluntary leave with just cause.[2] People who are pregnant, caring for a newborn or adopted child, or sick can access maternity, parental, and/or sickness benefits. Additionally, fishing benefits are available to those who worked as fishers.

Eligibility criteria vary by type of benefit. Since CEIP participants are drawn from the population of regular EI beneficiaries, this description focuses on the eligibility requirements, application process, and the entitlement and benefit rates associated with regular EI. Statistics regarding the use of EI and the unemployment rates in industrial Cape Breton and Nova Scotia are included in the final section of this appendix.

## ELIGIBILITY

Regular benefits can be paid to individuals who lose their jobs through no fault of their own (for example due to shortage of work, seasonal or mass layoffs, or voluntary leave with just cause) and who are available for, able, and searching for work.

To qualify for regular benefits, an applicant must show that

- he or she has been without work and without pay for at least seven consecutive days and
- he or she has worked for the required number of insurable hours during the qualifying period.

The qualifying period is the shorter of either the 52-week period immediately before the start date of a claim or the period since the start of a previous EI claim if benefits have been received within the last 52 weeks. Under certain circumstances, the qualifying period may be extended for up to 104 weeks. Only the insurable hours that fall within the qualifying period are used to determine eligibility for benefits.

Most people need between 420 and 700 insurable hours of work in their qualifying period to qualify for regular EI benefits. The required number of hours is based on the unemployment

[1]For more information about the EI program, refer to Canada's National Employment Insurance Site at www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/employment_insurance.shtml.

[2]For examples of voluntary leave with just cause, see www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/pubs/regular.shtml#Quitting.

rate in the economic region where the claimant resides at the time the benefit period begins (see Table A.1). However, 910 hours of insurable employment in the qualifying period is needed to qualify when the claimant is

- a new entrant to the labour force or
- a re-entrant to the labour force (after an absence of two years or more).[3]

Penalties associated with a previous EI claim may also increase the number of hours required to qualify for EI benefits.

**Table A.1: Insurable Hours Required**

| Regional Rate of Unemployment | Required Number of Hours of Insurable Employment in the Last 52 Weeks |
|---|---|
| 0% to 6% | 700 |
| 6.1% to 7% | 665 |
| 7.1% to 8% | 630 |
| 8.1% to 9% | 595 |
| 9.1% to 10% | 560 |
| 10.1% to 11% | 525 |
| 11.1% to 12% | 490 |
| 12.1% to 13% | 455 |
| 13.1% and over | 420 |

## APPLICATION PROCESS

To receive regular benefits, a claimant must submit an EI application on-line or in person at their local office of the Human Resources Centres of Canada (HRCC). Along with the application, the claimant is required to submit a Record of Employment (ROE) provided by the employer. If the claimant has not received the ROE in a timely fashion, the HRCC will assist in obtaining it from the employer. In the absence of an ROE, claimants must submit other proof of employment such as pay stubs, cancelled pay cheques, or a T4 slip.

The information required to complete an application for EI benefits includes the following:

- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Record of Employment (ROE) from each job held over the last 52 weeks[4]
- Personal identification, such as driver's license, birth certificate, or passport, if applying in person
- Complete bank information, as shown on a cheque, bank statement, or a voided personalized blank cheque from a current account (to have the payment of benefits made by direct deposit to a bank account)

[3]Specifically, a claimant is considered a new entrant or re-entrant (NERE) to the labour force when they do not have at least 490 hours of Labour Force Attachment (LFA) in the 52-week period that precedes their qualifying period. A number of employment-related activities are considered LFA, the more common being hours of insurable work and weeks of paid EI benefit (the latter counting as 35 LFA hours per week). A two-year period without labour force attachment will generally (but not always) mean that the claimant will be a NERE and will require 910 hours to qualify for EI benefits. For additional details on NERE and eligibility requirements, see http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/ae-ei/pubs/regular.shtml#Number.

[4]Claimants are asked to submit ROEs for each job held over the last 104 weeks if they need to demonstrate they have adequate labour force attachment to avoid being identified as a new entrant or re-entrant.

- A detailed account of the circumstances surrounding each resignation or dismissal if the claimant resigned or was dismissed from any job in the last 52 weeks
- Details regarding the most recent employment, including gross earnings (total earnings before deductions, including tips and commissions) during the last 26 weeks, gross earnings for the last week of work, and any amounts received or to be received as a result of termination (for example, vacation pay, severance pay, pension payments, pay in lieu of notice)

If the HRCC receives all the required information and the person qualifies for benefits, the first payment will be issued within 28 days of the start date of the claim. Claimants must serve a two-week unpaid waiting period before EI benefits begin to be paid. Generally, this period is the first two weeks of a claim. If a client reopens a previous claim for benefits for which a waiting period has already been served, another waiting period is not necessary.

## CALCULATION OF BENEFITS

Regular benefits are paid for a period that can vary from 14 to 45 weeks. The number of weeks to be paid is determined at the start date of a benefit period, and it is based on the unemployment rate in the claimant's economic region and the number of insurable hours the claimant accumulated during the qualifying period.

The basic benefit rate is 55 per cent of average insured earnings up to a maximum amount of $413 per week. (The maximum insurable earnings and maximum weekly benefit amount are reviewed annually and are subject to adjustment at the beginning of each year.) EI benefits are taxable income; consequently, provincial (if applicable) and federal taxes are deducted. Claimants are eligible to receive a higher benefit rate, up to a maximum of $413 per week, if they are in a low income family (currently an income of less than $25,921 a year) with children, and if the claimant or the claimant's spouse qualifies to receive the Canada Child Tax Benefit.

The amount of the weekly benefit payment depends on the client's total earnings in the previous 26 weeks, the number of weeks worked during that time period, the unemployment rate in the economic region, and the minimum divisor that applies at that unemployment rate. Average weekly insured earnings is determined by dividing total earnings in the last 26 weeks by the greater of the number of weeks worked in the last 26 weeks or the minimum divisor number (see Table A.2, below). The result is multiplied by 55 per cent to determine the weekly benefit.

**Table A.2: Minimum Divisor by Unemployment Rate**

| Unemployment Rate in Region | Minimum Divisor |
|---|---|
| 0% to 6% | 22 |
| 6.1% to 7% | 21 |
| 7.1% to 8% | 20 |
| 8.1% to 9% | 19 |
| 9.1% to 10% | 18 |
| 10.1% to 11% | 17 |
| 11.1% to 12% | 16 |
| 12.1% to 13% | 15 |
| 13.1% and over | 14 |

## SUMMARY STATISTICS

Tables A.3 and A.4 present some summary statistics on the number of EI claims and benefits paid as well as the unemployment rates for Industrial Cape Breton and Nova Scotia as a whole.

**Table A.3: Number of EI Claims and Benefits Paid, 1997–2002**

| | Nova Scotia | | Industrial Cape Breton | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Number of Active EI Claims (Annual Average) | EI Benefits Paid (Year Total) | Number of Active EI Claims (Annual Average) | EI Benefits Paid (Year Total) |
| **1997** | 59,479 | $521,200,304 | 11,863 | $106,780,728 |
| **1998** | 56,760 | $510,195,727 | 12,025 | $110,379,198 |
| **1999** | 53,896 | $492,421,107 | 11,953 | $110,438,293 |
| **2000** | 53,023 | $512,745,938 | 11,835 | $120,209,406 |
| **2001** | 53,402 | $547,739,902 | 11,154 | $122,771,149 |
| **2002** | 56,567 | $383,162,501[a] | 11,566 | $85,631,186[a] |

**Source:** *Nova Scotia LMI Statistics*, by Human Resources Development Canada, 2002. Retrieved on May 12, 2003, from http://www.ns.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/english/lmi/stats/eicount1.htm

**Note:** [a]2002 figures are available from January to August 2002 only.

**Table A.4: Unemployment Rate**

| | Number of Unemployed Persons Expressed as a Percentage of the Labour Force | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1999 | | 2000 | | 2001 | | 2002 | |
| | Nova Scotia | Region 210[a] | Nova Scotia | Region 210[a] | Nova Scotia | Region 210[a] | Nova Scotia | Region 210[a] |
| **January** | 9.9 | 20.6 | 10.4 | 19.3 | 9.5 | 18.1 | 9.7 | 15.5 |
| **February** | 10.2 | 19.9 | 10.4 | 20.3 | 9.7 | 18.3 | 10.5 | 15.7 |
| **March** | 11.0 | 19.8 | 9.9 | 20.0 | 10.7 | 19.5 | 11.1 | 16.2 |
| **April** | 11.2 | 18.2 | 9.6 | 18.5 | 10.9 | 20.5 | 11.1 | 16.1 |
| **May** | 10.9 | 17.8 | 9.4 | 16.9 | 11.0 | 20.1 | 10.7 | 16.1 |
| **June** | 9.9 | 15.8 | 8.7 | 16.0 | 10.3 | 18.6 | 9.8 | 15.5 |
| **July** | 9.2 | 14.9 | 8.5 | 15.9 | 9.6 | 16.5 | 9.4 | 15.9 |
| **August** | 8.6 | 14.1 | 8.6 | 16.7 | 9.4 | 16.1 | 9.2 | 15.8 |
| **September** | 8.7 | 16.8 | 8.9 | 17.5 | 9.1 | 15.2 | 9.3 | 15.5 |
| **October** | 8.6 | 17.7 | 8.6 | 16.9 | 8.8 | 14.2 | 8.7 | 14.3 |
| **November** | 8.8 | 18.3 | 8.7 | 17.0 | 8.6 | 14.1 | 8.6 | 13.1 |
| **December** | 8.9 | 17.7 | 8.7 | 16.5 | 8.9 | 15.0 | 8.6 | 13.1 |

**Source:** *Nova Scotia LMI Statistics*, by Human Resources Development Canada, 2001. Retrieved on May 12, 2003, from http://www.ns.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/english/lmi/stats/lfnur.htm#map

**Note:** [a]HRDC Region 210 encompasses the geographical area of Cape Breton Island.

Table A.3 illustrates that throughout each of the last six years Industrial Cape Breton accounted for about 22 per cent of EI claims and a similar proportion of total EI benefits paid in Nova Scotia each year. Although Industrial Cape Breton makes up only about 15 per cent of the population of Nova Scotia, it accounts for almost a quarter of all EI claims and benefits paid in the province.

Table A.4 presents the unemployment rate for Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island from 1999 to 2002. The rate of unemployment is consistently higher in Cape Breton than the province as a whole, ranging from 50 per cent higher to nearly double the provincial rate in particular months of the year.

# Appendix B:
# The Income Assistance Program in Nova Scotia

## BACKGROUND

Until well into the 1990s, Nova Scotia operated a "two-tier" income assistance (IA) delivery system — municipalities and the provincial government shared responsibility for income assistance. There were two distinct IA programs: Social Assistance and Family Benefits. Each program was governed by its own legislation, eligibility criteria, policies, and case management practices. The provincial government assumed responsibility for certain welfare recipients (generally those considered unemployable), while municipal governments were responsible for other categories of recipients (generally those considered to be employable).

Critics of this approach, including many welfare advocacy organizations and municipalities, and some clients themselves, felt that that the two-tier system was inherently unfair and was confusing to clients and the public. The National Council of Welfare (1991), for example, argued in support of a single province-wide program that would provide more uniform IA rates and an improved level of service to IA recipients.

In August 1995 the provincial government made an initial move towards replacing the two-tier system. A pilot project was set up in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) under which the provincial government assumed the full cost of providing income assistance in the CBRM. The purpose of the project was threefold. First, it aimed to demonstrate the effectiveness of a single-tier integrated IA system in Nova Scotia. Second, it was designed to examine the costs and benefits of arranging for IA recipients to take part in training and employment initiatives. Finally, the project was seen as a way of setting the stage for broader welfare reform initiatives in Nova Scotia.

Subsequently, on April 1, 1998, the provincial government assumed responsibility for the administration of all IA programs in Nova Scotia. A standard policy and rate structure were put in place. Over and above the basic allowance, discretionary payments could be made to meet special needs (for example dental and eye care) and expenses related to participation in work or training.

## EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT AND INCOME ASSISTANCE

Effective August 2001, the government of Nova Scotia introduced its new *Employment Support and Income Assistance* (ESIA) *Act*, which replaced the *Family Benefits Act* and the *Social Assistance Act*. The focus of the new program was based on promoting self-sufficiency and self-reliance. In addition, the *Income Assistance Act* was amended to allow the continuation of the Community Supports for Adults program and the Long-Term Care Program (the latter has since been transferred to the Department of Health).

**Integrated child benefits.** As part of the changes introduced by the ESIA Act, the provincial government removed the children's allowance from the IA system and

substantially increased the Nova Scotia Child Benefit. The increased Nova Scotia Child Benefit was fully integrated with the National Child Benefit to establish a single, non-taxable, monthly payment for all low income families. Providing child benefits outside the IA system has made it easier and more financially viable for parents who are receiving income assistance to return to work. This is due to a number of factors, including an increase in net income for working parents, the continuation of child benefits outside of the IA system, and enhanced employment supports. The Nova Scotia Child Benefit, the National Child Benefit, and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are all delivered by the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency. Together they provide an estimated $97 million in direct support of 60,000 children in Nova Scotia each year.

**Enhanced employment supports.** These supports include extended prescription drug coverage for up to 12 months after entering the workforce. There is also an increased contribution towards child-care expenses — up to $400 per month based on actual expenses incurred. The costs of transportation related to employment are also covered up to $150 per month (again based on actual incurred expenses). IA recipients will have increased access to training courses, including literacy and educational upgrading programs. A new Training Allowance Incentive allows clients to keep up to $150 of any training allowances they receive, after consideration of allowable expenses such as transportation and child care.

**An enhanced earnings incentive.** IA recipients can now keep 30 per cent of any net earnings received while on income assistance. The IA benefit amount, including amounts paid for child care, transportation, and other employment-related special needs is reduced by 70 per cent of the net amount of earnings received.

**Payments for work-related items.** An IA recipient may receive payments for work-related items subject to approval by the caseworker or casework supervisor. These items may include the following (the amounts shown in brackets can be approved by the caseworker; higher amounts can be approved in exceptional circumstances by a casework supervisor):

- Work-related clothing, for example uniforms, workboots, rain gear, coveralls, and office appropriate attire (up to $200)
- Safety equipment and gear, for example hard hats, ear protectors, eye protectors, safety harnesses, safety gloves, masks, helmets, and face shields (up to $300)
- Tools, including chain saws, mechanics tools, carpentry tools, electronic tools, ladders, and tool belts (up to $500)
- Payments of fees directly related to a return to employment, for example driver's license fees, the cost of obtaining a criminal records check or child abuse registry check, and medical examinations (up to $200)
- Association/professional/licensing dues, including union dues, professional membership dues, and professional license application and renewal fees (up to $500)
- Work-related training courses, including First Aid, WHMIS, CPR, traffic control, and non-violent crisis intervention (up to $200)
- Specific short-term skills training may be eligible for support, for example consideration may be given to computer literacy, General Education Diploma courses, academic upgrading, professional refresher programs, continuing education programs, and seat confirmation fees (up to $500)

- The purchase of personal hygiene and grooming supplies (up to $50)
- Books and supplies required for an approved educational program (up to $700)
- Approved personal development supports, including assertiveness training, self-esteem programs, anger management, career development, and individual counselling not available through provincial health services (up to $300)
- Any equipment and supports related to a disability, if the client is not eligible to receive the supports through other programs and if the supports are required to return to employment, including job coaching, tutoring, ergonomic supports, special chairs, and medical aids (up to $500)
- Psycho-educational assessments (up to $1,000)
- Other employment-related costs associated with participation in employability-enhancing activities that are not covered elsewhere on this list or by other policies and programs (up to $500)

**Employment readiness assessment.** All clients are required to have their employment readiness assessed. For some clients, this means that they will not be considered able to participate in the regular labour market. In such cases, the program will provide ongoing support to those individuals, with a focus on providing supports to enhance their quality of life.

**Restructured rates of assistance.** The rate structure has been simplified and standardized to include the following:

- a personal allowance paid at a rate of $180 per month for each adult in the household
- a shelter allowance paid at a rate of
  - $235 for one person
  - $550 for a two-person household
  - $600 for households of three or more persons
- for single persons, an additional amount not exceeding $300 may be paid in addition to the shelter allowance if the single person
  - has a disability
  - is fleeing an abusive situation
  - has a chronic physical or mental condition that limits participation in employability activities
  - is over 55 years of age
  - is between 16 and 19 years of age

**Enhanced eligibility for special needs benefits.** Special needs benefits are now available to all program recipients who meet the eligibility criteria (previously Family Benefits recipients had only limited access to these benefits).

**Improved appeals process.** Any person who applies for or receives income assistance and/or employment supports has the right to appeal any decision made by the ESIA program.

This includes the right to appeal overpayments and decisions related to the delivery of employment support services. A new two-stage appeal process has been implemented. A mandatory administrative review of an appellant's situation can, if the client wishes, be followed by a formal appeal hearing. Appeal boards make decisions based on whether the policy and regulations have been followed.

In addition to administering IA payments to clients and assessment for appropriate services, the ESIA division through the Employment Support Services (ESS) section is responsible for the development of employment-related initiatives for individuals in receipt of income assistance. The objective of ESS programming is to support IA recipients in moving from welfare to work by promoting self-sufficiency and enabling access to upgrading, training programs, and job opportunities. ESS provides services to the extent necessary to enable recipients to gain entry-level employment in the shortest possible time through the least expensive means (Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, Income and Employment Support Services Division, 2002).

