

A DRAFT PAPER:

TOWARDS A WOMEN'S AGENDA ON TRAINING

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PREFACE

Through the process of developing this draft of the Women's Agenda on Training we have spoken to women, facilitated workshops with a number of women's organizations, and received letters and ideas from individual women and women's groups. The opportunity to hear women from across the country tell their stories, and of their experiences of learning, work and training has been one of the richest organizing experiences I have had.

In these stories I heard about women's concern for the future of their communities and their commitment to have a voice in the process of renewing the communities in which they live. In these stories was so much energy and hope about what real participation in decision making might mean and how women can contribute to the democratization of not only the training system, but of broad social and economic policies which affect our lives. Women's stories also spoke of the pain, anger, and frustration we feel faced with systemic barriers and the inability of existing structures to meet our needs. Women spoke of the way they have been excluded from equitable participation in the worlds of work and learning.

It is very difficult to reconcile and work with the contradictions that we uncovered in the "Women's Agenda" workshops; our feelings of isolation and the thrill of working together, women's powerlessness and women's power, women's fears and women's hopes, women's anger and women's strength. I think it was very important for us to take advantage of the opportunity to tell our stories, to speak of our own personal experiences of the training system, and to identify the barriers that exist for women. It was just as important, yet much harder, for us to get beyond describing the frustration we feel with the existing system, to developing a vision of a training system that could work for us.

I feel extremely honoured and fortunate to have had the chance to meet with so many women who are committed to developing a common vision of a quality and equitable "learning culture" and to work together at developing strategies to make that vision a reality. To a great extent, these women's stories do speak for themselves on the following pages. The responsibility, however, of ensuring that all your stories and all the voices of women who have participated so far are present in this draft document has been quite daunting. It has been very difficult paring things down to make this draft useful and readable. I take full responsibility for what got lost in the process.

Luckily, this is not where it all ends....this draft is just a step in the process of ensuring that women's stories are told, that women's voices are heard, and that women's knowledge, expertise and experience contribute to the transformation of the training system. We have learned a lot already about what training, education and learning mean to us. We have identified those principles that are

central for women in moving towards our vision of an equitable, quality training system, accessible to all at all points in their lives. We have discussed the importance of women playing a central role in defining what training gets provided to who. In this paper, I have tried to capture what we have done so far to provide us with a focused place from which to continue our discussions and organizing work.

So use this draft "Women's Agenda on Training" as a building block...identify and critique what is there; identify what is still missing; think about what is most important to you; identify and develop concrete models to operationalize our visions... We know that women are committed to the "long haul"; and, to challenging existing structures and building healthy alternatives. This is just a start at finding ways to develop our own, women's, agenda and common strategies to accomplish our goals.

Barbara Anderson, Organizer/Writer

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OBJECTIVES OF A WOMEN'S AGENDA ON TRAINING:

- * To bring women together. To identify common goals while respecting diversity and a variety of approaches.
- * To develop and promote feminist values and principles: a new vision of training for women.
- * To collect information on women's needs in order to facilitate access.
- * To establish priorities with clear policy and programme interventions to educate and influence other stakeholders.
- * To change women's economic lives.

Women across the country have met to discuss their visions of a training system that would meet their needs. Central to these workshops was stepping back and describing our visions of a training system that is accessible to women and responsive to women's needs. Women across the country have welcomed the opportunity to develop a Women's Agenda on Training. We have, in fact, begun to identify ways to participate and organize with women across Canada in an effort to realize that vision. In the process we have formed unprecedented coalitions and networks.

The objectives of these workshops were:

- a) To share our experiences of the training system;
- b) To describe newly developing structures and consultative processes re: training and adjustment (The Canadian Labour Force Development Board:CLFDB, local Boards, and the involvement of women across Canada) in order to provide participants with an overview of recent federal policy initiatives on training and adjustment and developing structures;
- c) To identify components of a Women's agenda on training and discuss concrete ways to participate in it.
- d) To identify the key issues for different groups of women and to develop concrete recommendations and regional/sector specific plans of action.

INTRODUCTION

"Although approximately half of today's work force are women, employment is concentrated in clerical, sales and service occupations, which are low paying jobs, and women are not making decisions about what their communities should do about it. Training programmes for women present pathways to change. These programmes prepare women to better participate in the world of work and of their communities."

(Sylvia Giangrande, learner)

Education and training are one of the most influential institutions in society. Together they have the potential to work towards eliminating sexism, racism, classism, ageism and promote justice, peace and environmental protection.

What are the aims, though, of our decision makers in government and power holders in business in relation to training? To get a clear sense of this, we have to step back and look at the "global" picture. To a vast extent, Canada is following the direction of economic policies set by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, convinced that the way to manage inter and transnational economies is to do so competitively. Increasingly, the focus of our governments, is to develop a new type of training system or "learning culture" that is directed by this economic and ideological framework. Government and business tell us that to meet the demands of global competition, or to compete in an increasingly globalized economy, we have to adjust our labour force. *"It is only by continually raising our value added per employee that we can increase our wealth and maintain a high standard of living...this value added shift must happen across all parts of our economy"*. This economic "strategy" calls for increased value added industries and high skilled workers. It is largely due to this that government and business have recently developed a fervour and focus on the training of the Canadian workforce.

Adjustment programmes being implemented in Canada, therefore, can be seen as part of a world wide trend to globalize capital, politics and culture...concentrating wealth and marketable skills in fewer hands. Economic restructuring in Canada (and world wide) has resulted in unprecedented job loss, lay offs, a huge reduction in social spending, the dismantling of the welfare state, and increased privatization. We assume that the "market" will solve this crisis of structural unemployment (and permanent job loss). In fact, this economic restructuring is being carried out on the backs of women, the poor, people with disabilities, aboriginal people, visible minority and immigrants.

In Canada, we see increasingly low paying, less secure jobs for women, increasing home and contract work and part-time jobs. Current published data from Statistics Canada makes the position of women appear better than it really is by overestimating their full-time employment and greatly underestimating the number of women who are engaged in part-time and temporary work. At the same time women in North America live better at the expense of our sisters in other countries, reinforcing a system that divides women through racism and violence, labour fragmentation and competition.

This approach to economic restructuring is destructive and results in the reinforcement of existing inequalities in society. There are serious economic and social implications in marginalizing whole sectors of the population in poverty. The women's movement has given us a place to develop alternative economic and social policy. The Women's Agenda on training is one small piece of the broader project of the women's movement to transform societal structures and the process of policy development and decision making...to meet the social and economic needs of our communities and all the people who live in them. Women, through this project, have clearly stated their support for a system that discourages the hierarchy of various types of employment and stratification of society, and works toward equitable treatment for all.

