



Building Community

FIRST INTERIM ACTIVITY REPORT

Advancing Indigenous Women in Construction Trades

South Beach Casino and Resort
Scanterbury, MB
March 30, 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

In April 2015, the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute initiated the project **Advancing Indigenous Women in Construction Trades** with funding from Status of Women Canada. The project is governed by the belief that working together in partnership, a shared perspective can be an important ingredient by which subsequent work can be undertaken to facilitate durable and meaningful opportunities for Indigenous women in remote Manitoba communities.

Background

The *Advancing Indigenous Women in Construction Trades* is a major initiative that brings together **champions and leaders** from key sectors and industry namely Indigenous communities, Corporate, Training, Education, Employment, Government, and not for profit.

Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to report on our first initial meeting held in Brokenhead Ojibway Nation at the South Beach Casino and Resort on March 30, 2016. This report identifies the participants and an activity summary of our progress towards working together through multi-sectoral engagement with indigenous people and industry to identify priorities and implement strategies to advance Indigenous women in construction trades, with focus on those in remote Manitoba communities who have little to no access to technical training.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGIES

Objectives and Scope

The overall objective of the project is to assist in the removal of barriers for Indigenous women entering non-traditional occupations such as the construction trades industry.

The project will engage Manitoba Indigenous communities, as well as, industry, women, organizations and sector leaders, to participate in the development of and implement a community action plan to advance Manitoba Indigenous women for prosperity in non-traditional sectors.

By the end of the project participants will have identified the challenges and collaborated with the community to maximize opportunities to advance women.

The scope of this project involves Indigenous people, women, industry, and various sectors throughout Manitoba.

Methodologies Used

The methodology consisted of the following:

- A series of presentations on “Sectoral Perspectives” from Industry leaders and Indigenous women shared their experience within the trades industry.
- (40) Participants engaged in a series of round table discussions consisting of (6) groups of (6) or (7).
- Participants were encouraged to provide input and ask questions after each presentation.
- Indigenous women with experience in the trades industry were asked to complete a survey. Their responses are shared within this report.

Questions Posed

The following questions guided the round table discussions:

1. With particular focus on Indigenous Women in remote Manitoba communities, what issues do they face in advancing in the construction trades?
2. What has been done to resolve these issues? What can be done to resolve these issues? What should be made a priority?
3. How do we increase opportunities?

FINDINGS

Summary

The following section summarizes the series of presentations, key findings from the round table discussions and surveys:

Sectoral Perspectives:

Presentation #1

Brenda Mazur, *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada/Government of Canada/MB Region*

The Urban Aboriginal Strategy is a way to build partnerships. In 2014 the Government of Canada and National Association of Friendship Centres joined together and a new delivery mode was created. What does INAC do? Focus on building partnerships with the other governments (provincial, city, and stakeholders), and increasing participation of urban Indigenous people. Working with communities we developed a strategic plan to guide investments. Priority areas are education, employment & Training, Indigenous women, research, evaluation, and cultural approaches because research shows that taking the cultural approach helps. Working with Brandon, Thompson, The Pas and Winnipeg (intergovernmental aboriginal strategic alliance) our role for 2016 is working to reduce and remove barriers for urban Indigenous people to become involved especially for women.

Presentation #2

Jocelyn Burzuik, *President, Sundance Construction Safety Consulting, Inc.*

Sundance Construction consists of 70% aboriginal workers, 20% are female. I started engineering at 18, and in 2007 got hired by a construction company. I began as a project coordinator and learned anything I could. I continually asked myself “How do I transfer this information to the job?” I got promoted to project manager. You always have to have a plan B. I translated my skills as a mom to the industry and it worked beautifully. I didn’t know what I was doing but I found some great mentors who taught me everything. I was a sponge, I took it all in, I became a great Project Manager and within 2 years I was running projects all over Manitoba. I didn’t have the training that everyone says you need but I had brains, wit and ability to adapt. This is a tough industry but you have to stick it out. The barrier to this job is being a mom, it can be a downfall, your kids come first when you’re a mom and you can’t say that to a company of men. It took having a supportive partner that let me do what I needed to do in the industry, at times I felt like the worst mother in the world, I missed six