The guiding principle of the ESIA program is self-reliance achieved by providing support, information, and opportunities. The services offered by ESS include career counselling, vocational assessment, a variety of short-term courses (including job clubs, resumé writing, and labour market information), promotion of life-long learning, Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition, a portfolio development program, specialized programs for youth and potential entrepreneurs, job development services, services offered by the job search centres, employment services for disabled persons, and information and assistance in locating information on training and academic upgrading programs. Those services are available to all IA recipients who are job-ready or who may require some help in becoming job-ready.

The ESS staff includes employment counsellors (sometimes referred to as career counsellors or vocational rehabilitation counsellors). Their major function is to provide information and advice to participants in the ESS program, as well as to offer referrals to vocational assessment, a variety of workshops, and job development services. The role of the employment counsellor is to empower people to market themselves and to assist in addressing barriers to employment. It is the participant's responsibility to define a goal and pursue it on his or her own or with the assistance of a job developer. There are also assessment technicians on staff who provide a variety of vocational assessments to participants (including measures of aptitude, academic interests, values, vocabulary, and employment readiness) and job developers who work with both employers and job-ready participants to try to arrange placements into employment (Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, 2001b).

Following the introduction of the ESIA Act in August 2001, a new assessment tool, the Nova Scotia Employability Assessment (NSEA), was implemented. After completing the Employability Assessment, clients are categorized according to an Employability Participation (EP) scale:

> EP Code 1 — Clients awaiting assessment. The total waiting time from issuance of the first IA cheque to completion of an employability assessment should not exceed eight weeks.

EP Code 2 — Persons who are required to participate in ESS. They have completed an employability assessment and an employment plan is being created.

EP Code 3 — Clients who are temporarily excused from participating in ESS. An employability assessment was completed and, based on the results, it has been determined that there will not be a requirement for the client to participate at this time. The situation will be reviewed after six months.

EP Code 4 — Clients who are excused and not required to take part in ESS. The employability assessment has been completed and, based on the results, there is no requirement now, nor is there likely to be a requirement in the future, for the client to participate in employment-related activities.

EP Code 5 — Persons who did not report for their employability assessment appointment (Nova Scotia Department of Community Services, 2001a).

EP Code 6 — A temporary code used to identify individuals who were approved as long-term Family Benefit clients prior to the introduction of the ESIA Act in August 2001 and who have never been assessed for employability.

For the Community Employment Innovation Project, IA recipients who were identified as EP Code 2 were given the opportunity to be selected.

**Table B.1: Average Monthly IA Caseload**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|---|---|---|---|
| CBRM | 8,821 | 7,818 | 7,388 |
| Nova Scotia | 36,834 | 33,208 | 31,480 |

**Source:** Special tabulation provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services.

**Table B.2: Income Assistance Payments**

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|---|---|---|---|
| CBRM | | | |
| Basic | $55,762,299 | $50,631,351 | $46,058,068 |
| Special | $4,036,436 | $5,083,157 | $6,523,376 |
| Total | $59,798,735 | $55,714,508 | $52,581,444 |
| Nova Scotia | | | |
| Basic | $238,023,350 | $211,656,247 | $195,332,866 |
| Special | $16,029,095 | $22,759,765 | $29,455,398 |
| Total | $254,052,445 | $234,416,012 | $224,788,264 |

**Source:** Special tabulation provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services.

# Appendix C:
# The Analysis of Minimum Detectable Effects

The goal of a random assignment experiment is to test whether an intervention produces impacts on various outcomes of interest. To do this, the experiment uses two samples, a program group and a control group, that correspond to populations — one population that participates in the intervention and another that does not. From these samples, test statistics are used to make hypotheses about the program's impact on the populations. Usually this means that, for a given output, there is an attempt to measure how different the mean value of the program group (for example, average monthly income) is from the control group mean. In the case of discrete or qualitative data, it is the differences in proportion or probability (for example, the difference between the program and control groups in the probability of receiving income assistance) that are of interest.

When making such statistical inferences, it is not possible to be entirely certain that a test statistic did not occur by chance (that is, it is not possible to be certain that a difference in sample means actually represents a true difference in the population means). To deal with this uncertainty, hypothesis tests are conducted that allow conclusions to be reached as to the reliability of the estimate of mean difference and to quantify the probability that the conclusions made concerning that difference are incorrect. A null hypothesis can either be accepted or it can be rejected in favour of an alternative hypothesis.

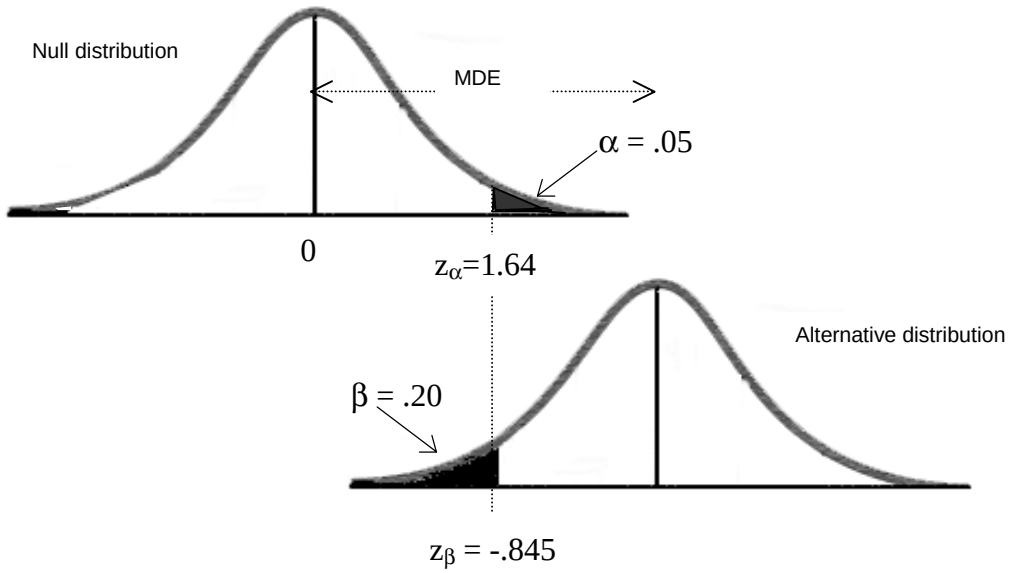
In a random assignment evaluation of a program, the objective is to determine, with an acceptable level of certainty, whether the intervention has had some positive or negative impact. In this situation, the null hypothesis is that the intervention has no impact; an alternative hypothesis is that it has a non-zero positive or negative impact. For example, if the outcome of interest is monthly income, the null hypothesis would be that the program group's average monthly income is the same as that of the control group; the alternative hypothesis would be that the program group's income is higher or lower than the control group's.

If after the intervention it is found that the program group's average monthly income is $200 higher than that of the control group, it might be concluded that the program raises people's incomes. However, it is not possible to be totally certain the test statistic (program–control group difference in means) did not occur by chance. Consequently, an acceptable level of certainty must be established. This is an arbitrary choice. For example, it could be decided that there must be a 95 per cent certainty that the test statistic (the measured difference in income) did not occur by chance (that is, that there must be a 95 per cent certainty that the null hypothesis was correctly rejected).

In such a case, the corollary is that there will be a five per cent chance that the null hypothesis was incorrectly rejected. This is called alpha error, as illustrated in the first distribution in Figure C.1, which shows a standardized sampling distribution where the units are standard deviations. Here, the darkened area, which amounts to five per cent of the total area under the curve, and represents the alpha error, is called the rejection zone (the remaining area is called the acceptance zone). This means that if the test statistic is more than

1.645 standard deviations higher than the mean, the null hypothesis will be rejected with 95 per cent certainty that this is the correct conclusion. If the test statistic is less than 1.645 standard deviations higher than the mean, the null hypothesis will not be rejected.

**Figure C.1: Standardized Sampling Distributions**




The null hypothesis is generally set counter to what is expected or theory suggests will be true. A small alpha error is generally allowed, usually no more than 10 per cent. However, this caution has disadvantages; too much caution could make it impossibly difficult to detect an impact in an intervention that would actually have worked and would have provided considerable benefits to recipients and helped improve their lives. Consequently, it is equally important to establish an acceptable level of certainty that a correct decision has been made in accepting the null hypothesis (that is, when it is concluded that a program has no impact).

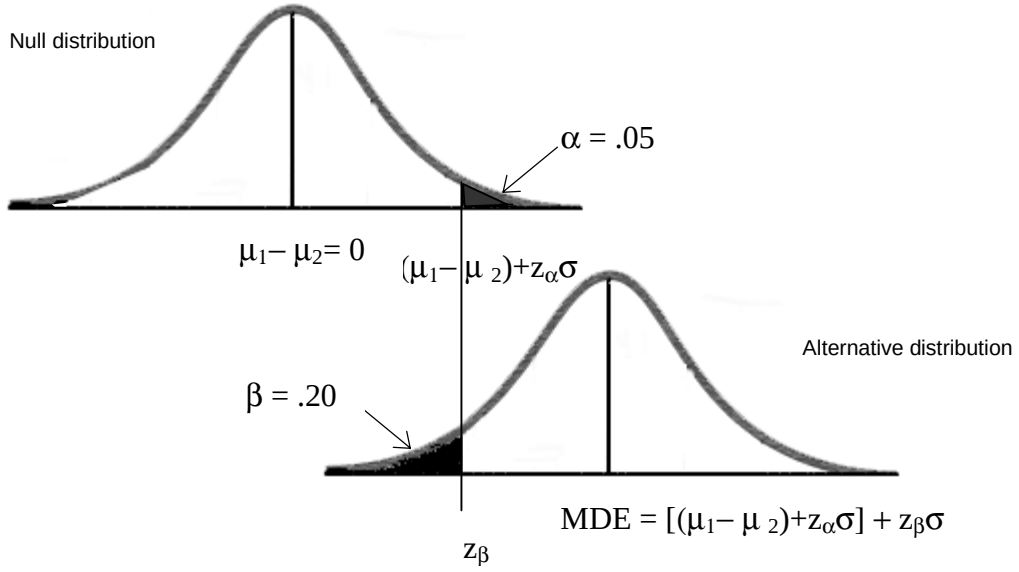
The probability that there has been a failure to detect a difference in the means (that is, the probability that a false null hypothesis has been accepted) is called the beta error. In order to quantify the beta error, there must be a specific alternative hypothesis. It cannot simply be said that the impact is thought to be positive, but that it is some specific value (for example, a $250 increase in monthly income). The second distribution in Figure C.1 shows the standardized sampling distribution under the assumption that the alternative hypothesis was true or as if the difference was $250.

Previously, it had been established that the null hypothesis would be accepted if the test statistic was less than 1.645 standard deviations from the centre of the null distribution. If a line is drawn from this critical value in the null distribution through the alternative distribution, it can be seen that a portion of the alternative distribution falls within the acceptance zone of the null distribution. If the sample statistic fell in this region, the null hypothesis would be incorrectly accepted. Thus, this region represents the probability that a beta error is made. The rest of the area under the alternative distribution curve is the probability that a true alternative hypothesis will be correctly accepted in this experiment or the statistical power to detect an impact.

In the example above, $250 was arbitrarily selected as the alternative hypothesis. When random assignment experiments are conducted, an alternative hypothesis is not arbitrarily selected. Instead, the specific power and alpha level that is considered to be acceptable is selected. It could be said that 80 per cent power to detect an impact with only 5 per cent chance of incorrectly concluding there is an impact is desirable. Given these probabilities of alpha and beta error — 5 per cent and 20 per cent, respectively — it is important to know how big the impact has to be before the null hypothesis will be rejected. This is called the Minimum Detectable Effect (MDE) and is represented by the horizontal distance between the centre of the alternative and null distributions in Figure C.1.

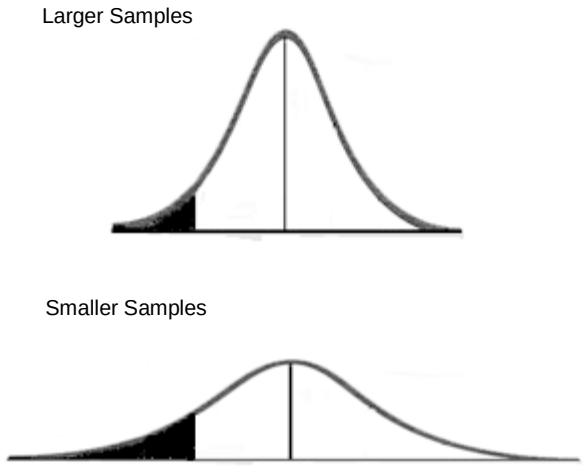
Since the distributions in Figure C.1 are standardized (the units are standard deviations) these need to be converted into distributions of the test statistic. Figure C.2 shows these distributions. Here it can be seen that the null distribution is centred at the null hypothesis, a zero difference in population means. The alternative distribution is centred at the MDE.

**Figure C.2: Sampling Distributions of the Test Statistic**




The MDE is of interest to researchers because they would like *to select a sample size that allows them to detect small impacts but impacts that have policy relevance*. Small sample sizes increase the variance of the sampling distribution since there are fewer observations that can moderate the effect of extreme values. With larger variations, the spread of the distribution increases the probability of alpha and beta error, as illustrated in Figure C.3. When both alpha and beta errors are held constant, as sample size decreases the MDE will increase. If the MDE is too large, it will not be possible to detect policy relevant impacts. Consequently, there will be a high probability of concluding that the intervention has no impact when in reality it does. The goal then is to select a sample size (given the statistical power and expected variation of the outcomes) that has an acceptable MDE, while also taking account of the practical and cost considerations of marginal changes in the size of the sample. Judgment must be exercised in making the trade-off between the power of an experimental design to detect impacts and the cost of conducting the study.

**Figure C.3: The Effect of Sample Size on Alpha or Beta Error**




The research design for the Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) calls for the enrolment of a study sample of 1,500 individuals. Of this total, 1,000 would be former Employment Insurance (EI) beneficiaries and 500 would be former income assistance (IA) recipients. It is expected that these subsamples would be analyzed separately and impacts would be estimated for each subgroup.

Based on these sample sizes, MDEs were calculated for a number of key outcomes. These calculations are shown in the following table.

**Table C.1: Minimum Detectable Effects for CEIP**

| Outcome | EI Subsample | IA Subsample |
|---|---|---|
| Employment rate (%) | 7.9 | 11.1 |
| Monthly earnings ($) | 211.99 | 248.45 |
| Proportion in receipt of EI/IA (%) | 7.9 | 11.1 |
| Monthly amount of EI/IA received ($) | 76.41 | 86.30 |

**Note:** Calculations assume the use of one-sided hypothesis tests, a significance level of 0.05 (a five per cent probability of a Type I error), and 80 per cent power (a 20 per cent probability of a Type II error).

# Appendix D:
# Selecting Comparison Communities

The Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) community effects research employs both a theory of change and a quasi-experimental comparison communities approach. The success of the quasi-experimental approach to community effects research relies in part on a high degree of similarity between program communities and the selected comparison communities. This appendix reviews the approach used in CEIP — proximity score analysis — to select comparison communities and groups of communities to form a pooled comparison group.

In addition to decisions of a statistical nature, the implementation of a proximity score analysis for Cape Breton involved a series of additional considerations regarding local community knowledge, the available data sources, and practical concerns for the research. The process involved six stages:

1. Establish a list of candidate communities, which can be clearly defined in terms of the 1996 Census small area data (the latest available at the time).
2. Identify and compile appropriate descriptive data from 1996 Census small area data for each community, which will form the basis for community similarity indices and proximity calculations.
3. Eliminate communities from further analysis, based on
    a. preliminary comparisons and prior local knowledge (if any) that suggest non-data factors that may affect suitability of certain towns as comparison sites and
    b. potential grouping of comparison communities for analysis based on the CEIP implementation strategy.
4. For the various community groupings, calculate pooled statistics for each of the descriptive community characteristics.
5. For each community and community grouping, calculate the squared Euclidean distance of the normalized Census characteristic variables from every other community.
6. Select the comparison communities and community groupings with the shortest squared Euclidean distances. Refine the selections in light of fieldwork and survey constraints.

The results of each stage of the analysis for Cape Breton communities are described below.

## Establishing a list of candidate communities

CEIP is being implemented within the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM). However, at the time of the initial proximity analysis, the final list of program communities was not known. The four "lead sites" had been selected — Dominion, New Waterford, Sydney Mines, and Whitney Pier — but others were to be added in the second year of implementation.[1] It would be preferable to have some sites within the CBRM as comparison communities; however, it was possible that all CBRM communities could have become program communities. Consequently, all CBRM communities with populations in excess of 1,500 were included in the list of communities for which data would be collected for evaluation purposes. This would ensure that data would be collected on all communities in the program group, regardless of whether they were selected at the outset or added in the second round. In addition, any CBRM communities that were not selected for the program would then be available as comparison sites.

Since the evaluation could not rely on any CBRM communities not being in the program group, it was necessary to include some communities from outside the CBRM. The initial list (see Table D.1) included every self-contained small town in Nova Scotia that was not within daily commuting distance of Halifax.