Women's employment problems are so deeply embedded in our labour market that a major transformation is needed to guarantee diverse groups of women fair treatment. To start, good policy must be based on the knowledge and the expertise of women who are directly involved in the training system, the instructors, programme workers, learners, counsellors, etc., who have first hand knowledge of how the training system works and a clear understanding of women's experience in it.

Women have historically been excluded from most decision making and policy development related to training, labour adjustment, apprenticeship, or local economic development initiatives. The "Women's Agenda on Training" is one way for us to identify what we want from a training system if it is to meet the needs of women.

"It was the women's movement which argued most forcibly in the 1970's that the process of political activity was integral to its content. It was feminists who argued for a practice which starts from people's experience, and involved working with them and promoting self-organization."

Hilary Wainwright

WOMEN AND TRAINING: OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE

What's There and What's Missing?

Women's access to on-the-job, employer sponsored training, and apprenticeship is seriously limited. Therefore, for many women, government funded programmes have been critical to accessing the paid work force. The existing infrastructure of Canada's training system falls far short of meeting the current and prospective needs of the labour force in general, as well as the specific and particular needs of women.

The introduction of the Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS) in 1985 heralded a major change in the federal approach to training and employment. Direct job creation programmes were abandoned, funds for classroom training were reduced, the focus on the unemployed (especially welfare recipients) was increased, and a much greater emphasis was placed on subsidies to private employers who sponsor training projects or commit themselves to hiring trainees for specific periods. With the introduction of the Labour Force Development Strategy (LFDS) in 1990, this emphasis has shifted towards training only individuals eligible for Unemployment Insurance. Many people needing training do not qualify or have run out of UI benefits. Thus, the training system has become increasingly privatized and women are increasingly excluded from it.

Women have identified that the effectiveness of strategies like the CJS and the LFDS are compromised in a number of ways:

- * a critical shortage of funds and training spaces and (notwithstanding the commitment to training announced by Federal Minister of Employment and Immigration) a continued reduction of funds for training;
- * an overwhelming emphasis on short term, entry level employment training;
- * increasingly restrictive eligibility criteria (ie. UI);
- * systemic exclusion of women in Canada Employment and Immigration Commission policy;
- * "success" is presently measured based on a limited vision with "minimalist", narrow training goals which limit the learner's real opportunities for long-term employment;

- * many women can't meet the institutional requirements of mainstream college programmes, and there is little or no flexibility within institutions to adapt to the needs of these women;
- * few opportunities for longer-term upgrading or skill development at the more advanced or technical end of the training spectrum and no ladders to this training from entry level training;
- * few opportunities for women to participate in policy development and decision making;

Perhaps most importantly, we have no single coherent framework for shaping training objectives in response to the needs of both our economy, our communities and the people who live in them.

Even within those programmes that do exist for women, women are struggling to make sense of what appear to be major contradictions. Through some of these programmes, some women are being assisted to enter the paid work force, are trained in job search skills, and provided with important information. Some community based organizations have been able to organize programmes that offer an integrated curriculum that recognizes the barriers that women face in the world of work. Women have been unable to influence, however, the fact that most existing programmes have trained women to enter low-paying, female dominated job ghettos where they continue to struggle with poverty, becoming the working poor, rather than the unemployed poor.

Even though these programmes vary across the country, and are delivered in a variety of settings (from institutional to community based) the women who work within them have some common concerns:

- * Women often re-enter or enter the job market because of life crises such as layoff, divorce, death of a spouse, leaving an abusive relationship, etc. These women require additional social support systems (such as child care, training allowance, health care, counselling, etc.) which are now inadequate. As a result, women's choices are further limited. As the "success", for government, of most programmes is determined solely by placement rates (an individual's attachment to a job) these other needs are not recognized as important.
- * High burn out rates for workers trying to deal with the increasing need and long waiting lists. Many programmes rely on volunteer or low wage workers with no equity in the workplace.

* Programme workers have had to focus limited resources on the survival of their organizations. This has led to a loss of autonomy of programmes who are told to make the changes mandated by funders or risk losing their funding. Some programmes, for example, are struggling with maintaining their initial mandate, to address the needs of those groups of women who need it most. This is pretty difficult to maintain when funding and eligibility criteria are increasingly restrictive. Even in partnership arrangements with public institutions there is often a negative impact on the integrity of community initiatives through institutional pressures.

* Women are concerned about increasingly shrinking funds for training women. Entry and re-entry programmes are being dismantled as the federal government back-pedals on its national training mandate.

These are just some of the reasons women see government funded job training programmes as both important and highly problematic opportunities to foster women's empowerment. Such programmes can reproduce social inequities as well as be important sites for feminist practice.

WOMEN AND TRAINING: OUR DIVERSE EXPERIENCE

Certain groups of women are clearly at a greater disadvantage than others; we are not a homogeneous group...some groups of women (immigrant and refugee women, women with disabilities, aboriginal women, women of colour, older women, linguistic minority women, farm and rural women, etc.) face additional barriers and specific forms of systemic discrimination.

IMMIGRANT WOMEN

The overall participation rate of immigrant women in the workforce is consistently higher than that of Canadian born women, yet, immigrant women tend to be concentrated in the lowest echelons of the occupational hierarchy. A general trend of "downward mobility" after immigration, creating a sort of "status shock", has been the experience of many immigrant women. One of the major contributors to this trend is the lack of recognition, by Canadian institutions and employers, of immigrant women's previous work, experience, education and training.

Another group of immigrant women consists of those who are severely educationally disadvantaged with limited literacy and numeracy. A series of opportunities are required for those people with little or no fluency in English and/or French, for those with less than Grade 6 equivalency, for those without basic math, and for those with little literacy in their mother tongue.

The discrimination in the labour market, lack of adequate child care and other support systems, and institutional barriers such as restrictive eligibility/admission requirements of training programmes (such as UI and SAR) and accreditation procedures, contribute to immigrant women's disadvantaged position in the labour market.

Immigrant women require supportive programmes to improve language skills, to provide orientation to Canadian society and institutions, and to bridge the gap to long-term employment in Canada. Needed resources include prior learning assessment, career counselling, and language, literacy and skills training programmes. An integrated package which includes these components as well as specific assistance in upgrading to Canadian requirements and establishing language equivalencies is required.

The vast majority of domestic workers and homeworkers are immigrant women. These women face additional barriers to access training given the isolation of their work places, inadequate legislation, and long hours of work. This training must include components on labour legislation and basic worker rights.