Christmas concerts being at meetings etc. Now I run my own company and I can tell you that the barriers never go away, you just have to roll with them, I do what I can as President of the company. I also had to develop the physical attributes to do the job in the industry. The only thing we can do is mitigate it. How do we get around the barrier? One way is to have more women owners that understand what we go through. When I started my company I mentored, I let staff bring kids to work, allowed time to go to a dr. appoint. I did not want one more person to sacrifice their families to be successful. We look at what we can do for them; put together a career plan for what they are suited for, and what they are good at. How can we get them there? None of the previous companies I worked for had anything like that. The barriers to employment are some of those ingrained philosophies that are still there, they don't know that the greatest assets in their industry are the people. The people I work with say they are in in for the long haul because I do what I can to remove barriers. We keep a list of who we need to send to training. A big roadblock is middle management, they don't want to see advancements or change, and maybe they're afraid. It's a constant battle, it doesn't matter what industry you're in.

When I started my company, not one government institution would help me. Lack of experience stopped me from getting the start-up I needed. Only one group helped me. They showed me what to do with my plans and model. Our barriers are financial, child care, reliable transportation (a car), family related issues, lack of promotions, but you just have to keep pushing, you have to be strong, I learned that I had tools to do that. I take a deep breath and tell myself "I can do this". Once you figure out the first step, the others will follow. The industry is about fighting (when you're a woman) the first impression of women in authority, especially in construction is "is she capable?" Appearance gets looked at and they immediately think she is not the person they are looking for. The best thing we can do as a woman is use a hammer and learn a trade.

Presentation #3

Heather Lambert, *Journey Person, Northstar Scaffolding*

Sean Ramsay, *Carpenter Representative, Prairie Arctic Regional Council Local 343*

Sean Ramsey

The name of our union shows that it is a male dominated industry 'brotherhood'. Margaret Allen was the first woman in trades, and we are starting to see more but we are not at the numbers we could be at. We work with members to find them work in their home community and do our best to accommodate them. There are hurdles for sure. The male dominance of the trade, you walk into the trailer and most are males. We are lucky to have a few female reps. When Heather joined in 2008, there were 2 women in our local organization and now we are up to 2 percent which is about 12 females. It's growing, but slowly. How can we address that? There are a

few things being done, we have projects with equity hire, women, persons of color. We have trade and training programs to represent people who are underrepresented in the trades. We have been somewhat successful, retention can be an issue. One of the biggest things we have done is form a committee sister in the brotherhood in 1998. This is an international committee where the sisters (female) have an opportunity to get together and share experiences and learning. A mostly female international conference is held annually where they get together and share skills. Locally, Sisters in Brotherhood has been around for 4 years. Sisters get together and work on skills together. When I was approached to attend the conference, I was happy to attend and present, my first call was to Heather because it becomes more genuine when you have someone who has lived it. She is a great success for herself, her family and our company. Heather is the first woman to be in the chapter, Sisters in the Brotherhood local 343 2008.

Heather Lambert

There were only 2 females on site at the time and there was a lot of confrontation, it hurt but was empowering. It pushed me to go further and showed that I belonged here. I'm a single mother of 4 kids so I had to stay in the city for the first few years. After my children got older, I went out of town more, you have to have tough skin, and I told other moms you have to put your mom ears on, you have to block it out when guys talk the way they talk. But when it is directed at you, you have to stand up for yourself so that they know. In 2008, guys would say stuff like "she doesn't belong here" until, they got to know me and that I was there for the long run. As years went on, other trades became more accepting. I would like to see more females in the trades but you have to be in shape and be ready to be away from home for a bit. My local chapter had my back and that helped a lot. The 'Sisters in the Brotherhood' was one of the most empowering conferences I been to. There were 300 females in the trades and we all shared stories and learned from each other. I am now encouraging my daughters to get a trade, one is a painter and one is going into carpentry, I've seen a lot more females in other trades now, it is so encouraging. You will always come across those people who say "you can't do it", but there are also the ones that will encourage you. We have to teach our younger females not to be intimidated. If you think you can do it, put your mind to it and do it. It took 6 years but I got to the top and got my journeywoman.