**Table D.1: Candidate List of Comparison Communities**

| Within the CBRM | Outside the CBRM | |
|---|---|---|
| Sydney Mines | Amherst | Pictou |
| New Waterford | Arichat | Port Hawkesbury |
| Dominion | Baddeck | St. Peters |
| Whitney Pier | Bridgewater | Shelburne |
| Florence | Ingonish | Stellarton |
| Reserve Mines | Inverness | Truro |
| Glace Bay | Kentville | Windsor |
| North Sydney | Liverpool | Yarmouth |
| Sydney Downtown | New Glasgow | |
| Louisbourg | New Minas | |

To determine the suitability of each of the initial communities on the list, comparable data on each were required. Thus, SRDC researchers defined each one based on Census enumeration area boundaries. These were the smallest geographical units capable of being aggregated for which Census data were readily available.[2]

[1] An overview of the process by which communities were selected and a brief description of each of the selected communities is given in Chapter 4.

[2] Relative to the size of communities, enumeration areas (EAs) were large. For example, Reserve Mines was covered by just three EAs: 067–069 in Federal Electoral District 12002. In some cases, therefore, a community had two Census boundary definitions. This happened when a community's boundaries did not lie clearly within a compact set of enumeration areas. The bulk of each community's population did lie within a small set of EAs, but parts of some communities strayed into neighbouring enumeration areas. Two boundary definitions were thus defined: an inclusive definition (capturing the whole community) and a "core" definition (capturing the bulk of its population).

### Identifying and compiling descriptive data to form the basis for community similarity indices and proximity calculations

The next step was to compile descriptive data on characteristics from the 1996 Census for each community. The choice of characteristics was guided by several factors, including the available data sources and the CEIP research hypotheses. The limited range of variables available in Statistics Canada's *Community Profiles* (Statistics Canada, 2003a) restricted the analysis to those concerned with demographics, employment, income, population structure, level of education, and families and dwellings. Variables were then selected in accordance with the CEIP research hypothesis. The aim was to choose variables that could potentially be influenced by CEIP and that genuinely differed between potential sites. Data on 21 variables were selected (shown in Table D.2) and were used for the proximity calculations.

**Table D.2: Variables Used for Community Comparison**

| |
|---|
| Percentage change in population between 1991 and 1996 |
| Percentage of the population aged 0–4 years |
| Percentage of the population aged 15–19 years |
| Percentage of the population aged 20–24 years |
| Percentage of the population aged 65 years or older |
| Percentage of the population having English as their first language |
| Percentage of the population who are immigrants |
| Percentage of the population who are of Aboriginal ancestry |
| Percentage of the population who are members of a visible minority |
| Percentage of the population aged 15 years and older without a high school diploma |
| Percentage of the population with a post-secondary education qualification |
| Mean total per capita income |
| Unemployment rate |
| Male participation rate |
| Female participation rate |
| Percentage of the population 15 years and older with work experience in the service industry |
| Percentage of the population 15 years and older with work experience in manufacturing or construction |
| Percentage of the population 15 years and older with work experience in the primary sector |
| Percentage of families headed by a lone parent |
| Percentage of households living in rented accommodation |
| Average value of homeowner's dwellings |
| Approximate economic dependency ratio (the ratio of non-earned to earned income) |

### Eliminating communities from further analysis based on preliminary comparisons, prior local knowledge, and possible community groupings

To narrow down the list of potential communities, a preliminary crude "similarity index" was constructed. Each community scored one point for each of the 22 variables whose value was within 0.8 and 1.2 times the value of that variable for the CBRM as a whole. Among the four CEIP lead communities, North Sydney and Sydney Mines scored 16 on this index and Dominion and Whitney Pier scored 15 (out of a possible 22). For comparison, the overall score for Nova Scotia was 12 and for Canada it was 5. Communities that scored below 12 (that is, that matched the CBRM less well than did Nova Scotia as a whole) were dropped

from the list,[3] including Bridgewater, New Glasgow, New Minas, Baddeck, Ingonish, Truro, Yarmouth, and Kentville.

### Calculating pooled statistics for each of the descriptive community characteristics for various groupings of communities

The research design calls for comparison sites to act as a combined counterfactual and not a comparison of matched pairs of communities. Each CEIP site is not paired with a comparable non-CEIP community. Apart from the practical difficulties of trying to align individual communities in this way from among the limited set of available communities, chance factors could intervene over the five-year study period and render a carefully selected matched comparison site much less comparable by the end of the study. In terms of the planned community survey, pooling several communities is more efficient since a smaller sample size is required from each community than if each CEIP site required its own matched pair. Therefore, the comparison sites will collectively serve as a barometer of changes occurring in similar Nova Scotian towns over the course of the project. This will enable researchers to determine, for example, whether an increase in network size in New Waterford is a general trend, already happening in such towns, or is only happening where CEIP is operating.

Consequently, various community combinations (shown in Table D.3 below) were tested in order to select communities that collectively, not just individually, would represent valid comparisons with the CEIP sites. This analysis consisted of producing a matrix of squared Euclidean distances, based on Census characteristics.

**Table D.3: Community Groupings for Proximity Score Analysis**

| Community Grouping | Census Communities |
|---|---|
| CEIPCOMP1 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Downtown |
| CBRMCOMP1 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg |
| CBCOMP1 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness |
| ENSCOMP1 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness, Stellarton, Pictou |
| CBCOMP2 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness, St. Peters |
| ENSCOMP2 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness, Stellarton, Pictou, Shelburne |
| ENSCOMP3 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness, Stellarton, Pictou, Liverpool |
| ENSCOMP4 | Florence, Reserve Mines, Sydney Main, Louisbourg, Inverness, Stellarton, Pictou, St. Peters, Shelburne |

### Proximity scores: Calculating the squared Euclidean distance of the normalized Census characteristic variables of each community and community grouping from every other community

First, the Census observations were normalized, so that their variation was measured in standardized units (mean of zero, standard deviation of one). In this way, each of the 22 variables contributed equally to the analysis. However, because unemployment plays such

[3]There were two exceptions. Downtown Sydney was kept on the list, since it continued to be a potential project site. Port Hawkesbury was also retained, since it represented the only other large town on Cape Breton Island outside the CBRM with a comparable industrial heritage to the CBRM.

a major role in defining the towns of Cape Breton, the "unemployment rate" variable was included in the analysis twice, making 23 variables. The squared Euclidean distance between each pair of communities in the matrix was calculated based on the normalized values of each of the 23 variables. The distance between two communities *i* and *j* was calculated as

$$d_{ij} = \sqrt{(\sum(x_{ik} - x_{jk})^2)}$$

where $x_{ik}$ is the normalized value of Census characteristic *k* for community *i*. The square root of the sum of the squared differences for all 23 characteristics is then taken to derive the distance between communities *i* and *j*.

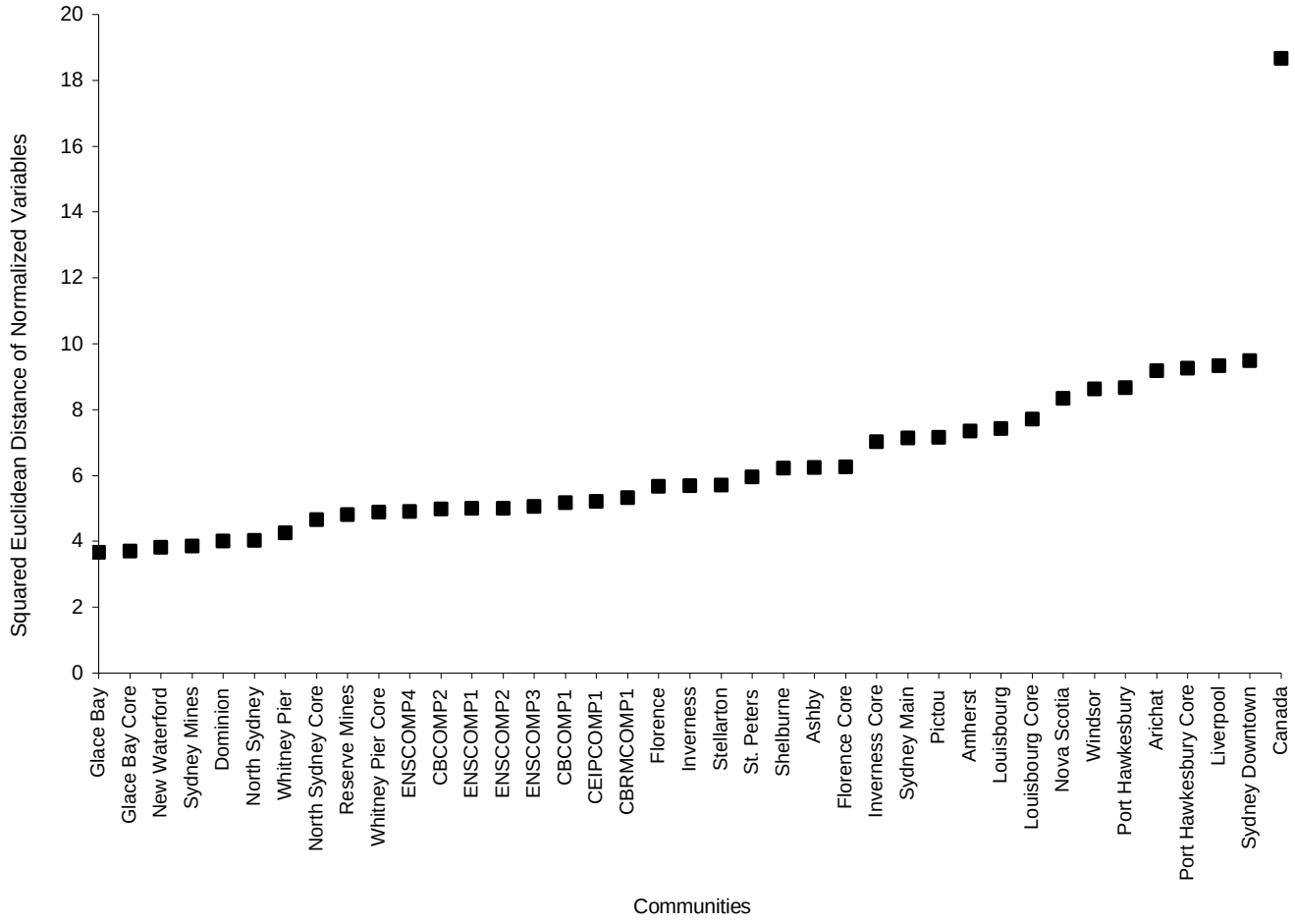
The lower the squared Euclidean distance between each community and every other community — including community groupings — the more similar the two communities are considered to be. Thus it is not surprising that the shortest distances were recorded between overlapping community definitions: the distance of Glace Bay core from Glace Bay was just 0.72 units, and the distance of Whitney Pier core from Whitney Pier was 1.35 units.

Also not surprising is that among the uniquely defined communities the CEIP sites were quite similar to each other. The distance between New Waterford and Glace Bay was just 2.51 units, between North Sydney and Whitney Pier it was just 4.03 units, between Sydney Mines and New Waterford it was 4.15 units, and between Glace Bay and Sydney Mines it was 4.19 units. At the other extreme, all six CEIP sites were most dissimilar from Canada as a whole, ranging from 17.60 units between North Sydney and Canada to 19.51 between New Waterford and Canada. All other distances from CEIP sites were in the range of 3.7 to 11.0 units. This indicates that CEIP sites were much more similar to every other community in Nova Scotia included in the analysis than they were to Canada. The most distant community pairs within Nova Scotia included Dominion–Sydney downtown (10.99 units), Sydney Mines–Port Hawkesbury core (10.16 units), and New Waterford–Liverpool (10.10 units).

### Selecting the comparison communities and community groupings with the shortest squared Euclidean distances and refining in light of fieldwork and survey constraints.

To help identify the closest comparison communities, the means of the distances of the six CEIP sites from each community were calculated. The results are plotted in Figure D.1 below. This plot shows once again that the CEIP sites are most similar to one another (and also to Reserve Mines). The CEIP sites also show a strong similarity to the combined characteristics of all the tested community groupings. All the mean distances of the pooled combinations are in a very narrow range between 4.91 and 5.32. In fact, there is very little reason to choose any one of the comparison community combinations tested over any of the others. ENSCOMP4 is the most similar to the six CEIP sites. If cost were not a factor, this analysis suggests that the ENSCOMP4 combination of communities represents the most appropriate counterfactual. Nonetheless the distances of CBCOMP2, ENSCOMP1, and ENSCOMP2 from the six CEIP sites were each within a tenth of a unit of the distance of ENSCOMP4.

**Figure D.1: Communities Similar to All Six CEIP Sites**




Ultimately, cost and practical considerations for the fieldwork (for example small and scattered communities, like Shelburne, and unincorporated towns, like St. Peters, were much harder to collect data from) led to the selection of communities within the ENSCOMP1 grouping:

**Within CBRM**

- Reserve Mines
- Florence
- Sydney Main
- Louisbourg

**Outside CBRM**

- Inverness
- Stellarton
- Pictou

# Appendix E:
# Socio-economic Profile of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality

*Community stability and growth are missing from the Cape Breton Regional Municipality. The regional economy is marked by just the opposite: declining industries leading to job losses, high unemployment and net out-migration from the area.*

(Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999, p. 7)

## INTRODUCTION

The decline of the social and economic health of the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) is well known. The closure of the region's steel and coal industries presents a major challenge to the area; there is a real possibility that the socio-economic health of the CBRM will be further eroded. The purpose of this appendix is to provide a descriptive overview of the economic and social conditions of the CBRM.

## THE REGION

The CBRM was created by an act of the Nova Scotia legislature on August 1, 1995. It was the first regional government created in the province of Nova Scotia. The CBRM is comprised of eight former municipal units: the City of Sydney; the towns of Glace Bay, New Waterford, Sydney Mines, North Sydney, Dominion, and Louisbourg; and the County of Cape Breton. A mayor and 21 councillors governed the CBRM from 1995 to 2000. In 2000 municipal boundaries were redrawn and council was reduced from 21 to 16 members.

A chief administrative officer and various other administrative staff carry out the day-to-day operations of the CBRM. The municipality also has an economic development officer on staff who provides policy advice to senior administrators and council on matters affecting the economic health of the CBRM. As with other municipalities, the CBRM generates the majority of its revenue from property taxes.

CBRM has an area of 2,473 square kilometres, making it the municipality with the second largest geographic area in Atlantic Canada (second only to the Halifax Regional Municipality). There are 1,967 kilometres of public streets and roads in the CBRM.

The region has a reputation for scenic beauty, with approximately 835 kilometres of coastline on the Atlantic Ocean and 415 kilometres of shoreline on the salt water Bras D'Or Lakes. The CBRM's longest river, the Mira, is at the centre of a popular recreation area. There are also numerous freshwater lakes. Other recreation areas within the CBRM include the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, the Marconi National Historic Site, five provincial parks, and the Two Rivers Wildlife Park. Winter recreation is also popular in the area, with a downhill ski facility and several cross-county ski facilities within the municipality.

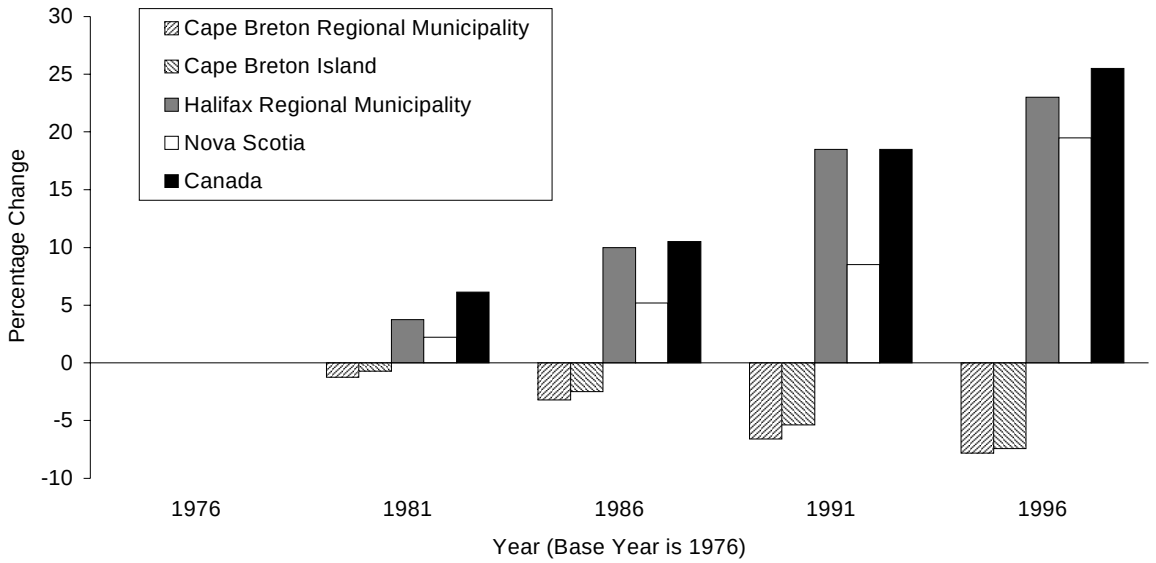
## THE PEOPLE

The population of the CBRM grew steadily until 1961, when it peaked at 131,507; it has been in a steady decline since then (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999, p. 6). From 1991 to 2000 the population of the CBRM decreased by 6.5 per cent (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 6), and by the time of the 2001 Census it was down to 105,968 (Statistics Canada, 2003c). This figure excludes the population of the First Nations reserves of Eskasoni and Membertou, which are geographically surrounded by the CBRM but do not officially form part of the municipality. The 2001 Census population for the reserves was 3,362 (comprising 3.2 per cent of the total population of the area) (Statistics Canada, 2003b).