The diversity of immigrant women's situations and experiences should be reflected in a diversity of models. Anti-racist curriculum is required to avoid cultural/racist stereotypes in instruction. One single approach will not meet the needs of these learners given their diverse skills, experiences and learning needs.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

"Women with disabilities who are receiving social assistance are considered "unemployables"...they are denied access to training for employment or upgrading, and even basic education that would make their lives better, employable or not. People with disabilities participated in less than 2% of CJS programmes in 1990. Assuming there was gender equity in this that means women with disabilities participated in 1% of federal training! In 1990, 71% of disabled women in Canada were not in the labour force."

Tannis Doe, People with Disabilities
Reference Group Staff

People with disabilities are given last class status in the training system, where they are seen as disabled first and foremost. Training for people with disabilities is not even always called training; rather, it is called "rehabilitation". This signifies an absolutely inappropriate identification of the particular needs of people with disabilities to access training.

Women with all forms of disabilities have a diversity of needs and a diversity of models are required. The bottom line is to break down segregation within the training system and accommodate people with disabilities within "mainstream" training. Clearly, certain learners have particular programmatic needs (ie. women with physical/mental health problems such as learning/perceptual disabilities, attention deficit disorders and sleep disturbances require flexible time parameters to complete tasks).

To understand the magnitude of barriers that women with disabilities face one only has to point to the fact that women with disabilities are simply not eligible for most training programmes.

- * The UI Act disproportionately discriminates against people with disabilities. As they are often not even considered employable they are rarely on UI, and are therefore ineligible for most training.
- * Not eligible for training when receiving disability allowance.
- * On-the-job or on site attendant care and other types of on-going services are not available in many parts of Canada. Even if they are available they are not funded adequately and there is limited control over quality.

- * The income security system continues to be a disincentive to employment or training; in most provinces an individual loses all their medical benefits if they accept full-time employment.
- * Aboriginal people with disabilities are experiencing more severe difficulties as 90% of all aboriginal people with disabilities living on-reserve have incomes below the poverty line.
- * Women with severe disabilities are segregated from all "mainstream" training opportunities.

ABORIGINAL WOMEN

"That training be conducted by Aboriginal women with Aboriginal women, within communities where native women live is just a beginning for us. We (Aboriginal women) must play a pivotal role in helping to develop and implement approaches...for without our active participation, there will be no measurable change. This means we can assume the responsibility of identifying employment related needs and models to address them."

Sylvia Maracle (speaking on the creation of Aboriginal training boards, a parallel structure to the CLFDB, controlled by Native people for Native people)

The training needs, that have to be addressed, of Aboriginal women are manifold. Low educational levels, child care and mobility difficulties (associated with the high percentage of native women of all age groups with dependants and particularly those who are single parents), the lack of information on CEIC programmes and services, language barriers, discrimination along both sex and race lines, lack of training and the lack of flexibility in contracting with CEIC, no available means of information on employment opportunities, and the forced dependency on social assistance are a few of the central barriers.

The poor data base on native women and the tendency to lump both native males and females under one category presents practical difficulties in assessing the impact of Canada Employment Centre programs and services on those native women who do access these services. The unemployment rate of women is another relative unknown, as CEIC does not actively measure the labour force participation of native peoples on reserves (where the majority of native women live) because they fall under the federal jurisdiction of DIAND.

Aboriginal women point to what seems to be a trade-off effect at work on reserves in terms of the limited employment opportunities that exist. Many native women on-reserve want a job, period, and the type of job is not the central issue. The real concern on the reserve level, is not so much the type of jobs or the number of native women who are employed, but that "there are not enough jobs to go around".

As elsewhere, women tend to be hired for positions considered traditionally female occupations. Yet, many, especially young native women on-reserve are willing and eager to train in non-traditional occupations and have identified the trades and apprenticeship as the training of their choice.

Training programmes are not meeting the needs of off-reserve First Nations women. Curriculum that is not developed by Aboriginal women, for aboriginal women is often exclusionary and insensitive to native women's needs and learning styles.

The off-reserve employment that aboriginal women manage to find is generally entry level, low paying and "low-skilled" occupations or on make work projects. Those with a higher degree of education do not appear to fare much better. In addition, the support system in place on-reserve and provided by family, friends and community, do not exist to any significant extent off-reserve, which means that the majority of the off-reserve native women with dependants face additional barriers in accessing training and employment.

OLDER WOMEN

"Compared to the period before the recession, older women remain unemployed longer, are less likely to find a new job, and are likely to take pay cuts in the order of twenty five percent or more when they are re-employed."

from: "A Social Planning Strategy", Social
Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1990.

Older women workers have been increasingly crowded out of the labour market; and, at the same time, federal and provincial policies and programmes continue to miss out on their needs. For example, the federal government's Employment Assistance Option excludes workers 45 years of age and over. Furthermore, much of labour policy and legislation (many provincial labour relations acts, employment standards acts, employment equity acts) is discriminatory through its exclusion of older women.

Older women face a number of barriers in accessing training and have particular training needs. The definition of an "older" woman is every woman who believes she has been discriminated against because of stereotypes and structural inequalities regarding aging. Most of these older women are working in part-time/temporary positions with no or limited benefits leading to low Canada Pension Plan (CPP) rated employment. Few receive private pensions. In addition, mandatory retirement is devastating for women who have little income to live on.

When seeking training opportunities, many older women are in a period of major change, financial instability, and emotional upheaval. Older women who want to enter/re-enter the labour market often:

- * have recently been laid off. It is older women who most often bear the brunt of job loss due to plant closures or partial shut downs;
- * are experiencing the emotional effects and financial hardship of unemployment or underemployment;
- * do not feel confident to go through the job search and interview process;
- * have found themselves "suddenly single" due to the death of a spouse or divorce/separation;

- * are "sandwiched mothers", acting as providers and caregivers to their children and an elder parent/relative;
- * suffer from repetitive strain injuries/chronic debilitating conditions.

The additional barriers older women face and their particular training needs calls for flexible programming, counselling, and bridging programmes.

FARM AND RURAL WOMEN

"...(there) seems to be real male privilege to access training and to be defined as the ones who need "real" jobs and pay...there's a real need for more training for women farmers."

In general, women now carry the double burden of work and family responsibilities. For farm women the burden is triple because most also work actively in farm operation and management. In Canada, and elsewhere, agriculture is in a state of crisis. Income from farming is generally insufficient for farm survival. In 1986, approximately 46% of women farmers worked off the farm in order to meet basic needs and to pay for basic farm expenses. Although new census data is not yet available, we know that this percentage is increasing.