Q. What was the hardest thing?

A. Leaving my family, going out of town, I cried every night.

Q. Did you have that moment where you realized it was worth it?

A. When my daughter graduated, she was the first. I drove 12 hours to be there, and her friends said "wow your mom works all that time and drove all this way to come to grad". I can be in the trades but also be there for them

Q. How did you get into the trades?

A. It was somewhat similar to Joeelyn's story; I was in abusive relationship and wasn't allowed to work. When he left us I didn't want to be on welfare forever so I had to do something. I went to the aboriginal centre for a couple programs. When the program I was in got shut down, I got put into carpentry and succeeded. They didn't think I would catch up because it was 4 months into the program. I surpassed my classmates and went to the top of the class. I enjoyed scaffolding; I enjoyed climbing so I went into that trade.

Q. You faced a lot of challenges and barriers; do you have any other barriers you want to knock down?

A. I'm getting older and I know I can't do this forever; I am interested in talking to the younger generation. I would like to help our younger people.

Q. Was there anything you couldn't do physically?

A. In our trade, I can't do some of the pulling; some are 130 pound pull ups. You have to know your physical limitations.

Q. For Sean – Some women get discouraged, you were able to have support of your union, is there a consistent theme?

A. Not per se but much of the issues is around the male dominance, the more women we have in the trades I think it will shift. Sometimes when the ladies go in the trailer they feel intimidated but we try to address all those concerns.

Q. When you were beginning the process, what supports did you have?

A. Daycare and my mom. That was it.

Q. You went a lot on your own determination?

A. Yes, just to prove that I could do it.

Q. There are many women in your situation. What would you say to them, or recommend? What kind of supports do we need to retain?

A. Family, someone to talk to, you got to want it, its determination on your own part, a lot of women keep it bottled up and quit because they have no one to talk to. You have to express yourself, you can't be intimidated.

Q. do you find language is a tool?

A. Yes you have to be able to talk with them, joke with them and put your mom ears on when you don't want to hear it.

Q for Sean – In your company, what do you do to help build awareness to inform the men?

A. I don't think there is a whole lot being done; there is that thing of being respectful in the workplace. But I don't think there is any kind of education campaign. I think it has to be an inclusive workplace, where you work as a team.

Q. Do you see it that way? Or do you have to work extra hard at it as a woman?

A. It was at the beginning, I had to watch and learn. There are males out there that will take you under their wing but when I first started I had to push myself harder than the guys. My first employer was very good with me in that respect. It helped push me to succeed.

Q. Have you ever thought of being a representative on the board?

A. I'm a shop steward; I am the rep for the union. If any co-worker had a problem, they come to me and I am the go between.

Q. What was the longest you had to be away from family?

A. 7 weeks. Anywhere from 3-21 days

Presentation #4

Jamie Grant, *Project Coordinator, Northern Manitoba Sector Council*

Sasha Shorting, *Level 2 Electrical Apprentice, Northern Construction Trades Training*

Jamie Grant

Sasha is working on level 2 hours; the program is an opportunity for remote communities to get into the trades. We traveled to remote communities to talk about this program and to do something that hasn't been done before. We had a great response from communities. Participants had to be willing to leave the community for training. We received over 220 applications, we had a short list of 70, then 40, and then after an essential skills assessment we had 34 selected participants. Sasha is one of them; I will leave it to Sasha to tell the story of her journey.