The majority of the region's population is White and English-speaking. According to the 2001 Census, only 1.6 per cent of people in the CBRM were born outside of Canada (Statistics Canada, 2003c). Furthermore, only 1.4 per cent of the population (1,440 residents) identify themselves as members of a visible minority; the largest groups of self-reported minorities are Blacks (830 residents) and Chinese (175 residents) (Statistics Canada). English is the mother tongue of 97.6 per cent of CBRM residents (Statistics Canada). The second most common language is Mi'kmaq, although fewer than two per cent of all residents reported that language as their mother tongue (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999, p. 5).

Cape Breton Island is slowly losing population relative to the rest of Nova Scotia and particularly to the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Figure E.1 shows that the Canadian population increased by 25 per cent since 1976, and that of HRM grew by a comparable amount. The population of the CBRM, however, has deceased steadily over that time. This is part of an overall trend toward greater concentration of Nova Scotia's population in the capital region.

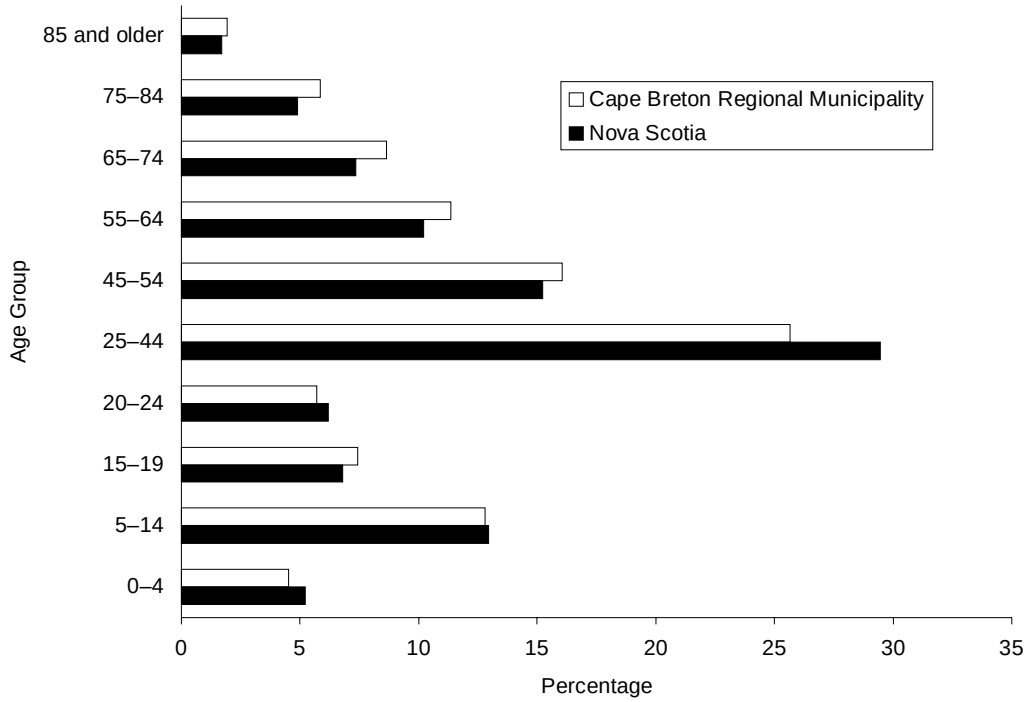
**Figure E.1: Population Change, 1976–1996**




**Source:** *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (p. 7), by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999, Sydney, Nova Scotia: Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

The population changes are more revealing when various age groups are examined independently. Between 1991 and 2001 the population aged 25 to 34 years decreased by 31 per cent in the CBRM (compared with a 21 per cent decrease overall in Nova Scotia) (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002a). The 15 to 24 age group decreased by 14 per cent in the CBRM (compared with 8 per cent in the province as a whole); while the 0 to 14 age group decreased by 23 per cent in the CBRM (and 10 per cent province-wide) (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division). Figure E.2 presents the distribution of population by age in the CBRM and in Nova Scotia as a whole. Compared with the total provincial population, higher proportions of the population in the CBRM are 15 to 19 years of age or are in the oldest age groups (45 years of age and older). A significantly smaller proportion of the CBRM population is in the prime working-age groups, from 25 to 44 years of age.

**Figure E.2: Population by Age Group, 2001**




**Source:** *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (p. 8), by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999, Sydney, Nova Scotia: Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

The number of deaths outpaces the number of births in the CBRM. According to the 2001 Vital Statistics Report by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (2003), there were a total of 925 births in the CBRM in 2001; during the same period there were 1,165 deaths.

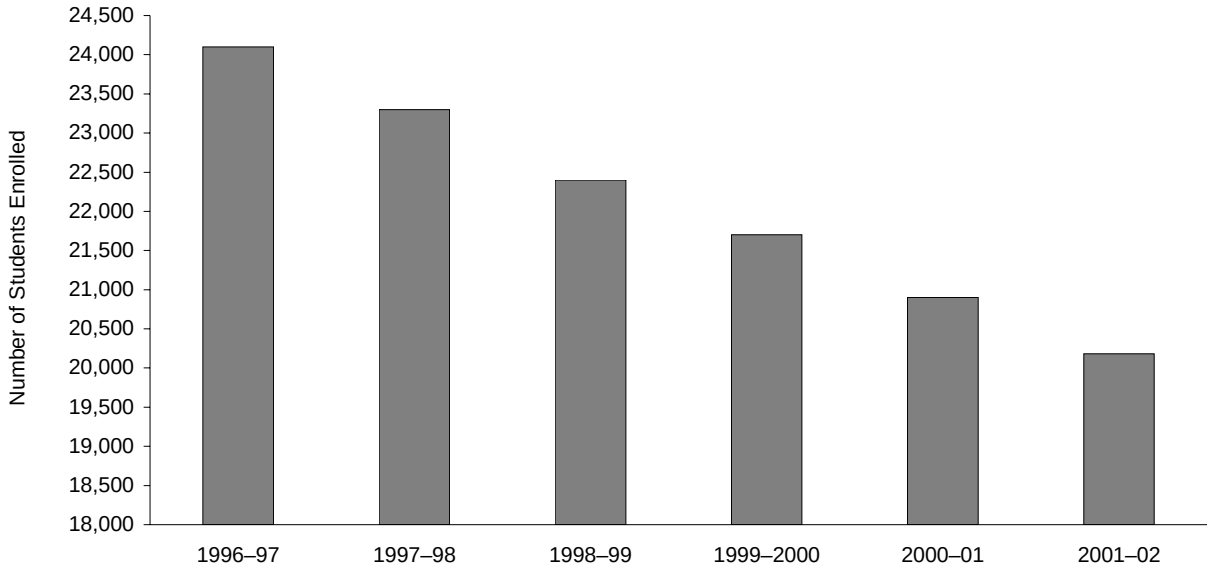
# EDUCATION

## Student Enrolment

School enrolment in the Cape Breton–Victoria Regional School Board (CBVRSB) is declining, in part due to the falling birth rate and also in part due to the out-migration of

established households. Revenue is provided to school boards based on student enrolment. The average per student revenue provided to school boards in Nova Scotia by the Department of Education is $4,505 (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 7). As enrolments decline, school boards lose the revenue necessary to maintain existing programs. The loss of 100 students in a school system triggers a financial loss of nearly a half-million dollars per year (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 7). Figure E.3 details the declining enrolment in the CBVRSB.

**Figure E.3: Student Enrolment — Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board**




**Source:** *Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (p. 7), by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, Halifax: Nova Scotia Teachers Union.
**Note:** Figures for 1999 to 2002 are Nova Scotia Teachers Union projections.

Based on records for the 1996–97 to 1998–99 school years, enrolment in the CBVRSB declined by 1,613 students (representing 41 per cent of the total student enrolment decline experienced across the province during that same period) (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 8). Projections of enrolments to 2002 made by the Nova Scotia Teachers Union suggest that the CBVRSB will absorb 34 per cent of the provincial student decline over the three-year period and will experience a financial reduction of more than $6 million (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 8).

## Education Levels

In terms of education level, members of the labour force in the CBRM are about equally likely to have low or high levels of education. According to Statistics Canada's 2001 Census (2003c), 30.6 per cent of the CBRM population aged 20 to 64 years has not completed high school[1] (the comparable proportion for Nova Scotia as a whole is 25.3 per cent). At the same time, the Census also indicates that 31.6 per cent have a college certificate or diploma or a

[1]The proportion is significantly lower — 17.4 per cent — among the CBRM population aged 20 to 34 years and significantly higher — 40.6 per cent — among those aged 45 to 64 years (Statistics Canada, 2003c).

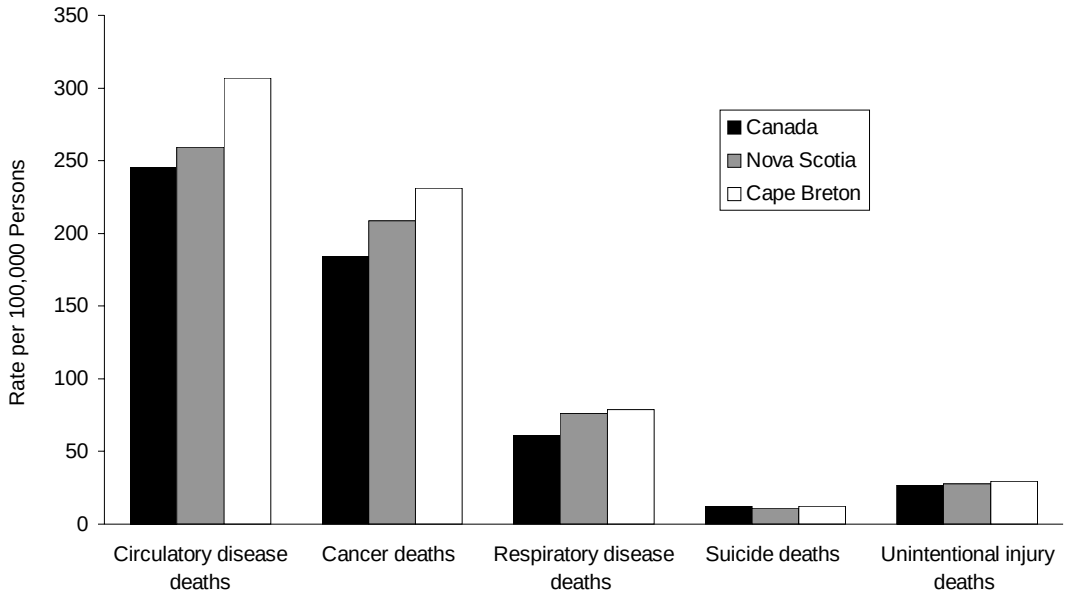
university certificate, diploma, or degree (the comparable proportion for Nova Scotia as a whole is 30.0 per cent); and a slightly higher percentage of the CBRM population aged 20 to 64 years has obtained a trades certificate or diploma (17.4 per cent compared with 16.6 per cent for the province as a whole).

## FAMILY WELFARE AND HEALTH

The number of divorces in the Sydney area decreased from 1997 to 1999, only to rise substantially in 2000 — in 1997, 121 divorces were granted in the Sydney area; the number decreased to 91 in 1998 and further decreased to 80 in 1999 (R. Bolduc, personal communication, January 30, 2001). In 2000 the number of divorces granted in the Sydney area was at a four-year high of 170 (S. Bertrand, personal communication, May 17, 2001). At the 87th Annual General Meeting of the Children's Aid Society of Cape Breton–Victoria it was reported that between 1998 and 2001 the number of children in taken into care by the society increased by 36 per cent (to 117 in 2001) (Children's Aid Society of Cape Breton–Victoria, 2001).

Life expectancy at birth is lower for people born in Cape Breton (76.1 years) compared with the Nova Scotia average (77.7 years) and the national average (78.4 years) (Statistics Canada, 2003e). Current health indicators, shown Figure E.4, show a disturbing trend of higher mortality rates across several categories.

**Figure E.4: Health Indicators for Canada, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton (Zone 5), 1997**




**Source:** Statistics Canada, http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/82-221-XIE/00503/hlthstatus/deaths3.htm.

In the most recent ranking of quality of health care services compiled by Maclean's Magazine, Cape Breton ranked 50th out of 54 geographical areas (Hawaleshka, 2002).

## THE ECONOMY

Industrial Cape Breton has not experienced a period of economic growth for more than half a century. A report prepared at the end of the 1990s (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999) compiled the following list of discouraging statistics:

- the gross domestic product (GDP) of the local economy is declining at an annual rate of 0.5 per cent
- average personal income is 31 per cent below the national average
- per capita retail sales are 21 per cent below the national average
- the population declined 4.1 per cent between 1991 and 1997
- the assessed value of taxable commercial property is falling
- the labour force participation rate is 10 percentage points lower than the provincial average
- there are more than 12,000 unemployed
- there was a net out-migration of 3,100 people between 1992 and 1996
- the level of dependency on transfer payments is one of the highest in the country
- total employment income declined by 4 per cent between 1993 and 1996 (while Canadian total employment income grew by 10 per cent)

The closures in 2000 of the last coal mines operated by the Cape Breton Development Corporation (DEVCO) and of the steel mill run by the Sydney Steel Corporation (SYSCO) served only to worsen the economic and social malaise from which the region has long suffered. The coal and steel industry had been the economic engine of the local economy for the past century. For the last 30 years both industries were government-owned and -operated. The federal government created the Cape Breton Development Corporation in 1967 when the Dominion Coal Company went out of business. The original mandate of DEVCO was to gradually phase out coal mining in industrial Cape Breton. However, the oil price shocks of the 1970s gave a new — albeit temporary — lease on life to coal mining. The impact of the DEVCO closure has been widely acknowledged. The corporation's total payroll accounted for approximately 4.3 per cent of total GDP in the CBRM in 1998 (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 15). In the same year, DEVCO employed 1,700 people, 4.5 per cent of the employed workers in the CBRM (Nova Scotia Teachers Union). In addition, it has been estimated that a further 1.6 per cent of the CBRM's GDP and 4.5 per cent of its total employment in 1998 was supported by DEVCO expenditures through spinoffs — indirect plus induced impacts (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 15).

Sydney had been involved in steelmaking since 1905. The provincial government took over Sydney Steel in 1967 when the industry's former private sector operators moved to shut down the mill. Since that time, the government has spent over $3 billion to continue steel production (American Metal Market, 2000). Since 1992, the provincial government had been trying to find a buyer for the SYSCO facilities. The closure of SYSCO resulted in a loss of 700 jobs in the CBRM (American Metal Market).

Ironically, the infrastructure problems that are plaguing the CBRM are, at least in part, a legacy of the former coal and steel industry. Communities developed around mine sites and followed sprawling infrastructure developments patterns that are largely irreversible. Today the CBRM is burdened by high maintenance costs for this infrastructure while the assessment base continues to erode and the population continues to decline.

The poor fiscal environment presents challenges to the local municipality. Local governments in Canada derive a majority of their revenues from property taxes. The CBRM generates 64 per cent of its revenue from property taxes (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999, p. 9). Residential, commercial, and business occupancy assessments have been steadily declining in the CBRM. Between 1999 and 2001 the total assessed value of residential property decreased from $2.31 billion to $2.25 billion, of commercial property it declined from $1.10 billion to $1.07 billion, and of business property it fell from $156.46 million to $150.35 million (S. McNabb, personal communication, January 2001). Declining assessments limit the ability of the CBRM to take measures to develop the local economy.

Today the largest employers in the CBRM are the Cape Breton District Health Authority, the CBVRSB, and Stream International (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002a). These are the only employers with more than 1,000 employees — and two are public institutions.

Data for 2001 comparing Cape Breton with the Halifax region and Nova Scotia as a whole illustrate the weakness being experienced in the local labour market (see Table E.1). A much lower proportion of the working age population is participating in the labour force in Cape Breton and the unemployment rate is almost double the provincial average. It is important to note that the official, published unemployment rate is calculated as a percentage of the labour force (both the employed and the unemployed), not taking into account how the labour force may be changing in response to economic circumstances. In times of persistent high unemployment, people who are out of work become discouraged and may drop out of the labour force. This can result in fewer people being counted as unemployed because they are not actively seeking work, and so may lead to an understatement of the underlying level of unemployment.

Average per capita income in Cape Breton County in 1999 was $21,097 (compared with the provincial average of $25,425 and the Halifax County average of $29,961) (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002b).

The statistics are more telling when the percentage distribution of income is examined. In Cape Breton County, 28.9 per cent of those who reported income were in the $10,000 to $20,000 income group (compared with 26.5 per cent in Nova Scotia as a whole) while only 6.6 per cent in Cape Breton County reported income of $50,000 or more (compared with 10.8 per cent province-wide, and 15 per cent for Halifax County) (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002b, p. 65).

A recent labour market review reveals that the long-term trend away from goods production and towards services is continuing. In 2001 the service sector accounted for over 80 per cent of employment in Cape Breton (Human Resources Development Canada, 2002a).