"I suppose what I need first is to be getting a living wage for my work on the farm, but I've really wanted to get some training and there is nothing out there at all other than the job finding club. Ideally I don't want training to find off-farm employment, but training that will help me to keep our farm viable."

Farm women and women who live in rural areas in Canada face particular barriers to accessing training:

- * There are so few courses available, and the few that do exist are short term.
- * Availability of child care is a major problem for farm/rural women. Rural child care is hard to find anywhere, and it usually requires considerable transportation.
- * Isolation, distance, and transportation:
"What's most important to me is that in Newfoundland, we farm women are so isolated...when they (government) put money into training they are looking at numbers. It's how many people can you say you trained for cheap. It doesn't matter if people really learn anything...Look at how little we get because we don't have the numbers in farming communities."

- * Women were told that in order to be eligible for UI they must enter into a joint contract with their husband. This places the farm woman as the employee of her husband. Women fought for women's ownership/co-ownership of farms and now we are penalized for it as farm women can not qualify for UI. With UI restrictions to training, other supports are barred from farm women.
- * The energy it requires to be present (and gain access; ie. so few women on Community Futures Committees) at multi-level consultations for farm/rural women is overwhelming. There is a lack of integration of the myriad of consultative structures.

Farm women need to make choices in their lives in order to manage the multiple stresses they face. They call for new methods of economic and social decision making and see a real need for community economic development strategies that will keep their farms and communities alive and healthy.

WOMEN ASK AND ANSWER:

TRAINING FOR WHAT?...WHAT IS TRAINING FOR?

Demographic trends indicate that Canada faces a labour shortage in the longer term. We are being told by policy makers that "equity" participation in newly developing structures is important, for:

"if we fail to provide opportunities for training and development to young people and adults who are disadvantaged, we may end up without the skilled and productive workforce we need to compete in the global economy".

(from: "Back on Track: First Report to the Advisory Group on New Social Assistance Legislation", p.43)

Women, on the other hand, look at training quite differently. While women are not ignoring the impact of the globalization of the economy...we see social and political implications, not just economic.

"Training, as it is usually defined is limited...we should expand the notion of what relevant training is".

So, when women talk about what training we want, and what we want training for, we talk about more than training for a job. Training is important for other reasons than merely attaching individuals to the labour market. What else do we want from training?

"We need a broad vision of training".

"People have different wants/needs at different times in their lives...the training system must be responsive to this diversity".

"Training is a vehicle for empowerment".

"Training must address the whole person, and see that women as learners are also mothers, daughters, tenants, neighbours, workers, and other things...this will lead to flexible training models that take the whole person into account".

"Training should provide information and support...build personal power to make choices".

"Training should view women as learners, not as clients".

"Collective learning is important...training should assist

us to work together in identifying barriers to learning...
empowering learners".

ACCESS:

"I have found that there are many barriers for women to gain entry into training programs. Financially, its tough to get started. Openings in good quality, subsidized day care are very hard to find, and if your child is sick, you have to stay home with her or him. Transportation costs are another hindrance. Bus passes here are presently \$27.00 per person. If you have more than one person in your family taking the bus, it's overwhelming. After we find an "entry level job" we still need to continue our education. Night school courses are expensive. These are just some of the physical things that can hinder women. One of the hardest things I found was the emotional upheaval. Many women, who left abusive relationships, are forced to upgrade or change careers so that they can support their families. For me the court procedures were so drawn out, it was difficult to commit to a job or training."

(Susan Cucksey, Stratford)

"I am a fortunate participant in the programme now. There were others who were not so fortunate. Because of the increasing number of women re-entering the work force, or entering for the first time, for many reasons accessibility to such programmes is limited. By offering more government funded courses, access would be made easier and barriers would be removed."

(Kathy Negro, STEP)

Access to training is the central issue for women across the country. Although barriers to access vary for diverse groups of women, we have begun to identify components of a training system accessible to all.

Specific Actions

- * Access to Information
- * Support Services
- * Child care
- * Training Allowance
- * Expanded Eligibility Criteria
- * Full Employment

1. Access to Information:

An integral component of women's vision for an accessible training system is that information be available to all on the availability of training and education programmes and possible avenues for financial assistance. Women should be made aware of the entire range of training/career options open to them and "non-traditional" jobs in the trades, technologies, operations and blue collar occupations must be presented as an important option. The need for more information sharing is important here such as educating educators/trainers/counsellors of existing programmes. We need information that is accessible, written in plain language, broadly disseminated, and in which funding is allocated for its development. Women want to see a "right to information" component within the training system.

2. Support Services:

For many women, it is frequently too difficult to participate in those training opportunities that are available because of the high costs associated with training or retraining. Women envision a training system that provides comprehensive support services that cover in full the costs of medical needs, accommodation/physical access for women with disabilities, childcare and travel and that assist with the costs of housing, transportation and other employment-related costs. No government dollars should be given to inaccessible educational institutions and training facilities. This infrastructure must be well publicized for all training programme applicants and made available to all learners who need such assistance.

3. Childcare:

Child care on the training site is a start; but, women want to see the development of a universal child care strategy.

4. Training Allowance:

It is essential to have a single, easily understood system of financial support for all trainees. The current national training allowance, however, should not be considered an adequate level of income support. The training allowance must be increased to a living level, based on nationally accepted standards of living costs, tailored to account for differences in local conditions. A proactive way of disbursing these funds is through wage based training, where a wage is provided for training. This system would adhere to all Employment Standards and Minimum wage legislation.

5. Eligibility Criteria:

Significant expansion of the eligibility criteria is necessary. The current shift to UI eligibility criteria for training is very restrictive--barring access for farm women, older women, immigrant women, women with disabilities, women on social assistance, etc. Women are seriously concerned about the erosion of long-term commitment for funding of women's programmes and see the need to remove strict eligibility criteria and to replace it with criteria determined by women, that reflects women's needs.

6. Full Employment:

A commitment to full employment, and the adoption of a full employment strategy is required to promote access to training for all groups.

"Training which positively confronts and sets out to redress discrimination experienced through the structuring of society along class, gender, race, ability, sexuality, marital status and age lines, promotes equal access to and opportunity in training as axiomatic. The formulation of meaningful equal opportunities policies must depend on learning from the experiences of people who suffer discrimination. Translating these policies into effective practices requires broad based organizing."

Greater London Council, p.169

BRIDGING PROGRAMMES

Bridging programmes, which provide varied curriculum developed in the community to respond to specific needs, are an effective way of addressing barriers women face to accessing much of the training system. These programmes are an integral part of the process of advancing through the labour force for women who have previously been barred access as they help women with specific disadvantages make the bridge to mainstream programming.