Sasha Shorting

I am from Little Saskatchewan First Nation and a mother of 2. I grew up with uncles, always terrorizing me and would make me play sports. I never thought I would be in a trade; I wanted to be a teacher or a cop. After I had my kids and got my grade 12 I took a break. In 2012, the children's dad left and I had no income and had to go on welfare. After a couple months, I got tired of making ends meet. I looked for sponsorship, after being rejected for that year; I was approved the following year. In January 2014, I got a letter asking if I was interested in full sponsorship to the program. I had one day to fill out the application and started at the end of January. I took introduction to trades because I wanted to be a mechanic. There were 3 women in the program. The guys in my class were pigs, one tried to grab my leg, some of them were nice but others were terrible. They took us into the electrical shop, after a couple of weeks I fell in love with it. With the Introduction to Trades Program, they offered 4 seats per trade guaranteed for next semester. I decided to go for it. I gave up being a mechanic and went into electrical. On the first day there were 13 guys and me. The next

day another woman joined us and we were always getting picked on. For the first month I let them run their mouths but then I got sick of it. I started telling everyone off and they stopped. I took the other female under my wing. I tried to get hired as a level 1 Apprentice but all the call-backs were surprised that I was a female and told me they weren't looking for anyone after hearing my voice. I came across a flyer one day for Northern Construction Trades Training (NCTT) and began trying to get friends to apply with me. A friend went with me and got a call back way ahead of me. Then I finally got a call back saying I was chosen, it was unbelievable. I had to go up north for 14 weeks. I drove home every weekend, it was tough. Some of the guys turned out to be like my brothers. When I was in Thompson I had a family situation and I almost quit but I had supports that kept me going. I decided to stay. Jamie is a big help, she gets me interviews. She takes care of my daycare while I'm in school and working.

Jamie Grant

The thing with Sasha is that she calls the men her brothers and they do have her back. They have a close group and everyone is always asking how everyone is doing. This project was a journey and it really opened a door for some that would never have had the opportunity to get in the trades. It's the social issues that we face. We have the supports built in. Some stuff can't be planned but we work with it and do what we can to help our people. We nip all problems in the bud right away. We keep apprentices on task.

Q. How many employers are involved?

A. About 12

Q. Do you think Manitoba industry can sustain another program and jobs?

A. I think electricians definitely, millwrights not so much, we would look at a different trade.

Q. You indicated you bring people from communities? How do you handle the logistics of getting them around?

A. Training was in The Pas and Thompson, we arranged residencies, moved people into apartments, and travel benefits for technical training.

Q. What's the biggest problem when communities want to do it themselves? They just don't have the resources.

A. Definitely, we built into the project that if they were not able to get EI then we would get them a living allowance. By level 2 they are eligible for EI. We have other barriers for our students, some get laid off.

Living arrangements were also a barrier, when we had to relocate them we also were subsidizing them.

Q. When you were in the application process, how did you determine suitability for this program?

A. We have a point system, if they had any previous industrial experience or training. We had to have a scoring system, then they went into the essential skills assessment, then we chose who to have face to face assessments with.

Q. How long is the training before they get on the field?

A. 10 weeks per year for electricians, then they go to the field. Differs for other trades

Q. Was this program built from scratch?

A. Yes it was a partner project with heavy investment. It is a pilot project that is getting good buzz. We have employers talking across the board calling us to ask about our graduates because they trust the work that we and they have done.

Q. Were there any life skills?

A. Yes there was 2 weeks of life skills when we first started. We had Eric and Ariel Cook. In those weeks he bonded the group and it really made them reflect on their lives, and culture and so forth. Students wished it was longer because it talked about everything they needed, opening bank accounts, and living. Etc.

Roundtable Discussion #1:

With particular focus on Indigenous women in remote Manitoba communities, what issues do they face in advancing in the construction trades?