**Table E.1: Labour Market Statistics for Nova Scotia, Halifax, and Cape Breton, 1997–2001**

| Year | Labour Force ('000) | Participation Rate (%) | Employed ('000) | Unemployment Rate (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1997 | | | | |
| Cape Breton | 64.8 | 52.0 | 52.1 | 19.6 |
| Halifax | 186.4 | 67.6 | 169.6 | 9.0 |
| Nova Scotia | 437.4 | 59.9 | 384.3 | 12.1 |
| 1998 | | | | |
| Cape Breton | 65.6 | 53.0 | 53.8 | 18.0 |
| Halifax | 190.6 | 68.1 | 176.8 | 7.2 |
| Nova Scotia | 445.9 | 60.7 | 398.9 | 10.5 |
| 1999 | | | | |
| Cape Breton | 63.8 | 51.8 | 52.7 | 17.4 |
| Halifax | 193.5 | 68.2 | 180.4 | 6.8 |
| Nova Scotia | 452.0 | 61.0 | 408.6 | 9.6 |
| 2000 | | | | |
| Cape Breton | 63.5 | 51.7 | 52.4 | 17.5 |
| Halifax | 202.0 | 70.0 | 189.5 | 6.2 |
| Nova Scotia | 461.6 | 61.7 | 419.5 | 9.1 |
| 2001 | | | | |
| Cape Breton | 65.8 | 54.0 | 54.6 | 17.0 |
| Halifax | 204.2 | 69.9 | 189.8 | 7.1 |
| Nova Scotia | 468.9 | 62.4 | 423.3 | 9.7 |

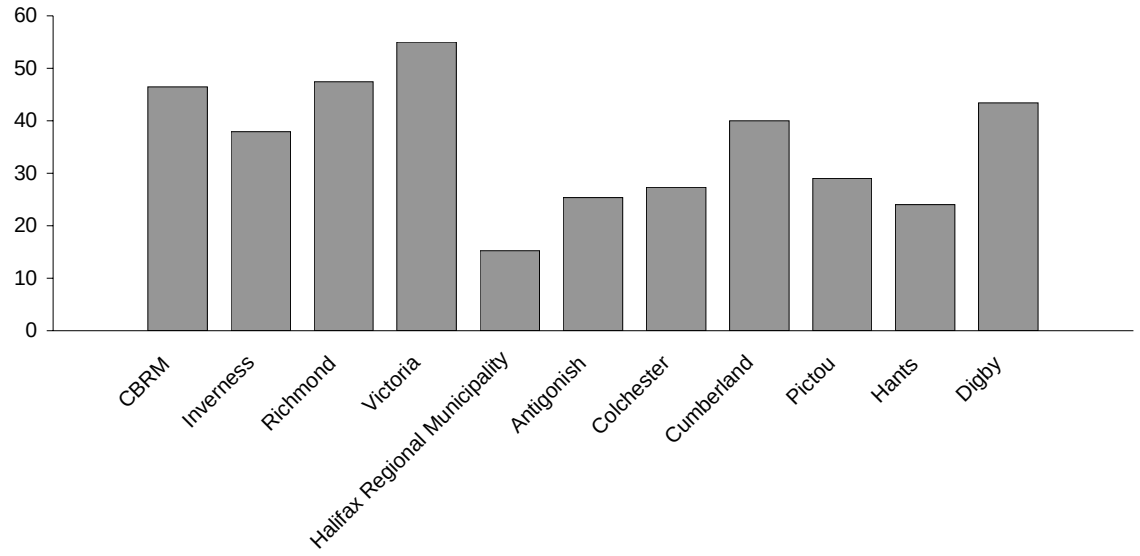
**Source:** *Nova Scotia Statistical Review* (19th edition) (p. 40), by the Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002, Halifax: Nova Scotia Department of Finance.

## ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

Reliance on government transfers has contributed to Cape Breton County having a high economic dependency ratio (EDR). The *Nova Scotia Statistical Review* published in 2002 defines the EDR as "the sum of transfer payments received as benefits in a given area, compared to every $100 of employment income for that same area" (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2001, p. 60). Figure E.5 shows the 1998 EDR for Cape Breton County and various other counties in Nova Scotia. The economic dependency ratio of Halifax County is noticeably lower than for other areas of the province.

Cape Breton County is also more dependent on Employment Insurance (EI) than the Halifax region. The EI dependency ratio of Cape Breton County is 9.36, which means that $9.36 in EI benefits was received for every $100 of employment income for the area (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002b, p. 62). The EI dependency ratio is lower for Halifax County at 2.06 (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002b, p. 62). There is a similar disparity when the social assistance dependency ratio is examined, with Cape Breton County at 6.53 and Halifax County at 2.01 (Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2002b, pp. 62–63).

**Figure E.5: Economic Dependency Ratio (EDR) for Various Nova Scotia Counties, 1998**




**Source:** *Nova Scotia Statistical Review* (pp. 61–65), by the Nova Scotia Department of Finance, Statistics Division, 2001, Halifax: Nova Scotia Department of Finance.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The *Cape Breton Post* recently published an article on the "cautious optimism" expressed by community commentators regarding the region's economy (Stewart, 2002). This article reported that, despite the acknowledged difficulty of replacing former heavy industry jobs in coal and steel, many local observers remain optimistic. The growth in employment in call centres has served to offset some of the employment declines and, despite the absence of a dynamic economy, the region managed to create more jobs in 2000 than at any time in the recent history of the CBRM (Stewart).

Despite the optimism, the region continues to search for its raison d'être. With the closure of the coal and steel industries, the CBRM has moved from an industrial economy to a service-oriented economy. The full implications of such a profound transition is not yet known. The growth of the service sector has been instrumental in offsetting the economic decline suffered from the closure of the steel and coal industries, however the ultimate potential of the service sector is not known at this time.

The collapse of the region's industrial base has impeded economic growth in the CBRM and, as a result, the CBRM has not kept pace with other parts of the province, especially the Halifax region. The CBRM municipal council voted in September 2002 to commission a study of the economic feasibility of changing Cape Breton's status — for example to that of a territory — as a way of gaining greater decision-making power over the use of resources linked to the region's future economic viability.

## CONCLUSION

The CBRM suffered a severe economic setback with the closures of SYSCO and DEVCO. However, the region has suffered from a long economic decline stretching back more than 40 years. The outright closure of the region's prominent industries served only to make the economic malaise more acute.

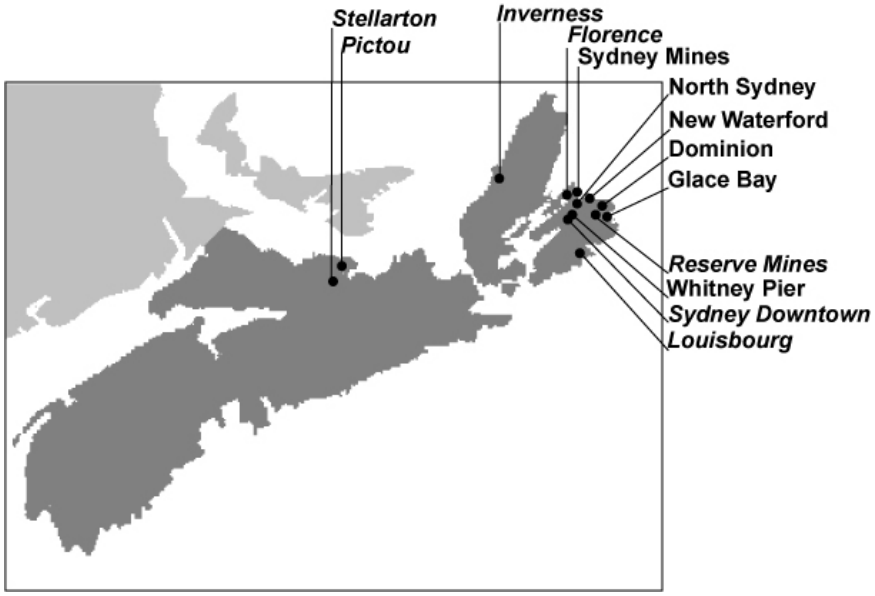
The CBRM is a region very much in transition. The potential exists for many sectors to play a role in revitalizing the economy of the region. The economy appears to have stabilized with the growth of the service and tourism industry. The ultimate potential of such sectors, at this time, is largely unknown. It remains to be seen whether offshore oil and gas development will buoy the economic fortunes of the region.

The road to an economic renaissance in the CBRM is certainly a daunting one. However, despite the economic uncertainty, there remains a sense of optimism for the future. Ron MacNeil, Director of the Information Technology Centre at the University College of Cape Breton, reflects this optimism regarding the future of Cape Breton's economy: "Tourism, culture and art, a depth of manufacturing, a strong education system give me cause to have an optimistic view of our future" (Stewart, 2002, p. A-1).

# Appendix F:
# The CEIP Communities

This appendix provides a range of information for the six program and seven comparison communities, including location/geographical size, history, infrastructure, education and health facilities, recreation, and current issues.

**Figure F.1: The CEIP Program and Comparison Communities**




**Note:** The names of the comparison communities are shown in italics.

## PROGRAM COMMUNITIES

### New Waterford[1]

*Note: The area covered by New Waterford Social and Economic Action Society includes following geographical areas: New Waterford, Lingan, River Ryan (as far as the River Ryan Bridge), Scotchtown, New Victoria, and Victoria Mines (as far as Kilkenny Lake Road).*

[1]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); Carl Getto's *A Community Profile of Lingan, River Ryan, Scotchtown, New Waterford, New Victoria and Victoria Mines* (2000); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://ns.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003, and *Coal Bowl Classic* (McMullin, 2003), retrieved from http://www.coalbowl.com on February 17, 2003.

New Waterford is located on the eastern side of Cape Breton Island. The former town is about one mile square and is surrounded by several communities, including Lingan, River Ryan, Scotchtown, New Victoria, and Victoria Mines. New Waterford is reached by driving through River Ryan, then descending a hill into the town area, along a seacoast route, or through Sydney overland to Lingan Road. New Waterford is 18 kilometres from Sydney, 12 kilometres from the Sydney airport.

Prior to the 1913 incorporation of the town of New Waterford, the area was known as Barrachois. 1907 saw the opening of the area's first post office and the first mine. Several mines opened from 1907 to 1913, attracting settlers from the British Isles and Europe. Until 1995, when the town merged with other communities to form the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM), New Waterford had its own municipal structure, with a town council. The amalgamation was and continues to be a contentious issue among some residents.

Plummer Avenue is the main street of the town, home to a modest shopping district that includes a few fast-food restaurants, banks, offices, and convenience stores. A grocery store is somewhat removed from the town centre, on Emerald Avenue. Town infrastructure has failed considerably in the last five years, with many buildings left vacant or falling into disrepair.

Community educational facilities include Mount Carmel School, St. Agnes School, Greenfield Elementary School, and Breton Education Centre (BEC). The New Waterford Consolidated Hospital provides 31 beds, operating facilities, and emergency facilities to residents. There are several active volunteer, recreation, and service groups in the area.

Sporting events are a large part of life in the community, with soccer, hockey, and basketball dominating. BEC has for 25 years hosted a high school basketball tournament that in 2003 drew 165 participants from across Canada. This is a high-profile event that requires the input of up to 400 volunteers each year.

New Waterford was once the largest coal-producing town in eastern Canada. A monument on Baker Street is dedicated to miner William Davis, who was killed during a strike march on June 11, 1925. The anniversary date is commemorated as Miners' Memorial Day throughout the former mining towns of Cape Breton. Also marking the community's mining history is Colliery Lands Park. The park features a mine fatality memorial, an exposed coal seam, a representative mine slope, a coal hopper-car display, picnic tables, and a band shell. New Waterford Coal Dust Days, held annually in July, are centred at this facility.

As of February 2003 a central issue facing members of the community was the potential closure of the emergency facilities at the New Waterford Consolidated Hospital. The closure would require residents to travel over 20 kilometres to the Cape Breton Regional Hospital for emergency and outpatient care. There was a great outcry against this measure, with several community meetings and protests resulting. Though the closure was deemed necessary by the Cape Breton District Health Authority in the face of doctor shortages, a final decision is pending.

In March 2003 the federal government announced more than $1.5 million in funding for economic and community development in the New Waterford area. The funds will enable the revitalization of the downtown area by the New Waterford and District Economic Renewal Association and the construction of a new multi-purpose business facility. The funds are to

be made available through the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation (ECBC) and the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA).

## Sydney Mines[2]

*Note: The Community Employment Innovation Project (CEIP) board for this community, the Sydney Mines CEIP Association, has boundaries set at the traditional borders of the former Town of Sydney Mines. It should be noted, however, that this board has approved projects outside of these boundaries.*

The community of Sydney Mines is located on the north shore of Sydney Harbour. This area, along with North Sydney and such surrounding communities as Florence and Bras D'Or, is collectively referred to as "the Northside" by CBRM residents. The community is reached by driving to the end of the Trans-Canada Highway, or by traveling via Shore Road along the North Sydney waterfront.

Sydney Mines grew up around the coalfields of Sydney Harbour. One pit operated continuously for 100 years, from 1875 to 1975, and produced 30 million tonnes of coal. An 1863 map of the area shows Sydney Mines as "Lazytown." This less-than-flattering name came from local farmers who, arriving in town to sell milk, eggs, and produce, would find few people up and about, due to the schedules followed at local mines. Though mining families would wake at dawn to get ready for the day shift, after the men went off to the pits the wives would return to bed for some extra sleep.

Much of the town's infrastructure — sewer, water, electricity, paved streets — was established circa 1902, when a steel plant was opened in the community. In 1932 Sydney Mines' population peaked at 10,000. The rapid industrialization of the town led to Sydney Mines receiving the first commercial telephone system in North America. The telephone system connected the coal company office, colliery, colliery store, executive house, post office, and telegraph house.

Like other communities in the CBRM, the population of Sydney Mines is on the decline. While the town's appearance and infrastructure have been failing for the last five years, local residents are now reporting an upswing in activity in the town. Upgrades to local roads are underway, and a Main Street Revitalization is in progress, spearheaded by the Sydney Mines Renewal Association.

The Old Sydney Mines Post Office, built in 1904, was renovated in 1989 and now serves as a municipal office. It is the focal point of downtown Sydney Mines. The community police station is likewise a renovated heritage property, the former CN Station, built in 1904

[2]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Sydney Mines Home Page* (n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/bec/cbtoursm/sydmines.htm on February 21, 2003; *The Sydney Mines Homepage* (Creative Communications, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.creativecommunications.ca/sydneymines on February 20, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

and renovated in 1994. Commerce Place, a modern complex that houses a coffee shop, library, and offices, is very active. A number of craft locations in the town feature locally produced crafts, and the downtown shopping area features a grocery store, a pharmacy, a bakery, banks, service stations, and a branch library.

Educational facilities include Memorial High School, located in the Northside Industrial Park, and Jubilee Elementary School, a brand new facility that is beginning to grow into a community meeting place. Northside Learning Centre, an alternative facility for at-risk students, is also located in Sydney Mines, as well as St. Joseph Elementary School and Sydney Mines Junior High School. The Northside General Hospital, a facility that provides emergency and ambulatory care, is located in North Sydney, on Purves Street. This is augmented by a local health clinic and a continuing care and rehabilitation facility, Harbour View Hospital.

Recreation facilities include the Northside Community Pool and a sports complex on Brown Street, with baseball fields and tennis courts. There is an undeveloped beach at the end of MacLean Street, fronting Sydney Harbour. A miners' monument, located on Main Street, pays tribute to the men who perished at the local collieries.

Sydney Mines celebrates Colliery Days every summer in August and hosts the Johnny Miles Road Race as part of its "Last Call for Summer" celebrations in the fall. Most of the activities take place at the Miners' Memorial Park on Pitt Street.

The Sydney Mines Renewal Association, in partnership with three levels of government and the private sector, recently received funding to proceed with Phase Three of the redevelopment of the community's commercial core. The project will include upgrades to existing infrastructure, landscaping, lighting improvements, business facade upgrades, development of green areas, and a signage program.

### Dominion[3]

Dominion is also a former coal-mining town. The 2001 Census puts the population at 2,144, with the number of dwellings at 865. The community is located along the seacoast and boasts a provincial park, Dominion Beach Park. From Dominion, Route 28 proceeds into Glace Bay.

Dominion is surrounded by the communities of Glace Bay, Gardiner Mines, and Reserve Mines and has a deep-seated vision of itself as a distinct community. There is a strong Italian heritage in the community, reflected in family names and community gathering places.

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[3]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Metro Cape Breton* (Destination Nova Scotia, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.destination-ns.com/common/trails/areaID.asp?AreaID=7C on February 16, 2003; "Nova Scotia Communities" (Industry Canada, n.d.), retrieved from http://broadband.gc.ca/maps/bbmaps_e/NS.html on March 18, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

Educational facilities in Dominion include MacDonald Elementary School and MacDonald High School, a complex housing grades 7 to 12. Residents of Dominion travel to Glace Bay or Sydney for health care facilities.

Dominion Beach is a major recreation area and the focus for Dominion Seaside Days, held annually in August. It provides picnic tables and supervised swimming, as well as a boardwalk that is available year-round and frequented by members of the community as a walking track.

Members of the community have recently been called to take action against the provincial government's decision to close and not rebuild the local high school, MacDonald Complex, which has been deemed unsafe due to subsidence. The school is a relatively new facility and housed 300 students, as well as providing a community meeting place and gym facilities for the nearby elementary school.