An example of an effective and successful bridging programme for women is Working Skills for Women, a programme developed in 1984 by the YWCA of Metro Toronto and George Brown College...it provides academic upgrading in both math and english to women considered disadvantaged due to their limited experience with or weak attachment to the labour force (of all ages, financial and racial diversity). Integrated into academic upgrading are computer literacy, life skill management and vocational exploration components...combined to make the programme more able to address the expressed needs of women than traditional institutionally based training. 90% of women go on to further training/education or employment. With the shift to UI eligibility criteria, however, what was an effective and far reaching programme is now inaccessible for many groups of women.

Women look for an expansion of these programmes, as they are presently oversubscribed and underfunded, and call for increased investment in Research and Development for Bridging programmes.

EQUITY:

"When do women have "enough" training to get adequate employment?"

"Co-union/management driven training has proven effective in providing the space for training for everyone and has moved women into more non-traditional areas, but there is still no pay equity, nor valuing of women's skills...We are told, "if you don't like your pay then go out there and become a truck driver.""

"Training is more than an investment in human capital which must be cost effective through enhanced productivity." Training is essential if disadvantaged groups such as visible minorities, aboriginal people, people with (all forms of) disabilities and women are to participate on more equal terms in the labour market. Women have, therefore, consistently identified the need to integrate pay equity and employment equity into the training system.

"Employment equity means providing access to education and training for designated group members who otherwise would be excluded because of their disability, race or gender. (These groups) continue to be discouraged from pursuing studies and skills in the fields identified by both the private sector and the government as essential to economic growth."

This idea needs to be expanded. If members of designated groups continue to be denied access to education and training, whether as a result of the prohibitive cost, or as a result of lack of physical access, or as a result of a threatening institutional climate, or as a combination of these and other factors, then employment equity legislation in and of itself will not create the far-ranging changes that are expected of it. Simply put, the pool of "qualified" candidates for jobs will continue to be small.

"Job segregation will continue as long as boys and girls are taught rigid sex roles and continue to choose segregated subjects in school. School programmes still encourage differences by offering courses designed to appeal to each sex, such as separate courses for home economics and industrial education, instead of one course in practical home skills incorporating both."

Equity in the training and education system or "educational equity" is vital in order to change the face of the workforce in a wide range of occupations. For employment equity to be truly successful, it must alter the occupational distribution in the skilled trades and across the spectrum of well paying jobs.

The success of education/training equity depends on the participation of members of the designated groups in developing and implementing the programmes and in providing role models for learners who are members of designated groups. However, current demographics within the training/education sector would not allow this. Without employment equity marginalized groups will not be present in education/training institutions in sufficient numbers to develop education/training equity programmes. This reinforces the need for interlocking educational/training equity and employment equity programmes.

Within training programmes systemic barriers must be challenged and removed, equity targets established (including mandatory goals and timetables), and a mechanism for monitoring agreed upon. Mechanisms must be in place to assure that aboriginal peoples, immigrants, people with all forms of disabilities, visible and linguistic minority people and women are equitably represented in decision making. Mandatory equity guidelines must be established and rigorously enforced.

All school/training materials and methods, as well as career counselling, must be free of sex stereotyping in order to encourage both girls and boys to develop all their talents, they must be anti-racist and delivered in ways accessible to people of all (dis)abilities.

The current shift to UI eligibility criteria for training is very restrictive--barring access for farm women, older women, immigrant women, women with disabilities, women on social assistance. Women are seriously concerned about the erosion of long-term commitment for funding of women's programmes and see the need to remove strict eligibility criteria and to replace it with criteria determined by women, that reflects women's needs.

Access to women as a whole, women in conflict/contact with the law, non-UI and SAR, rural women, aboriginal women, women entering/re-entering the work force, women living in poverty and women with "low" levels of education requires that a quota of spaces be reserved for women. The quota should be 52% of training spaces.

There are some structural bottom lines that must be promoted within newly developing "governing bodies" (the labour force development boards). For example, gender equity should be required for all boards and councils, amongst all constituent groups. The establishment of equity guidelines must be made by government (and implemented by all levels of Boards and Councils). These equity guidelines must be in place at every access point and for every governing body and board. These guidelines must include:

- * secured resources for women and other equity seeking groups
- * any dispersement of training dollars must require all training plans to incorporate measures for employment equity, pay equity and guidelines for dealing with sexual harassment

Training must be seen as part of a broader economic and social strategy in which equity is a central goal. There is a clear need for employment equity, pay equity and affirmative action to be an integral part of all training programmes for social equity objectives to be met.

RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION:

"I wish I could find a job after completing this programme. I do understand I may not get a job after graduation according to the present economic situation. I am mostly satisfied because I have learned so much, increased my life skills and now have a grade 12 diploma. I got lots of what I needed from attending this programme and can now move on. I notice a lot of people are on unemployment or welfare because of the present economic situation. I think that the government should provide opportunities to people who need to get the basics so they can get into other programmes to acquire more updated skills in order to find a job."

Suk Ming Ho

Recognition of the fundamental right to training, education and work is central to ending the ghettoization of women in lower paid jobs, and ending the way in which predominately female jobs are devalued. Any equitable transformation of the training system, therefore, is hinged on training being recognized as a basic right.

Education and training must be publicly funded and universally accessible at all levels, including adult education, literacy and language training. This requires the development of one integrated training system from ESL/FSL literacy to training in highly skilled occupations, accessible to all at all points in their lives.

Training resources must be directed to general education and skill training programmes which lead to accreditation. In particular, women identify a need for developing training structures that prioritize literacy, language training, academic upgrading for people with less than high school completion and bridging programmes for women in all areas including trades and technologies. As mentioned earlier, for women to access this system income support, childcare, life skills and bridging must be provided.

"Education and training should not be totally subordinated to the needs of the economy and the workplace, but should be seen as fundamental to the achievement of a truly democratic society. All citizens should have defined rights of access to adult basic education and training and to opportunities of life long learning. Rights of access must include the right to leave from work and to income and other support, such as child care services, during education and training...it is particularly important that workers should have the right to obtain basic literacy and numeracy skills and to upgrade their education to at least a Grade XII level...such an educational level is needed as the basis for most advanced skills training, including apprenticeship, college level technical courses, etc."