Group 1

Location of work, work is always at inaccessible places and you have to move around a lot; **Lack of financial resources**, when getting into the trades, there is a lack of resources for people that need to travel for schooling; you typically don't have the funders; **Stereotypes and lack of interest**, we need to break the stereotypes down because women are starting to get more into the trades. The other side of that is that women are pigeonholed into certain types of positions. There are not always promotions available to female workers; **Awareness issue**, they don't know what is involved; **Transportation**, public transportation is not always available and if you don't have a licence or car it is tough to get around; **Family commitments**, one of the biggest problems is we know women face more responsibilities of raising the family. Not only children it could also be elderly parents. Women find they have to change their lifestyle. It is always a balancing act; **Availability of training or lack thereof** - It's hard to get training in some of the smaller remote First Nations; **The economy**, affects what jobs are available; **Role models**, we need more leaders and

mentors to show that there are strong women in the trades and it is possible; **Co-ed working conditions**, when you're working in the trades it is very different, we need more co-ed living and working conditions available. They say you should have that but that is not always the case; **Lack of exposure**, we need to start planting the seeds earlier, getting women interested in the trades earlier and quicker; our school system needs to be more hands on. There is no exposure to trades in school.

Group 2

Transportation; Racism, sexism; Child care, family related matters
Need outlets to advance skill sets and opportunities to train; **Post-secondary funding barriers** and not having enough money to do anything else but get by day by day; **Education**, do women have a grade 12? Do they dream of going further? Maybe they are discouraged because they feel they don't have the level of education; **Social Issues and Addiction**
Remoteness of some communities; **Indigenous women need more mentors**; there are not enough positive role models; **The trade industry is very stereotypical**, some women didn't believe they could be anything other than a nurse or teacher; **More life skills** are needed for some women. **Physical challenges**, sometimes women cannot lift what needs to be lifted
Creating awareness – to say that you are a woman and you can do this, and getting them to commit; **Others peoples mindset**, people will say “why are you working when you make minimum wage and you can make the same amount on welfare”? Why try? We have to instill that it is important to try and push forward; **Cultural acceptance and proficiency** – some employers should allow the traditional way of life into the work place. Some places will not allow you to smudge. Being able to embrace other cultures, let them know that they are special.

Group 3

Start Early - engage much earlier. We need to start at 12, 13 and 14 years old. One of the things we do is mentorship at earlier ages and the result is astronomical. When you empower them at that age, they take control of their lives, and build up these skills much earlier; **Transition supports** for women and mothers entering the workforce later in life. This builds self-worth and makes them an active part of the community. It also gives them a skill set. How do we do that? By engaging contractors and employers. How do we build relationships? What can happen right now? How do we tap into the existing employer skill set and create partnerships with the community to start support. Make sure there is equity in the trades; **Lack of work experience opportunities**, this as a requirement with community projects. Build partnerships between local labour and employers/contractors coming to the community; **More Promotion** of the trades being a viable and well paid career path; **Family and Community supports** - childcare 'partnerships', workplace accommodations , orientation and safe work.

Group 4

Start Young, we have to catch them at a young age; **Lack of support and opportunity**, to learn a skill at that young age (family, community, sponsorship support); **Language** – jobsite language can be confusing; **Work life balance**, it's not easy to balance home and work life; **Financial**, sometimes people can't afford to do what you need to do to work or train (child care, transportation, etc.); **Relocation**, having a drivers licence and being able to travel can be a barrier; **Basic needs**, not always available in remote communities or are overpriced; **Traditional woman roles**, in our society, women are directed to have a different role than men; **Lack of mentorship**, people to aspire to, role models, people who can encourage you to take on those jobs or training, to support and point you in the right direction.

Group 5

Housing, in the north there is limited housing: **Knowledge of trades**, when you are young you have to know what's out there. We need more direction for the young people. Info should be available to student in high school. **Traditional roles**, many communities have traditional roles; where the women should be home with the children. There are some people who don't want to move away from that; **Lack of exposure**, some have never left the community and don't know how to function in the urban world. There are not really any resources available to them; **Financial, logistics, travel**, some communities are extremely remote, being able to pick up and leave is not easy; **Fear of leaving the community**, sometimes people think that if they go out and get the training there may not be any jobs in the community for them so they may not be able to come back. Those supports are needed. It is a reality that some of those people cannot go home. Sometimes they are looked down on in the community because they think they are better than them.