## Glace Bay[4]

*Note: The service area for the Glace Bay Community Improvement Society follows the old Town of Glace Bay boundaries.*

Glace Bay, located on the northeastern shore of Cape Breton, is a former coal-mining town. "Glace" is French for "ice," and the town was so named because of drift ice in the harbour. Surrounding communities include Sterling, Hub, Caledonia, McKay's Corner, and Passchendale. Glace Bay is approximately 20 kilometres from Sydney.

While Glace Bay has a history of settlement dating to 1818, the town was not incorporated until 1901. At that time, there were five coal-mining collieries open in Glace Bay. In 1902 the first transatlantic wireless message was sent from Table Head to Poldhu, England, by Guglielmo Marconi. This event is commemorated at the Marconi National Historic Site, which features a small museum.

The community became part of the CBRM in 1995. According to some residents, both amalgamation and the loss of the coal mining industries have contributed to a population drop and a loss of infrastructure and services. Community members came together to form the Glace Bay and Area Committee, which, with involvement from the Cape Breton County Economic Development Authority, commissioned a strategic plan for economic development. The plan was completed by Dillon Consulting in June 2000.

[4]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html, on February 17, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); Dillon Consulting's *A Strategic Economic Development Plan for the Glace Bay and Area* (2000); *Town History* (Glace Bay Summerfest Committee, 2002), retrieved from http://www.glacebay2001.ca/history.htm on February 26, 2003; *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Facilities* (Bayplex, 2003), retrieved from http://www.bayplex.ca on March 3, 2003.

The community's downtown core (Main Street and surrounding blocks) had been declining, but the placement of a large call centre, Stream International, on Union Street has led to a revitalization of the area. Restaurants and retail establishments have noted benefits from the presence of Stream employees, many of whom live in Glace Bay. Also central to the downtown core is the Savoy Theatre, a performing arts centre that was restored with community support following its destruction by fire in 1991. The original Savoy had stood since the 1920s in the current location.

The Bayplex is a major recreation area for the community, providing an ice surface with seating for 500, walking track, community hall, food service, lounge, and meeting rooms. The area is served by seven schools — one high school, three junior high schools, and three elementary schools — and two health care facilities. These facilities are under the jurisdiction of the Cape Breton Regional Health Authority and include the Glace Bay Health Care Facility, which provides acute care to Glace Bay and surrounding areas, and Taigh Na Mara, a continuing care facility.

The Glace Bay Heritage Museum Society recently restored the Old Town Hall, located on Main Street, and established a fully operational heritage museum. The society's Web site states it is trying to re-establish a link to the past with the only remaining building that is almost as old as the town itself, to promote and develop an awareness of the town's history and identity with the community and as a significant landmark in Cape Breton.

### North Sydney[5]

*Note: The North Sydney–Barra Community Development Association boundaries were set to include the former Town of North Sydney, as well as the former Cape Breton County surrounding the town, into the community of Barra as far as the Barra Strait.*

North Sydney, located on the north shore of Sydney harbour is 23 kilometres from Sydney, 38 kilometres from the Sydney airport. Surrounding communities include Centreville, Sydney Mines, Point Edward, Bras D'Or, and Edwardsville.

North Sydney was settled as early as 1785 by European and Loyalist settlers. The community has traditionally been a seaport and served as a major transport point for the nearby coal industry. Also, the fishery played a vital role in the local economy.

There are two business districts, King Street and Commercial Street. There are a number of retail stores and services within these areas, including several fast-food outlets and restaurants, grocery stores, hardware stores, and smaller shops. The infrastructure issues

[5]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; *The North Sydney Community Portal* (Business Improvement and Development Association (BIDA), Northside, 2002), retrieved from http://www.northsydney.ns.ca/index2.html on March 6, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

common to many CBRM communities have recently become the focus of a group of concerned citizens who are now working on a Downtown Revitalization Project.

North Sydney is home to the largest passenger ferries on the east coast of North America. The MV Caribou and its sister ship, the MV Smallwood, as well as the recently added Leif Erickson regularly cross between North Sydney and Newfoundland, continuing a service which began in North Sydney in 1898.

Manufacturing and fish processing are the primary industries. The Northside Industrial Park houses several businesses that deal in electronics manufacture, printing, small engine maintenance, plastics, and distance education. A large high school, Memorial Composite, is also situated at this site, and it serves Sydney Mines as well as North Sydney and surrounding areas.

There are also three elementary schools and one junior high school, Thompson Junior High School, located in North Sydney. Health facilities include the Northside General Hospital and Taigh Solas, a continuing care facility located at the hospital.

Major festivals include Canada Day celebrations and the Cape Breton Exhibition held annually during the third week of August. Additionally, the Bartown Festival, set in July, honours the historical roots of the community, which was known as Bar Town in the 1800s after a large sand bar that extends into the harbour. The harbourfront features a series of boardwalks and a small recreation area, Munro Park.

### Whitney Pier[6]

*Note: The District 7 Innovation Project Association (the Whitney Pier CEIP Board) chose to set its boundaries to service the area of CBRM District 7, which includes Whitney Pier, Lingan Road, Victoria Mines, and South Bar.*

Whitney Pier is located on the eastern side of Sydney Harbour, a seven-square-mile, triangular area located in the northeast corner of Sydney. “The Pier” is connected to the rest of Sydney by an overpass that spans the railway tracks between the now defunct steel plant and coke ovens. Whitney Pier is recognized as a distinct physical and social community by residents and non-residents alike, and is surrounded by the communities of Lingan Road and South Bar.

Whitney Pier was settled by a cross-section of diverse cultures at the turn of the 20th century, drawn to the area by the steel and coal industries. The variety of cultures currently

[6]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.htm on February 17, 2003; *Whit-Lin Shore* (Supracore Technologies, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.whitneypier.ca/enter.php on March 11, 2003; “Whitney Pier” (Campbell, n.d.), retrieved from http://collections.ic.gc.ca/virtualtours/wpindex.html on March 12, 2003; “Whitney Pier” (Vernon, Duchanan, & Wall, 1998), retrieved from http://faculty.uccb.ns.ca/pierscape98/pier.htm on March 10, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

represented in the Pier include Ukrainian, Polish, Italian, African Nova Scotian, West Indian, and a small number of First Nation families, which has made Whitney Pier one of the most ethically diverse communities east of Montreal.

Whitney Pier was deeply affected by the downturn of the coal and steel industries in Cape Breton. While infrastructure and the downtown core, located on Victoria Road, declined somewhat, the community has recently seen a variety of enhancements, including the startup of small businesses, park revitalizations, and a beautification program.

The community is served by one junior high school, Whitney Pier Memorial, and a large elementary school, Harbourside, which opened in September 2000, replacing five smaller community schools. The cleanup on the former Sydney Steel Corporation (SYSCO) site has raised concerns about the health and safety of children at the school, which is located near the site.

The health needs of residents are met by the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, located in Sydney, and the Pier Medical Clinic. Recreational facilities include the District 7 Forum and Neville Park, which hosts baseball and soccer games, as well as regular flea markets and a yearly Legion Picnic. Other events occurring in the community include the Whitney Pier Festival of Visual Arts, a Polish festival, and a Caribbean Festival.

The community mobilizes frequently regarding the environmental concerns that are the legacy of centuries of mining and steelmaking. Since 2000 the community has fought to prevent a solid waste landfill in its recreation area on Blueberry Hill. Also ongoing are issues surrounding the contamination of soil and water in the neighbourhoods.

## COMPARISON COMMUNITIES

### Florence[7]

Located northwest of Sydney Mines, this community was built around a mine sunk by the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company around 1903. Though known as Cox's in the 1800s, it was renamed after D. D. McKenzie's wife, a federal representative, in 1905. Florence covers an area of approximately 4.73 square kilometres. Surrounding communities include Bras D'Or, Mill Creek, Alder Point, and North Sydney.

Florence Elementary School and Dr. T. L. Sullivan Memorial Junior High School, located in nearby Bras D'Or, serve the community. Health care is provided by the Northside General Hospital, located in North Sydney. Residents also access the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, located in Sydney.

[7]The information in this section is derived from, *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.htm on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; "Nova Scotia Communities" (Industry Canada, n.d.), retrieved from http://broadband.gc.ca/maps/bbmaps_e/NS.html on March 18, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

## Louisbourg[8]

The community of Louisbourg is located on the southeast coast of Cape Breton Island, on a large, protected harbour. The Fortress of Louisbourg, located next to the community, is a historic site administered by Parks Canada. Animators bring the fortress to life for residents and tourists alike each summer. Surrounding communities include Catalone, Kennington Cove, Main-a-Dieu, and New Boston.

In 1587 the English became the first Europeans to visit Louisbourg Harbour. During the 18th century, Louisbourg was the third busiest seaport on the continent. It was besieged by New England troops in 1745 and by British troops in 1758. Past industries in the community include coal shipping, swordfishing, and lobster, crab, and cod fishing and processing.

Today Louisbourg has a commercial area on Main Street, largely consisting of restaurants, gift shops, and accommodations. There is one school, George D. Lewis School, which accepts Grade Primary to Grade 9 students from Louisbourg and surrounding communities. Seafood processing and distribution businesses operate seasonally on the waterfront.

Recreational areas include the Sydney & Louisburg Railway Museum, Louisbourg Lighthouse, Kennington Cove Beach, and a boardwalk. Also, the Louisbourg Playhouse, a reconstruction in the style of 17th century theatres, is located in the centre of town and produces a variety of entertainments throughout the summer and fall months.

## Reserve Mines[9]

Reserve Mines, a former mining district, is located between the Sydney Airport and the community of Glace Bay. Nearby communities include Tompkinsville, Mackays Corner, and Steeles Hill. Though named for the large coal reserves located in the community, Reserve Mines is better known for its association with co-operatives and the Antigonish Movement

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[8]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Louisbourg* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.b), retrieved from http://louisbourg.com on March 19, 2003; "Town of Louisbourg" (The Louisbourg Institute, n.d.), retrieved from http://fortress.uccb.ns.ca/homeeng/about.htm on March 17, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

[9]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; "Reserve Mines and Tompkinsville" (TGIS Multimedia, n.d.), retrieved from http://collections.ic.gc.ca/co-op/glaceb.htm on March 18, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

under the leadership of Father Jimmy Tompkins. Reserve Mines opened the first credit union in Nova Scotia in 1933. Its membership was composed of the local coal miners and their neighbours.

A parish priest at St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in 1934, Father Tompkins is credited with sparking the drive towards adult education in Cape Breton by establishing, in 1935, Cape Breton's first public library. His work at Reserve Mines resulted in the first self-help co-operative housing development in North America.

Today Reserve Mines is home to Tompkins Place, constructed in 1993 by a non-profit community group. The local Credit Union, Tompkins Memorial Library, and Tompkins Museum are all housed in this building. An elementary school, Tompkins Memorial, also serves the community.

### Sydney Downtown[10]

*Note: In terms of area boundaries, for research purposes Sydney Downtown has been defined as the area bounded by Highway 125 to the south, Kings Road / Esplanade to the west, Louisa Street to the north, and Welton Street at Vulcan Avenue to the east. [Enumeration areas 052–055, 057–063, 065–068, 070, 071, 101–107]*

Sydney is situated on a large, protected harbour on the eastern side of Cape Breton Island. The downtown area consists of a commercial sector on George, Charlotte, and Esplanade streets, which run parallel to the harbour, and Prince and Welton Streets, which run perpendicular to George Street. Surrounding communities include Whitney Pier, Westmount, Coxheath, and Sydney River. Sydney is the seat of governance for the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, with a mayor and sixteen councillors working out of the Civic Centre, located on the Esplanade.

Following its founding in 1785 by Colonel J. F. W. DesBarres, Sydney was first settled by Loyalists from New York State as well as immigrants from the Scottish Highlands. Sydney experienced substantial economic growth at the turn of the century with the construction of the Dominion Steel and Coal Company steel plant at Whitney Pier, then the largest self-contained steel plant in North America.

Downtown Sydney is home to several educational facilities, including Shipyard Elementary School, Sherwood Park Education Centre, Colby School, Sydney Academy, and Holy Angels High School. The central office for the Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board is also located in the area. Health facilities include several clinics and physicians'

[10]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Features* (Centre 200, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.centre200.ca/features.html on March 17, 2003; *Sydney, Cape Breton* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.c), retrieved from http://sydney.capebretonisland.com on March 19, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

offices, as well as the Cape Breton Regional Hospital, located at the south end of George Street.

Recreational areas include Wentworth Park, a boardwalk, the Sydney Forum and the Cape Breton Centre for Heritage and Science. In addition, Centre 200, a convention and entertainment facility with a 6,500-person capacity, hosts concerts, sporting events, and many other functions throughout the year.

Annual events include Action Week, a festival of music, sports, and special events, held the first week in August. Also, Celtic Colours International Festival, a celebration of Celtic music and dance, takes place in a variety of venues around the island in October.

### Inverness[11]

The village of Inverness is located on the western side of Cape Breton Island, in Inverness County. Surrounding communities include Deepdale, Broad Cove, Strathlorne, and Campbelton.

Mining played a large part in making the community what it is today. At the turn of the century the Inverness mine attracted labourers from Scotland, Ireland, France, Russia, and Belgium. In 1958 the final mine closed and Inverness lapsed into a period of recession. Many of those who remained in the community relied on the fishing industry to provide a livelihood.

In the early 1990s a wharf facility was expanded to enhance services for the fishers participating in the crab and tuna fishery. Processing plants operate on a seasonal basis. Community groups in the area are also seeking ways to develop the community through the tourism and service industries.

Educational facilities include Inverness Education Centre, built in 1964, and Inverness Academy, built in 1991. Health facilities include the Inverness Consolidated Memorial hospital, a 50-bed facility constructed in 1977.

In addition, the village has several stores and restaurants, an RCMP detachment, accommodations, and a bank. Recreational facilities include an arena and Inverness Beach, a supervised swimming area facing the Gulf of Saint Lawrence. Other recreational activities include horseback riding, hiking, camping, and skiing. The Inverness Gathering, a week-long festival, takes place annually in July.

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[11]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm, on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Welcome to Inverness* (Inverness Education Centre, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.inverness.ednet.ns.ca on March 19, 2003; *Welcome to the Municipality of the County of Inverness* (Municipality of the County of Inverness, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.invernessmunicipality.com on March 19, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); "Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis" (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton Nova Scotia Online, Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html, on February 17, 2003.

## Pictou[12]

The town of Pictou, located on the northwest shore of mainland Nova Scotia, is renowned as the "Birthplace of New Scotland," as it was the landing point for the first Scottish settlers to Nova Scotia in 1773.

Halifax International Airport is approximately 150 kilometres from Pictou. The Trans-Canada Highway, which joins many highways across Canada and the US, leads into the community from New Brunswick.

Pictou is home to the head office and factory for Grohmann Knives, which has been producing handcrafted products for more than 35 years. It remains a family-owned enterprise.

There are four schools serving local residents; Pictou Academy, McCulloch Junior High School, Pictou Elementary School, and West Pictou District High School. One hospital, Sutherland Harris Memorial Hospital, provides health care to residents.

Special community events include New Scotland Days, held in mid-September, Tartan Day, and an annual bluegrass festival. Parks include Caribou Provincial Park and Waterside Beach Provincial Park. The area also boasts campgrounds and nature trails.

Recreational facilities include a golf club, tennis courts, a curling club, and a pool.

## Stellarton[13]

The 48-foot-thick Foord Coal Seam, discovered in the early 1790s, controlled the fortunes of Stellarton for many years. Today the corporate head office of the Sobey's Corporation is located in the town. Sobey's food stores and Sobey's-owned shopping malls can be found all over Canada; the corporation also owns the Empire Theatre and Lawton's Drug Store chain.

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[12]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003; *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Town of Pictou* (Town of Pictou, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.townofpictou.com on March 18, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

[13]The information in this section is derived from *Branches* (Cape Breton Regional Library, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrl.ca/about/branches.html on March 17, 2003, *Cape Breton Showcase* (Moran Dan Productions, n.d.a), retrieved from http://www.capebretonet.com on February 16, 2003; *Contact Info: Schools* (Cape Breton Victoria District School Board, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbv.ns.ca/allan/admin/schools/cont.htm on March 5, 2003; *Councillors* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.cbrm.ns.ca/councillors.html on February 17, 2003; *Pictou County Visitors Guide* (Pictou County Tourist Association, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.tourismpictoucounty.com/pages/stellarton.html on March 18, 2003; *Stellarton.com* (Pictou Regional Development Commission, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.prdc.com/prdc/pages/profile.html on March 18, 2003; *Welcome to the Town of Stellarton* (Town of Stellarton, n.d.), retrieved from http://www.town.stellarton.ns.ca/default.htm on March 13, 2003; *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview* (Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999); *Economic Impact of the Devco Closure* (Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd., 1999); *Our View: Cape Breton County: A Community in Crisis* (Nova Scotia Teachers Union, 1999); *Facilities* (Cape Breton District Health Authority, 2002), retrieved from http://www.cbdha.nshealth.ca/facilities.html on February 17, 2003; and *Cape Breton: Communities* (Nova Scotia Online, 2003), retrieved from http://nsonline.com/Cape-Breton/communities.html on February 17, 2003.