A Labour Perspective on Training: Discussion Paper

PORTABILITY/TRANSFERABILITY:

"The training I am getting is excellent...I feel, however, that it should not stop here. While entry level jobs are a start, it is just not enough. We need programmes offered at post entry level, offering women the opportunity to advance into specialized fields. This would encourage women to continue educating themselves....Another big breakthrough for women would be that they would not have to start at the bottom....there are a lot of women who would like to continue their education after completing an entry level course, but can't for many reasons, the biggest one being financial."
(STEP participant)

"We must insist on national standards...all training must be "recognized" so that an individual does not find herself having completed a training programme leading to a specific job, is laid off and finds her former training "useless", not recognized.....a woman who has a diploma/degree/credit in one province/territory should see it recognized elsewhere."

Women's desired direction for change is a model that would permit women with a need and an interest in upgrading, training, or developing skills to do so at various points throughout their working lives. Transferability between various training, with credit given for every step and career pathing are central to this.

ACTION:

Mechanisms are, therefore, needed to ensure that skills acquired and accreditation received are portable and transferable from one level and type of learning and from one location to another. Linkage and laddering criteria in all publicly funded programmes and institutions is required as well. Mechanisms are needed such as Prior Learning Assessment to ensure that skills acquired and accreditation are portable and transferable.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT

Many women have acquired learning and skills through work experience, community work, educational institutions outside the jurisdiction/area in which they live. They should not be required to duplicate training in order to receive recognition for skills and knowledge which has been acquired in other regions, provinces, or countries. Prior learning assessment is one possible mechanism that enhances the portability and transferability of skills.

The purpose of Prior Learning Assessment is to relate prior learning, formal and non-formal, to recognized creditable courses and programmes.

- portfolio of skills and development of every type
- equivalency (challenge existing testing/exams)
- notion of credit bank
- laddering or linking skills and training credits (recognition for advancing)

Models of prior learning assessment are now being used to a limited degree in the B.C. college and the Quebec Cejep system. The Ontario Council of Regents have been developing an approach to operationalize prior learning assessment throughout the community college sector in Ontario.

If Prior Learning Assessment is further developed and implemented there will be a need for flexibility of response to the different training needs this implies. Undoubtedly, this will require lobbying of professional associations for accreditation, and real responsiveness of institutions. Unions and corporations must share this responsibility.

QUALITY:

"In the short time I have been here I have begun to learn not only clerical skills of a varied nature, but also the life skills which will help me promote them."

(Valerie, Stratford Training and Employment Program)

"Quality" training has been defined for women as that training which "successfully" attaches the trainee to the paid work force. Women have other ways of defining "success" and "quality training" which are extremely valuable. Women support a view of training that places the learner at the centre of any discussion and sees quality in broader terms than simply attaching an individual to the labour market.

Women envision a training system with a variety of delivery systems. In this system comprehensive programme models (a number of programmes meeting women's diverse and particular needs) can be offered through women's learning centres (integrating literacy, counselling, and skills training). These programmes would be creditable and linked to all other parts of the system, providing a continuum of learning...connected from entry level standards to all levels of skill training.

Quality components of this training system include:

1. Diversity of models
2. Learner Centred
3. Curriculum Development
4. An Integrated System
5. Counselling

1. A DIVERSITY OF MODELS

"The different learning styles of women need to be considered in program delivery. We need a plurality of models to meet the needs of a diverse community. Trainees need to be involved in the process of developing these".

No one model can be held up as the answer to women's training needs. Women support programmes that meet the expressed needs for specific equity groups. In recognition of the complexity of women's lives, women support holistic programmes. These take the whole person's needs with respect to family responsibilities, child care, financial needs, etc. into account.

2. LEARNER CENTRED

Training must have value for the learner:

- * where different learning styles are taken into account (ie. adult, youth, women);
- * where success is redefined by learners with women articulating their goals/ desired outcomes;
- * recognizing learners styles/speed with the length of programmes to accommodate and reflect that;
- * reflect needs of mature students;
- * a training system accountable to trainees;
- * need for more exploratory programmes...beginning from where the learner is at;
- * courses specifically for women;
- * testing/grading systems revamped;
- * do not separate education/training from practice, recognition of the importance of learning through doing.

3. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

- * Curriculum materials that put women at work at the centre and acknowledge what is happening in the broader economy
- * Education materials and curricula should be transformed to highlight issues of systemic discrimination and focus on the experiences of the learners
- * Models with anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-homophobic curriculum
- * Women/ staff/trainers participate in curriculum development and implementation
- * Flexible, modular, personalized curricula are components of programme design which best meet the learning needs of the individual

- * A component of training programmes must deal with women's history of abuse
- * Availability of information on opportunities
- * Counselling, ESL, etc. part of every training programme
- * Guidelines for counteracting harassment as a component of all courses

4. AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM

- a) models that work for women: community based training
- b) developing an integrated system

a) MODELS THAT WORK FOR WOMEN: COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING

"Community based training offers women needed information on community resources, outreach, cultural support, self esteem...all training should have these [features]".

Community based training programmes are non-profit organizations generally initiated through the self organization of a "community" of interest. These programmes are developed to meet the expressed needs of particular groups who can not access, are ineligible for, who have dropped out of or who have been failed out of mainstream institutional education/training or employer based training. (for any of a variety of reasons: systemic discrimination against certain groups on the basis of their race, sex, country of origin, physical abilities; poverty; insufficient formal education; lack of literacy; lack of recognition of skills, etc.) These women are further impeded by social isolation, little information and knowledge of their rights, domestic violence, homelessness. Immigrant and Native women are triply disadvantaged by cultural and language barriers, disorientation, loss of support systems, and unsettled immigration and employment status.

Some of the main features of community based training are:

- * income support, wages for participants/learners;
- * programmes address participants' barriers to employment in a holistic way through assisting learners to establish a safe, stable living situation, dependable childcare, good health, self-esteem, and independent problem solving skills;
- * the model of adult education used is collaborative, learner centred, and practical;
- * programmes include counselling and personal/interpersonal support, referrals to other services, and advocacy;

- * generic skills training and training in specific job related skills;
- * programmes are staffed by qualified people who often come from the socio-economic groups participating.

All of these features have contributed to the high degree of success and real relevance of these programmes to learner's needs. There is an overwhelming demand for this type of training. In fact, the demand is far greater than existing services and programmes can provide for. For example, programmes for immigrant women receive at least 20 "qualified" applications for every available training seat. Waiting lists are long. Referral is difficult. There are few alternative programmes to refer women to.

This sector has historically been underfunded. It is devastating that at a time of unparalleled economic crisis and overwhelming need that many of these programmes are being systematically dismantled.

b) DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED SYSTEM:

CJS programmes have received mixed reviews. On the positive side, they can be praised for making job training more flexible and more practical, for encouraging innovative projects and for broadening trainee's choices. In particular, training sponsored by non-profit community organizations has proven more sensitive and less intimidating than school courses in the case of immigrants and disadvantaged groups.