The business district is centred on Foord Street and offers shops; dental, veterinary, and law offices; as well as accommodations and restaurants. Educational facilities include two elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school. Also, Stellarton is home to the Pictou campus of the Nova Scotia Community College. The community is served by Aberdeen Hospital, located in New Glasgow, as well as local doctors' offices and clinics.

Recreational services include special events and programs for youth, adults, and seniors. Facilities include baseball and soccer fields, a skate park, playgrounds, tennis courts, a hiking trail, and Stellarton Memorial Rink. The Stellarton Homecoming festival is a highlight of the summer.

**Table F.1: Community Profiles — Community Population, Dwellings, and Residential Assessments, 2001**

| Area | Population | Dwellings | Residential Assessments ($ millions) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CBRM communities** | | | |
| County of Cape Breton | 38,077 | 16,742 | 1,067 |
| Dominion | 2,144 | 865 | 35 |
| Florence | 1,628 | 645 | 27* |
| Glace Bay | 16,984 | 6,970 | 271 |
| Louisbourg | 1,071 | 479 | 17 |
| New Waterford | 6,944 | 2,846 | 103 |
| North Sydney | 6,158 | 2,545 | 116 |
| Sydney | 18,843 | 8,662 | 464 |
| Sydney Mines | 6,982 | 2,844 | 120 |
| Reserve Mines | 1,990 | 780 | 28* |
| Whitney Pier | 5,142 | 2,113 | 116* |
| Eskasoni First Nation | 2,741 | 753 | n/a |
| Membertou First Nation | 621 | 217 | n/a |
| CBRM | 109,330 | 46,461 | 2,250 |
| **Non-CBRM communities** | | | |
| Inverness (Sub. A) | 6,009 | 2,370 | 50** |
| Pictou | 3,875 | 1,570 | 80 |
| Stellarton | 4,809 | 1,985 | 102 |

**Sources:** *The Cape Breton Regional Municipality at the End of the 20th Century: A Demographic and Economic Overview*, by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, 1999, Sydney, NS: Cape Breton Regional Municipality, The Planning Department; *2001 Community Profiles*, by Statistics Canada, 2003, retrieved July 16, 2003, from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/Profil01/PlaceSearchForm1.cfm; and *Service Nova Scotia — Vital Statistics — 2001 Annual Report*, by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, 2003, retrieved July 10, 2003, from http://www.gov.ns.ca/snsmr/vstat/annualreports/2001/table3.asp.

**Notes:** The 2001 Florence and Reserve Mines population and dwelling statistics were taken from the County of Cape Breton totals.

The 2001 Whitney Pier population and dwelling statistics were taken from the Sydney totals.

Estimated 2001 population/dwelling counts by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) Planning Department; estimates were required due to changes in dissemination area boundaries implemented in 2001 by Statistics Canada.

n/a = not available

*Assessments provided by the Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM). The Whitney Pier assessment covers the area for District 7. District 7 is a municipal district in the CBRM. The District 7 assessment was provided by the CBRM and covers an area encompassing part of Sydney and the County of Cape Breton. The assessment total for District 7 is also included with the Sydney and the County of Cape Breton assessments in this table.

**The total is for the residential assessment in District 6. District 6 includes the community of Inverness.

# Appendix G: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| **Personal characteristics** | | |
| Gender (%) | | |
| Female | 41.6 | 61.8 |
| Male | 58.4 | 38.2 |
| Age (%) | | |
| Under 20 years | 0.6 | 1.7 |
| 20–24 years | 8.7 | 14.3 |
| 25–34 years | 21.5 | 29.3 |
| 35–44 years | 28.7 | 33.9 |
| 45–54 years | 33.0 | 17.6 |
| 55 years and older | 7.5 | 3.1 |
| Average age (years) | 40.3 | 35.7 |
| Marital status (%) | | |
| Single, never married | 26.8 | 52.2 |
| Married or common law | 58.2 | 18.6 |
| Separated | 6.2 | 13.7 |
| Divorced | 8.0 | 14.3 |
| Widowed | 0.8 | 1.4 |
| Education (%)[a] | | |
| High school diploma | 69.0 | 60.7 |
| College diploma | 17.3 | 12.6 |
| Trade or vocational diploma | 43.7 | 36.9 |
| Apprenticeship diploma | 12.4 | 4.9 |
| University degree | 5.0 | 1.8 |
| Other diploma/degree | 17.4 | 17.4 |
| **Household composition and household income (%)** | | |
| Number of people in the household | | |
| 1 person | 7.3 | 11.7 |
| 2 persons | 29.0 | 30.9 |
| 3 persons | 29.2 | 29.1 |
| 4 persons | 21.7 | 17.9 |
| 5 persons | 10.1 | 7.6 |
| 6 or more persons | 2.7 | 2.9 |
| Number of children under 18 years of age in the household | | |
| None | 55.3 | 38.1 |
| 1 child | 22.7 | 26.8 |
| 2 children | 15.7 | 22.5 |
| 3 children | 5.3 | 10.7 |
| 4 or more children | 1.0 | 1.9 |

*(continued)*

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| Age of youngest child in the household | | |
| Under 3 years | 16.4 | 23.1 |
| 3 to under 6 years | 18.4 | 22.8 |
| 6 to under 13 years | 34.2 | 36.3 |
| 13 to under 18 years | 31.0 | 17.8 |
| Number of adults who contribute to the household income | | |
| 1 adult | 30.0 | 67.6 |
| 2 adults | 58.2 | 22.6 |
| 3 adults | 8.4 | 7.2 |
| 4 or more adults | 3.5 | 2.5 |
| Household income | | |
| Less than $10,000 | 10.8 | 58.6 |
| $10,000–$19,999 | 31.4 | 35.9 |
| $20,000–$29,999 | 22.9 | 3.5 |
| $30,000–$39,999 | 17.5 | 1.9[b] |
| $40,000–$49,999 | 9.4 | n/a |
| $50,000–$59,999 | 4.2 | n/a |
| $60,000–$69,999 | 2.3 | n/a |
| $70,000 or more | 1.5 | n/a |
| Relatives living in Cape Breton, excluding those in the household | 97.0 | 97.3 |
| **Employment characteristics** | | |
| Years worked in paid job or business since 16 years of age (%) | | |
| Never worked | 0.0 | 9.9 |
| Less than a year | 3.7 | 20.1 |
| 1–2 years | 3.0 | 10.5 |
| 3–5 years | 9.4 | 14.3 |
| 6–9 years | 9.9 | 12.3 |
| 10 or more years | 74.0 | 33.0 |
| Number of different companies worked for in past 5 years (%) | | |
| Have not worked in past 5 years | 0.5 | 32.0 |
| 1 company | 37.8 | 31.1 |
| 2–3 companies | 43.9 | 25.5 |
| 4–5 companies | 13.7 | 8.0 |
| 6 or more companies | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| Industry of last employment (%) | | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting | 3.3 | 1.6 |
| Mining | 7.7 | +++ |
| Utilities | +++ | 0.0 |
| Construction | 10.8 | 13.5 |
| Manufacturing | 19.3 | 8.9 |
| Wholesale trade | 1.6 | +++ |
| Retail trade | 10.6 | 15.9 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 3.5 | 3.3 |

*(continued)*

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| Information and cultural industries | 0.8 | 1.1 |
| Finance, insurance, and real estate | 1.1 | +++ |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 3.2 | 2.2 |
| Administrative support and waste management | 9.2 | 14.6 |
| Educational services | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| Health care and social assistance | 6.4 | 5.1 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 1.7 | 1.8 |
| Accommodation and food services | 11.3 | 19.0 |
| Other services (except public administration) | 4.2 | 5.5 |
| Public administration | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| Number of years worked in industry of last employment (%) | | |
| Less than 1 year | 14.1 | 35.6 |
| 1–2 years | 16.0 | 21.2 |
| 3–5 years | 17.1 | 17.3 |
| 6–9 years | 9.9 | 7.6 |
| 10 or more years | 43.0 | 18.3 |
| Occupation in most recent job (%) | | |
| Management | 2.9 | +++ |
| Business, finance, and administrative | 13.3 | 9.0 |
| Natural and applied science | 3.0 | 1.1 |
| Health | 2.6 | 2.0 |
| Social science, education, government, and religion | 3.4 | 1.1 |
| Art, culture, recreation, and sports | 1.0 | 1.1 |
| Sales and service | 31.1 | 54.5 |
| Trades, transport, and equipment operators | 21.9 | 20.7 |
| Primary industry | 7.9 | 2.9 |
| Manufacturing, processing, and utilities | 12.7 | 7.3 |
| Reason most recent job ended (%)[a] | | |
| End of contract/temporary job | 16.1 | 19.1 |
| Non-seasonal layoff | 27.8 | 19.7 |
| Seasonal nature of work | 21.0 | 5.4 |
| Own illness | 2.2 | 7.1 |
| Maternity/parental leave | 0.6 | 8.0 |
| Family responsibilities | 2.9 | 10.0 |
| Employer closed down or moved | 15.0 | 6.9 |
| Return to school | +++ | 3.5 |
| Dissatisfied with job | 2.4 | 6.5 |
| Moved to new residence | 1.9 | 4.8 |
| Retired | 5.4 | 0.0 |
| Dismissal by employer | 0.6 | 3.5 |
| Labour dispute | 0.6 | +++ |
| Quit | 1.9 | 2.6 |
| Other | 2.9 | 2.4 |
| Expect to return to last employer (%) | 31.2 | 7.1 |
| Average hourly wage at most recent job ($) | 11.36 | 8.06 |

*(continued)*

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| Currently in paid work (%) | 18.3 | 16.7 |
| Minimum acceptable wage in next job ($) | 9.55 | 7.71 |
| **Attitude toward work (%)** | | |
| Will take additional training to improve job prospects | 97.6 | 97.1 |
| Will move permanently outside Cape Breton in order to get a job | 17.5 | 19.9 |
| Will move part of each year in order to get a job | 28.6 | 24.7 |
| Will work for a lower wage in order to get a job | 51.0 | 38.1 |
| Will work in a different occupation or industry in order to get a job | 91.1 | 82.4 |
| **Volunteerism** | | |
| Participated in formal volunteer activities during the past 12 months (%) | | |
| Never | 47.3 | 51.2 |
| Every day | 3.0 | 2.7 |
| A few times a week | 11.1 | 10.9 |
| About once a week | 10.3 | 7.8 |
| About once a month | 11.2 | 10.1 |
| Less than once a month | 17.2 | 17.3 |
| Participated in informal volunteer activities during the past 12 months (%) | | |
| Never | 12.7 | 14.8 |
| Every day | 7.5 | 9.5 |
| A few times a week | 27.5 | 30.3 |
| About once a week | 21.0 | 18.3 |
| About once a month | 18.6 | 15.7 |
| Less than once a month | 12.7 | 11.5 |
| Participated in community groups during the past 12 months (%) | 47.1 | 39.7 |
| Average number of community groups participated in | 2.0 | 1.9 |
| **Attachment to community (%)** | | |
| Number of years lived in Cape Breton | | |
| Less than 10 years | 4.7 | 4.9 |
| 10 or more years | 19.6 | 23.7 |
| All my life | 75.8 | 71.5 |
| Number of years lived at current address | | |
| Less than 1 year | 12.6 | 24.4 |
| 1–4 | 19.8 | 34.9 |
| 5–9 years | 11.4 | 14.2 |
| 10 or more years | 42.1 | 15.9 |
| All my life | 14.0 | 10.7 |
| **Networks (%)** | | |
| Number of contacts for help with household activities | | |
| None | 4.0 | 5.8 |
| 1–2 contacts | 24.6 | 34.0 |
| 3–5 contacts | 39.6 | 41.2 |

*(continued)*

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| 6–10 contacts | 21.5 | 16.3 |
| 11 or more contacts | 10.3 | 2.7 |
| Average | 5.6 | 3.8 |
| Median | 4.0 | 3.0 |
| Number of contacts for specialized help (such as legal, medical) | | |
| None | 12.4 | 14.2 |
| 1–2 contacts | 43.7 | 46.6 |
| 3–5 contacts | 33.5 | 30.3 |
| 6–10 contacts | 8.8 | 7.0 |
| 11 or more contacts | 1.6 | 1.9 |
| Average | 2.9 | 2.6 |
| Median | 2.0 | 2.0 |
| Number of contacts for emotional help | | |
| None | 4.2 | 4.5 |
| 1–2 contacts | 26.1 | 25.4 |
| 3–5 contacts | 39.5 | 38.5 |
| 6–10 contacts | 20.6 | 25.4 |
| 11 or more contacts | 9.6 | 6.2 |
| Average | 5.5 | 4.9 |
| Median | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| Number of contacts for help finding a job | | |
| None | 10.1 | 13.8 |
| 1–2 contacts | 30.8 | 37.9 |
| 3–5 contacts | 37.1 | 35.2 |
| 6–10 contacts | 17.2 | 10.9 |
| 11 or more contacts | 4.8 | 2.1 |
| Average | 4.2 | 3.1 |
| Median | 3.0 | 2.0 |
| Total number of contacts | | |
| None | 2.2 | 2.1 |
| 1–2 contacts | 9.5 | 11.1 |
| 3–5 contacts | 29.4 | 29.2 |
| 6–10 contacts | 30.9 | 33.3 |
| 11 or more contacts | 27.9 | 24.3 |
| Average | 9.7 | 8.2 |
| Median | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| How many of these contacts would you say know each other? | | |
| All of them | 36.7 | 49.1 |
| Most of them | 37.4 | 29.5 |
| Some of them | 21.0 | 15.3 |
| Very few of them | 1.6 | 1.2 |
| None of them | 1.5 | 1.2 |
| Can't say | 1.8 | 3.7 |

*(continued)*

**Table G.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | Income Assistance |
|---|---|---|
| How many of these contacts would you say have same political views as you? | | |
| All of them | 5.9 | 13.3 |
| Most of them | 14.8 | 16.6 |
| Some of them | 29.2 | 23.1 |
| Very few of them | 3.3 | 2.5 |
| None of them | 1.7 | 2.2 |
| Can't say | 45.1 | 42.4 |
| How many of these contacts would you say have same religious beliefs as you? | | |
| All of them | 15.8 | 21.5 |
| Most of them | 29.8 | 31.1 |
| Some of them | 26.2 | 21.7 |
| Very few of them | 3.8 | 2.7 |
| None of them | 1.9 | 1.0 |
| Can't say | 22.4 | 21.9 |
| Agreed that most people can be trusted | 80.4 | 74.6 |
| **Health characteristics (%)** | | |
| In general, my health is | | |
| Excellent | 32.0 | 26.9 |
| Very good | 49.6 | 45.7 |
| Good | 16.5 | 23.8 |
| Fair/poor | 1.9 | 3.5 |
| Difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, etc. | | |
| Sometimes/often | 21.7 | 26.1 |
| Not at all | 78.3 | 73.9 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits activity at home | | |
| Sometimes/often | 12.7 | 19.5 |
| Not at all | 87.3 | 80.5 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits activity at work/school | | |
| Sometimes/often | 13.5 | 18.5 |
| Not at all | 86.5 | 81.5 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits leisure activities | | |
| Sometimes/often | 12.5 | 18.3 |
| Not at all | 87.5 | 81.7 |
| **Sample size** | 998 | 516 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations from enrolment forms of CEIP volunteers.

**Notes:** Invalid or missing values are not included in individual variable distributions.
Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in the calculation of sums and differences.
n/a = not applicable
[a]May not add up to 100 per cent because respondents may appear in more than one category.
[b]This statistic is for household income of $30,000 or more for the income assistance caseload.
[+++] Sample size too small (less than five) for publication.