The Women's Agenda begins on the expressed support for a public education and training system. At the same time, we see the need to extend our definition of public to include groups who are at arms length from the State. Community based programmes have to be recognized as part of a public sector education system and support for a solid infrastructure of this sector must be publicly funded. To operationalize a quality, integrated approach to training this "public" system must include certain components. Women see a need for the establishment of minimum basic standards for training deliverers. These should include:

- * basic standards for trainers, and bottom lines for the training of trainers (ie. mandatory cross-cultural/anti-racist training for all deliverers);
- * adequate support systems and services for staff including counselling, flexible schedules, good wages, benefits, resources for childcare, dealing with abuse, etc.;
- * availability of women only programmes;

- * structural support for special needs;
- * bridging mechanisms;
- * trainers whose background reflects that of groups being trained;
- * quality standards and monitoring procedure;
- * to ensure for autonomy of community based training, programmes should have room to select their own clients/participants. This requires cooperation from Canada Employment Centre's.

5. COUNSELLING

The traditional approach to counselling views the laid off woman, the woman receiving social assistance as the problem, in need of being fixed. Women reject this approach to counselling that focuses on individual "weaknesses" and nurtures dependency for an advocacy approach to counselling that addresses the systemic barriers women confront in their work, learning and home lives and assists women in negotiating their way through the bureaucracy.

Because women need support to identify their options and assess their needs (who they are and how they do fit into or don't fit into the system), this counselling should also:

- * assist people to assess and plan for short term and long term goals (career or other);
- * educate women of job market choices;
- * educate counsellors re: breaking stereotypes and a more proactive approach;
- * train instructors/teachers in counselling skills;
- * include assertiveness training for women;
- * build self esteem which is critical for women's participation;
- * integrate counselling with other components of programming (ie. upgrading and ESL/FSL);
- * The training system should recognize the value of planning and provide resources for
 1. what are women's choices
 2. identifying needs
 3. selecting the "best" option
 4. facilitation in getting options

EVALUATION:

Evaluation of programmes is now based on the "success" of those programmes in attaching individuals to jobs. Success for government is always based on the number of workers who get jobs and does not examine the quality of those jobs. In order to assure for relevance and responsiveness of the training system to emerging needs, all training programmes must be periodically assessed and evaluated. Training programmes require vigilant monitoring and evaluation based on clearly stated objectives. Women view an effective evaluation model as a process where:

- * Success is defined by women, building different ways of measuring success and new criteria;
- * where this new "value" of training is recognized by employers and funders;
- * learner/participant/client participation in evaluation and monitoring is a requirement and is used by government and governing bodies as criteria for ongoing funding;
- * we recognize the need to document both successes and failures;
- * communicatio is enhanced between employers and on-the-job training programmes including feedback from the employer on these training programmes;
- * examination of outcomes is a central part of evaluation activities;
- * Boards and committees must be held accountable for their activities.

NOTE to readers: This piece does not seem to fit cozily into the draft, but the issue seems critical...any suggestions on where it would be most effective??

FUNDING (considering increased privatization)

- now used to develop management's quality circles
- system of accountability for use of public funds
- allocation of funds must have clear equity guidelines
- accountability for public dollars: reporting re: what's spent where!
- no free work...need for developmental dollars
- Available funds (not based on UI or Social Assistance status)
- need for ongoing, multi-year funding (3-5 years), more comprehensive application process, more possibilities of planning/conferences
- demystify elusive budget (excuses: it's the beginning...middle...end of the fiscal year)
- Resource Competition; too many groups competing for limited resources
- \$'s to training - funding base (tuition fees and travel allowances)
- Continuous, universal funding
- no more saying there is "no \$ available": account of where it has gone
- Use existing resources/sharing with school boards in provincial policy

Several alternative methods for raising the funds necessary to reform the labour market adjustment system are recommended:

- a) establishment of an employer training tax/levy as recommended by ...for work place based training;
- b) exemption of those firms opting into comparable voluntary initiatives at the sectoral level;
- c) establishment of labour adjustment funds as proposed by the Industry Committee of the Prime Minister's National Advisory Board on Science and Technology.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

"Progressive and innovative policies can only be developed if people outside the state can be given the facilities to develop them...this tension is messy, but essential to increasing economic democracy".

Labour market adjustment and related education and job and skill training and development is perhaps the most critical intersection between economic and social development strategies. Of central importance here is recognition of the magnitude of change currently underway in the economy. Industrialized countries have entered a period of profound and lasting transformation. Increased competition in the global economy and the restructuring of international markets has led to new ways of producing goods and services, as well as new ways of administering and organizing production.

Women's fundamental economic and social needs include the need to directly shape economic life and institutions as individuals, as citizens, as working people, and as communities. Conversely, a fundamental feature of our economic system is the fact that many crucial decisions are made by business (particularly large corporations), large labour organizations and by government institutions. Corporations decide how much to invest and reinvest, and where to invest it; what to produce, and how to produce it; who is to be trained, and what kind of training they are to receive. These decisions have enormous implications in terms of the well-being of individuals, communities, and the country and its resources. But these are "private" decisions made almost entirely on the basis of what is best for the owners and managers of the corporation.

There are enormous reservoirs of creativity which can be tapped by truly involving people in the direction and control of our economic institutions. Democratization of the economy can be furthered through new, decentralized instruments which offer alternatives to government and corporate ownership and control of key economic institutions.

Women vision a system where the economy works for people, rather than people working for the economy! Economic activities that begin with the needs of the community and not the corporation have the potential to:

- * create meaningful work where women live
- * redefine work/value of work

- * develop new forms of work
- * help us re-vision the economic infrastructure (and move from a model centred on growth, productivity and competition)
- * include women's alternatives...not restricted by white, male definitions of occupations
- * operationalize approaches to incentive, regulation, and legislation
- * focus on environmental sustainability
- * recognize the needs of women, assisting them to channel into "paying" jobs, to identify industries and coordinate training with good jobs

Developing a new approach to community economic development:

"Why is all the emphasis on entrepreneurship and self employment programmes? We need to support the development of worker cooperatives and other alternatives as well."

To develop models that are not merely crisis intervention women have identified some central building blocks:

- * Skills are needed related to women's economic participation;
- * We must connect regional economic development and training, and create economic options for women (building on regional resources/needs);
- * Local economic development plans and training and equity issues must be integrated;
- * Organized needs assessment of local needs - challenging how assessment is currently done. This would include technological development through training with environmentally sound and ecologically based components;
- * Capital for women to create own jobs, coops, etc.

We should look for the possibilities, the creativity which can be released and the pressures for innovation which can be generated when a lot of people participate in the development of policies, and not immediately boxed into pre-determined structures. "Without that creativity and pressure - that noise and mess - not much new will be achieved." (H. Wainwright)

REPRESENTATION/PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING

"Any political authority which thinks it can construct a progressive and successful economic policy without developing a method of constructing and implementing it in association with (and also sometimes in active contradiction with) those in whose interests it is intended to operate will be wrong.. (furthermore), state resources should be used to strengthen the organizations of these people, and developing the capacity of those organizations to put pressure on the state, is an essential element of working towards more economic democracy"
(Hilary Wainwright)

In order to develop a training system driven by social equity objectives, women must be formally and centrally included in all deliberations related to training, at all levels and in all capacities. Commitment to women's full and equal participation calls for a careful, participatory process and the provision of enabling resources to support women's autonomous organizing.

A women's training system is subversive! The existing system works for some men, but a women's training system involves educating women to change their lives and society itself.

- how to turn this around?
- effective caucusing/organizing
- coalition of union women
- coalitions between union women and unorganized women
- women create/make policy around issues that they have to live with

- * We need to communicate our demands to other groups--labour, other equity groups, maybe business, especially if our demands are not met.
- * We must use the process to empower women to influence the larger agenda with the women's training agenda.
- * we require funding to support our ongoing organizing efforts;
- * we require a response regarding federal cutbacks and the dismantling of the language program for immigrants; we have great difficulty in participating in any government processes while our programs are being dismantled.

"The state's organization has to be transformed from where it assumes it is the master of policy to where it recognizes the state's limits...(in order to) work cooperatively with others who provide different forms of knowledge and can mobilize other sources of power for change."

WHAT COMES NEXT?

LET'S CONSIDER:

- * How can we get bridging programmes acknowledged as an integral part of the training system?
- * Do you think that information about training programme options should be developed by local communities? Should the government fund the development of these materials?
- * What are effective/integrated approaches to childcare and training?
- * How do we develop and enforce equity targets in terms of global funding for training without imposing limits on the flexibility of a single programme?
- * Do you know of any examples of where employment equity is integrated into training and education programmes?
- * How do women's community based programmes work together with the college system as well as maintain the autonomy and integrity of our programmes?
- * How do we push for a commitment to full employment? What does a full employment strategy look like?
- * What models of evaluation do you know of that work for women?
- * What criteria would you use to evaluate an effective, quality training programme?
- * Clearly women need resources/funding to pursue this work. What areas do you think are important for further research by women?

PARTICIPANT CONTRIBUTORS

The bulk of ideas and suggestions in this kit come from the workshops we held with approximately 500 women in a number of regions across the country:

B.C.

- (WETC, Women's Employment and Training Coalition, 27 women)
- (BC Federation of Labour Women's Conference, 44 women)

Manitoba

- (Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 57 women)

Saskatchewan

- (Working Women and CLOW, Sask., 43 women)

Ontario

- (Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition/ Coalition formation des femmes d'action de l'Ontario, 2 provincial conferences, 140 women)
- (Ontario Committee for Women in Non-traditional Occupations, 13 women)
- (Advocates for Community Based Training and Education for Women, 34 women)
- (Lakehead Women's Decade Council, 19 women)

New Brunswick

- (Steering Committee, 30 women)

NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- (National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women, 25 women)
- (National WITT Network Conference, 41 women)
- (National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 18 women)
- (Educational Council of the Canadian Farm Women's Network, 16 women)

* * * * *

In addition, women's organizing groups in Nova Scotia, PEI, and Newfoundland discussed the Agenda. The Council of Women in Saskatchewan held a think tank to discuss the Women's Agenda on Training. Numerous community based training programmes for women provided us with information on their programme models and organizational mandates. Women learners wrote letters describing

their needs, experiences and visions.

OTHER SOURCES

"ACCESS!: Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades", Peter A. Cumming, Chairperson, 1989.

"Bridging Programs", presented to C. Gran (B.C. Minister Responsible for Women's Issues) by Women's Employment and Training Coalition, March, 1990.

"Brief to the Employment Equity Commissioner on Educational and Employment Equity", The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations, February, 1992.

Canada Employment and Immigration, Native Employment Strategy 1985/86, New Brunswick Region.

"The London Training Legacy: The Work of the GLC's Greater London Training Board", Greater London Council, 1986.

Mackintosh, M., Wainwright, H. (eds), A Taste of Power: The Politics of Local Economics, Verso, London, 1987. .

"Prior Learning Assessment: Enhancing the Access of Adult Learners to Ontario's Colleges", a discussion paper of the Council of Regents' Prior Learning Assessment Advisory Committee, April, 1992.

"Women and Labour Market Poverty", Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1990.

"Women and Poverty Revisited", A report by the National Council of Welfare, 1990.

The Women's Reference Group, with members representing national women's organizations and regional networks for women's training and education has the mandate:

- * to advise the Women's Representative on the CLFDB on policy recommendations, on ways to work with the CLFDB, its committees and other equity seeking groups;
- * to network with other women's organizations and programmes offering training to women;
- * to provide the women's representative with a direct link to learners and community based trainers and programmes;
- * to plan consultations including reference group meetings and annual national consultations with women's groups;
- * to evaluate the work of the women's representative and provide her with feedback on her activities;
- * to identify, develop and direct special projects and research activities, such as this participation kit, the Resource Kit, and the development of the Women's Agenda on Education and Training.

We welcome you to participate in the work of the reference group. Contact us for a complete list of members to identify the Reference Group member who lives nearest you.

We would appreciate receiving feedback from the users of this Participation Kit. Please send us your comments. How was it useful? How can it be improved? What further work in this area would be useful to you?

Towards a Women's Agenda on Training
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COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT OF THE WOMEN'S AGENDA ON TRAINING?

Please, let us know what you think about this draft of the Women's Agenda on Training, what your experience with it is and what changes could make it more useful. Use the section below to respond and return it to us. Thank you.

* * * * *

Name: _____

Group: _____ Phone/FAX _____

Address: _____

We have read ____, used ____, the draft to _____

(purpose, such as general interest, educational workshop, reference for specific training issue, etc.)

The draft of the Women's Agenda is very ____, so so ____, not very clear ____, especially sections ____, ____, ____.

The Women's Agenda could be most useful for our needs if it included _____

We would like to make the following suggestion(s) for the Women's Agenda on Training (use additional pages if necessary):