# Appendix H:
# Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | Income Assistance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | Program | Control |
| **Personal characteristics** | | | | |
| Gender (%) | | | | |
| Female | 39.5 | 43.7 | 60.1 | 63.6 |
| Male | 60.5 | 56.3 | 39.9 | 36.4 |
| Age (%) | | | | |
| Under 25 years | 10.4 | 8.2 | 14.7 | 17.4 |
| 25–34 years | 21.0 | 22.0 | 33.3 | 25.2 |
| 35–44 years | 28.1 | 29.3 | 31.0 | 36.8 |
| 45–54 years | 32.5 | 33.5 | 19.0 | 16.3 |
| 55 years of age or older | 8.0 | 7.0 | 1.9 | 4.3 |
| Average age (years) | 40.3 | 40.4 | 35.6 | 35.9 |
| Marital status (%) | | | | |
| Single, never married | 27.9 | 25.7 | 51.8 | 52.5 |
| Married or common law | 57.5 | 58.8 | 21.2 | 16.0 |
| Separated, divorced, or widowed | 14.6 | 15.5 | 27.1 | 31.5 |
| Education (%)[a] | | | | |
| High school diploma | 68.5 | 69.5 | 57.9 | 63.4 |
| College diploma | 15.8 | 18.8 | 11.7 | 13.5 |
| Trade or vocational diploma | 45.7 | 41.7 | 36.8 | 37.1 |
| Apprenticeship diploma | 12.7 | 12.1 | 6.0 | 3.7 |
| University degree | 6.4 | 3.6* | +++ | 2.4 |
| Other diploma/degree | 17.2 | 17.7 | 15.1 | 19.5 |
| Number of people in the household (%) | | | | |
| 1 person | 8.0 | 6.6 | 11.3 | 12.0 |
| 2 persons | 27.5 | 30.5 | 26.5 | 35.3 |
| 3 persons | 28.9 | 29.5 | 31.9 | 26.4 |
| 4 persons | 23.1 | 20.4 | 20.6 | 15.1 |
| 5 persons | 10.0 | 10.2 | 7.4 | 7.8 |
| 6 or more persons | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 3.5 |
| Number of children under 18 years of age in the household (%) | | | | |
| None | 57.5 | 53.1 | 41.3 | 34.9 |
| 1 child | 21.4 | 23.9 | 23.7 | 29.8 |
| 2 children | 15.6 | 15.8 | 23.7 | 21.3 |
| 3 children | 4.4 | 6.2 | 10.1 | 11.2 |
| 4 or more children | 1.0 | 1.0 | +++ | 2.7 |

*(continued)*

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | Income Assistance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | Program | Control |
| Age of youngest child in the household (%) | | | | |
| Under 3 years | 16.1 | 16.7 | 25.0 | 21.4 |
| 3 to under 6 years | 14.2 | 22.2 * | 21.1 | 24.4 |
| 6 to under 13 years | 39.8 | 29.1 | 36.8 | 35.7 |
| 13 to under 18 years | 29.9 | 32.1 | 17.1 | 18.5 |
| Number of adults who contribute to the household income (%) | | | | |
| 1 adult | 29.2 | 30.7 | 64.2 | 71.1 |
| 2 adults | 58.3 | 58.0 | 23.4 | 21.9 |
| 3 adults | 9.1 | 7.6 | 9.0 | 5.5 |
| 4 or more adults | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 1.6 |
| Household income (%) | | | | |
| Less than $10,000 | 11.7 | 9.9 | 56.6 | 60.7 |
| $10,000–$19,999 | 32.4 | 30.4 | 36.1 | 35.8 |
| $20,000–$29,999 | 24.6 | 21.2 | 7.4 | 3.5 # |
| $30,000–$39,999 | 16.5 | 18.6 | n/a | n/a |
| $40,000–$49,999 | 7.4 | 11.3 | n/a | n/a |
| $50,000–$59,999 | 4.4 | 4.0 | n/a | n/a |
| $60,000–$69,999 | 1.8 | 2.8 | n/a | n/a |
| $70,000 or more | 1.2 | 1.8 | n/a | n/a |
| Relatives living in Cape Breton, excluding those in the household (%) | 98.2 | 95.8 ** | 98.8 | 95.7 ** |
| **Employment characteristics** | | | | |
| Years worked in paid job or business since 16 years of age (%) | | | | |
| Never worked | 0.0 | 0.0 | 9.2 | 10.5 |
| Less than a year | 3.1 | 4.3 | 20.0 | 20.2 |
| 1–2 years | 2.9 | 3.1 | 12.0 | 8.9 |
| 3–5 years | 10.3 | 8.4 | 16.4 | 12.2 |
| 6–9 years | 10.1 | 9.7 | 11.6 | 13.0 |
| 10 or more years | 73.6 | 74.5 | 30.8 | 35.2 |
| Number of different companies worked for in past 5 years (%) | | | | |
| Have not worked in past 5 years | +++ | +++ | 30.5 | 33.5 |
| 1 company | 38.8 | 36.9 | 28.3 | 33.9 |
| 2–3 companies | 44.0 | 43.9 | 26.2 | 24.8 |
| 4–5 companies | 13.7 | 13.8 | 11.2 | 4.8 |
| 6 or more companies | 3.2 | 4.8 | 3.9 | 3.0 |
| Industry of last employment (%) | | | | |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting | 3.7 | 2.9 | +++ | +++ |
| Mining | 8.2 | 7.2 | +++ | +++ |
| Utilities | 0.0 | +++ | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Construction | 11.0 | 10.5 | 16.4 | 10.6 |
| Manufacturing | 18.2 | 20.5 | 9.3 | 8.4 |
| Wholesale trade | 2.3 | 1.0 | +++ | +++ |
| Retail trade | 9.4 | 11.9 | 15.5 | 16.4 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 3.5 | 3.5 | 2.7 | 4.0 |

*(continued)*

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | Income Assistance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | Program | Control |
| Information and cultural industries | +++ | 1.2 | +++ | +++ |
| Finance and insurance | +++ | +++ | +++ | +++ |
| Real estate | +++ | +++ | +++ | +++ |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 2.9 | 3.5 | +++ | 3.1 |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Administrative support and waste management | 10.0 | 8.4 | 15.9 | 13.3 |
| Educational services | 3.9 | 2.3 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| Health care and social assistance | 6.3 | 6.4 | 4.9 | 5.3 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 1.6 | 1.8 | +++ | 2.7 |
| Accommodation and food services | 11.7 | 10.9 | 16.4 | 21.7 |
| Other services (except public administration) | 3.5 | 4.9 | 6.6 | 4.4 |
| Public administration | 2.0 | 2.3 | 2.7 | +++ |
| Number of years worked in industry of last employment (%) | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 13.3 | 14.9 | 34.1 | 37.1 |
| 1–2 years | 15.7 | 16.3 | 21.0 | 21.0 |
| 3–5 years | 17.5 | 16.7 | 17.9 | 16.6 |
| 6–9 years | 10.5 | 9.2 | 6.6 | 8.7 |
| 10 or more years | 43.1 | 43.0 | 20.1 | 16.6 |
| Occupation in most recent job (%) | | | | |
| Management | 3.0 | 2.8 | +++ | +++ |
| Business, finance, and administrative | 13.7 | 12.8 | 4.4 | 13.6 |
| Natural and applied science | 3.2 | 2.8 | +++ | +++ |
| Health | 2.6 | 2.6 | +++ | 2.2 |
| Social science, education, government, and religion | 5.3 | 1.6 ** | +++ | +++ * |
| Art, culture, recreation, and sports | +++ | 1.8 | +++ | +++ |
| Sales and service | 30.1 | 32.2 | 56.8 | 52.2 |
| Trades, transport, and equipment operators | 21.2 | 22.7 | 22.5 | 18.9 |
| Primary industry | 8.3 | 7.5 | 2.2 | 3.5 |
| Manufacturing, processing, and utilities | 12.3 | 13.2 | 8.4 | 6.1 |
| Reason most recent job ended (%)[a] | | | | |
| End of contract/temporary job | 14.9 | 17.3 | 18.9 | 19.2 |
| Non-seasonal layoff | 27.0 | 28.6 | 18.0 | 21.4 |
| Seasonal nature of work | 21.9 | 20.1 | 4.3 | 6.6 |
| Own illness | 2.0 | 2.4 | 8.2 | 6.1 |
| Maternity/parental leave | +++ | +++ | 6.4 | 9.6 |
| Family responsibilities | 3.8 | 2.0 * | 9.9 | 10.0 |
| Employer closed down or moved | 15.3 | 14.7 | 8.2 | 5.7 |
| Return to school | +++ | +++ | 3.4 | 3.5 |
| Dissatisfied with job | 1.0 | 3.8 *** | 9.0 | 3.9 ** |
| Moved to new residence | 2.4 | 1.4 | 4.7 | 4.8 |
| Retired | 5.4 | 5.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Dismissal by employer | +++ | +++ | 3.0 | 3.9 |
| Labour dispute | +++ | +++ | +++ | 0.0 |

*(continued)*

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | Income Assistance | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | Program | Control | |
| Quit | 1.8 | 2.0 | 3.4 | 1.8 | |
| Other | 3.0 | 2.8 | 3.9 | +++ | |
| Expect to return to last employer (%) | | | | | |
| No | 51.9 | 47.6 | 74.4 | 78.9 | |
| Yes, no date | 25.2 | 27.9 | 6.5 | 5.8 | |
| Yes, recall date | 4.7 | 4.7 | +++ | +++ | |
| Already returned | 6.5 | 5.7 | 4.8 | 4.9 | |
| Not sure | 11.8 | 14.2 | 13.5 | 9.4 | |
| Average hourly wage at most recent job ($) | 11.54 | 11.18 | 8.03 | 8.08 | |
| Currently in paid work (%) | 19.6 | 17.0 | 15.7 | 17.6 | |
| Minimum acceptable wage in next job ($) | 9.61 | 9.49 | 7.85 | 7.56 | |
| **Attitude toward work (%)** | | | | | |
| Will take additional training to improve job prospects | 97.2 | 98.0 | 95.7 | 98.4 | |
| Will move permanently outside Cape Breton in order to get a job | 17.5 | 17.4 | 23.2 | 16.7 | |
| Will move part of each year in order to get a job | 29.8 | 27.4 | 25.6 | 23.8 | |
| Will work for a lower wage in order to get a job | 50.9 | 51.1 | 39.0 | 37.2 | |
| Will work in a different occupation or industry in order to get a job | 91.9 | 90.4 | 83.5 | 81.2 | |
| **Volunteerism** | | | | | |
| Participated in formal volunteer activities during the past 12 months (%) | | | | | |
| Never | 49.1 | 45.6 | 55.3 | 47.1 | |
| Every day | 2.6 | 3.4 | 2.3 | 3.1 | |
| A few times a week | 11.3 | 10.8 | 6.6 | 15.2 | ** |
| About once a week | 10.3 | 10.2 | 9.0 | 6.6 | |
| About once a month | 10.9 | 11.5 | 10.5 | 9.7 | |
| Less than once a month | 15.9 | 18.5 | 16.3 | 18.3 | |
| Participated in informal volunteer activities during the past 12 months (%) | | | | | |
| Never | 11.4 | 14.1 | 13.6 | 15.9 | |
| Every day | 7.8 | 7.2 | 9.3 | 9.7 | |
| A few times a week | 26.7 | 28.3 | 25.7 | 34.9 | * |
| About once a week | 22.9 | 19.1 | 20.6 | 15.9 | |
| About once a month | 18.8 | 18.3 | 19.5 | 12.0 | |
| Less than once a month | 12.4 | 13.1 | 11.3 | 11.6 | |
| Participated in community groups during the past 12 months (%) | 45.5 | 48.7 | 38.7 | 40.6 | |
| Average number of community groups participated in | 1.9 | 2.0 | 1.7 | 2.0 | |
| **Attachment to community (%)** | | | | | |
| Number of years lived in Cape Breton | | | | | |
| Less than 10 years | 4.4 | 4.8 | 4.3 | 5.4 | |
| 10 or more years | 20.4 | 18.8 | 20.6 | 26.7 | |
| All my life | 75.2 | 76.4 | 75.1 | 67.8 | |
| Number of years lived at current address | | | | | |
| Less than 1 year | 11.9 | 13.4 | 24.4 | 24.4 | |
| 1–4 years | 19.7 | 19.8 | 37.6 | 32.2 | |
| 5–9 years | 9.8 | 13.0 | 12.0 | 16.3 | |

*(continued)*

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | | Income Assistance | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | | Program | Control | |
| 10 or more years | 43.8 | 40.5 | | 15.1 | 16.7 | |
| All my life | 14.9 | 13.2 | | 10.9 | 10.5 | |
| **Networks (%)** | | | | | | |
| Number of contacts for help with household activities | | | | | | |
| None | 4.0 | 4.0 | | 5.4 | 6.2 | |
| 1–2 contacts | 24.8 | 24.5 | | 34.9 | 33.1 | |
| 3–5 contacts | 40.2 | 38.9 | | 40.3 | 42.0 | |
| 6–10 contacts | 22.1 | 20.8 | | 16.3 | 16.3 | |
| 11 or more contacts | 8.9 | 11.8 | | 3.1 | 2.3 | |
| Average | 5.5 | 5.6 | | 3.8 | 3.7 | |
| Number of contacts for specialized help (such as legal, medical) | | | | | | |
| None | 14.2 | 10.5 | | 13.2 | 15.2 | |
| 1–2 contacts | 43.5 | 43.9 | | 49.6 | 43.6 | |
| 3–5 contacts | 32.9 | 34.2 | | 26.7 | 33.9 | |
| 6–10 contacts | 7.8 | 9.9 | | 8.1 | 5.8 | |
| 11 or more contacts | 1.6 | 1.6 | | 2.3 | 1.6 | |
| Average | 2.8 | 3.0 | | 2.7 | 2.6 | |
| Number of contacts for emotional help | | | | | | |
| None | 4.6 | 3.8 | | 5.0 | 3.9 | |
| 1–2 contacts | 25.9 | 26.3 | | 25.2 | 25.7 | |
| 3–5 contacts | 40.6 | 38.5 | | 37.2 | 39.7 | |
| 6–10 contacts | 19.9 | 21.2 | | 27.1 | 23.7 | |
| 11 or more contacts | 9.0 | 10.2 | | 5.4 | 7.0 | |
| Average | 5.5 | 5.5 | | 4.8 | 4.9 | |
| Number of contacts for help finding a job | | | | | | |
| None | 11.2 | 9.0 | | 14.0 | 13.7 | |
| 1–2 contacts | 30.9 | 30.7 | | 34.9 | 41.0 | |
| 3–5 contacts | 37.8 | 36.5 | | 35.3 | 35.2 | |
| 6-10 contacts | 15.7 | 18.6 | | 12.8 | 9.0 | |
| 11 or more contacts | 4.4 | 5.2 | | 3.1 | 1.2 | |
| Average | 4.1 | 4.4 | | 3.4 | 2.8 | ** |
| Total number of contacts | | | | | | |
| None | 1.6 | 2.8 | | 2.3 | 2.0 | |
| 1–2 contacts | 8.7 | 10.4 | | 11.3 | 10.9 | |
| 3–5 contacts | 33.8 | 25.1 | ** | 29.6 | 28.8 | |
| 6–10 contacts | 30.8 | 31.1 | | 33.1 | 33.5 | |
| 11 or more contacts | 25.2 | 30.7 | | 23.7 | 24.9 | |
| Average | 9.6 | 9.9 | | 8.2 | 8.3 | |
| How many of these contacts would you say know each other | | | | | | |
| All of them | 39.4 | 33.9 | | 48.2 | 50.0 | |
| Most of them | 35.6 | 39.2 | | 32.4 | 26.6 | |
| Some of them | 20.3 | 21.6 | | 13.0 | 17.6 | |
| Very few of them | 1.4 | 1.8 | | +++ | 2.0 | |

*(continued)*

**Table H.1: Characteristics of CEIP Volunteers at Baseline, by Assistance Type and Research Group (Cont'd)**

| Characteristics | Employment Insurance | | Income Assistance | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Program | Control | Program | Control |
| None of them | 1.6 | 1.4 | +++ | +++ |
| Can't say | 1.6 | 2.0 | 5.1 | 2.3 |
| How many of these contacts would you say have the same political views as you? | | | | |
| All of them | 6.3 | 5.5 | 13.7 | 12.9 |
| Most of them | 14.5 | 15.2 | 18.0 | 15.2 |
| Some of them | 30.2 | 28.1 | 19.9 | 26.2 |
| Very few of them | 3.0 | 3.6 | +++ | 3.5 |
| None of them | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 2.3 |
| Can't say | 44.2 | 46.1 | 44.9 | 39.8 |
| How many of these contacts would you say have same religious beliefs as you? | | | | |
| All of them | 17.1 | 14.6 | 22.3 | 20.8 |
| Most of them | 30.6 | 29.1 | 30.9 | 31.4 |
| Some of them | 25.0 | 27.5 | 19.9 | 23.5 |
| Very few of them | 3.4 | 4.2 | 2.0 | 3.5 |
| None of them | 2.2 | 1.6 | +++ | +++ |
| Can't say | 21.7 | 23.0 | 23.4 | 20.4 |
| Agreed that most people can be trusted | 80.4 | 80.5 | 74.3 | 74.8 |
| **Health characteristics (%)** | | | | |
| In general, my health is | | | | |
| Excellent | 32.9 | 31.1 | 27.5 | 26.4 |
| Very good | 47.9 | 51.3 | 47.7 | 43.8 |
| Good | 17.2 | 15.8 | 20.2 | 27.5 |
| Fair/poor | 2.0 | 1.8 | 4.7 | 2.3 |
| Difficulty hearing, seeing, communicating, etc. | | | | |
| Sometimes/often | 22.9 | 20.6 | 27.8 | 24.4 |
| Not at all | 77.1 | 79.4 | 72.2 | 75.6 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits activity at home | | | | |
| Sometimes/often | 15.0 | 10.5 * | 20.2 | 18.8 |
| Not at all | 85.0 | 89.6 | 79.8 | 81.2 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits activity at work/school | | | | |
| Sometimes/often | 14.1 | 13.0 | 19.9 | 17.1 |
| Not at all | 85.9 | 87.0 | 80.1 | 82.9 |
| Has a physical or mental condition that limits leisure activities | | | | |
| Sometimes/often | 14.0 | 11.0 | 19.6 | 17.1 |
| Not at all | 86.0 | 89.0 | 80.4 | 82.9 |
| **Sample size** | 499 | 499 | 229 | 229 |

**Source:** SRDC calculations from enrolment forms of CEIP volunteers.

**Notes:** Invalid or missing values are not included in individual variable distributions.
Rounding may cause slight discrepancies in the calculation of sums and differences.
n/a = not applicable
[a]Numbers do not add up to 100 per cent because enrollees could report one or more credentials.
+++Results are based on sample sizes that are too small for publication (less than five persons).
#This statistic is for household income of $30,000 or more for the income assistance caseload.
Chi-squared statistic or t-test was used to check for differences. Statistical significance levels are indicated as *** = 1 per cent; ** = 5 per cent; * = 10 per cent.

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