Group 6

Daycare, there is a lack of support especially when the issue of childcare has not been part of the industry because women used to stay home and watch the kids; **Funding**, having funding in place and available can be a barrier; **Lack of confidence**, proving yourself when you begin training or enter a worksite, you have to prove your capable even more so than men sometimes. You have to constantly prove that you can keep up with the men. You have to have self-confidence; **Relocation**, loss of support (cultural, community, etc.). In your community you have a network that you rely on but when you relocate, you lose those supports; **Housing**, when you relocate you have to move your life and home, you may not have your family support. Some have never had a landlord and it could be confusing; **Loneliness**, with loss of community you can get quite lonely; **Financial**, lack of experience with finances, budgeting; **Life Skills**, essential skills

could be lacking when you grow up in an isolated community; **Developing survival mechanisms**, you will become a new person, you will be in a male dominated industry, you need to learn a whole new technical language, along with that comes a lack of confidence in developing the new identity.

Group 7

- lack of preparation, life skills, cultural awareness
- too many formal and written assessments
- lack of trade vocabulary can be discouraging
- social issues
- family transportation and daycare
- supportive partnerships with employers
- lack of strong mentorship, particularly female mentors
- male focused terminology 'brotherhood'
- sexism and cultural old boys club
- lack of respectful workplace policies

Roundtable Discussion #2:

1. What has been done to resolve these issues?
2. What can be done to resolve these issues?
3. What should be made a priority?

Group 1

1. The title doesn't always reflect what the person is doing or the qualification; make sure the title reflects the duties/credentials, more education and training; apprenticeship rates are legislated regardless of who you are.
2. Provide more non-traditional options for education and training (late classes, off campus, online courses). More options to balance work and home. More women business owners that understand the barriers. Support groups; provide resume assistance, highlighting transferrable skills to help them market themselves. Customized application processes for different types of applicants (paper, online, read out, standard). Provide career paths, what it will look like, 'they can see the light at the end of the tunnel'.
3. A feeling of accomplishment. Being marketable in the workplace and having a stable living to support your family

Group 2

1. We've started the conversation by coming to this session and bringing these issues up and sharing ideas; some innovative training projects (NCTT) address the issues holistically; there are pockets of effort in different areas, everyone is doing something to address barriers and grow opportunities.

2. Better coordinate our efforts; share the info and learning within industry, government and training providers; evaluate the projects when you have them; pick apart what was a success and what was not, i.e. life skills; share results and best practices; build Community and group identity.

3. Engaging students at a young age about career options; having holistic supports tailored to the individual, ensuring there is a cultural component because that is important to some people; have more female leadership, instructors and mentors as key influences of cultural change; develop opportunities and connections

Group 3

1. ILDI Roundtable discussions are a starting point; small scale pilot projects e.g. MB Status of Women Gr 5-9 exposure to trades are sparking interest, North End Trades Discovery Initiative Grade 5 to High School; early engagement links to jobs/community.

2. Fund successful pilots to become programs; best practices workshops to share amongst communities; family housing and Day care supports; stabilize basic needs prior to the beginning of training and ensure supports throughout to completion; support to assist individuals to access funding; creative and flexible project based delivery models; build strong partnerships.

3. Priority is finding funding; build stronger partnerships; improve functionality between agencies and government departments.

Group 4

1. Look at training and apprenticeship programs e.g. Northern Construction Trades Training; getting into the rural communities with the program; more awareness is out there; work experience in high school and gaining credits; mentorship and liaisons on the job, helps integrate people on the job.

2. Making sure that it is mandatory that there are indigenous employees as well as gender equality; look into where the gaps are in the industry and train the people; have more programs and partnerships that work.

3. Starting early, getting them involved in high school, more hands on life skills, help people get drivers licences is also a big one.

Group 5

1. UCN community based program in communities; priority for women in trades; more promotions; more programs that are non-traditional for women.

2. Start to promote trades in schools at high school level; have more role models and exposure in trades, guidance councillor tours, workplace tours, Red River College tours; job readiness programs at provincial level which bridge into employment; assessment to help women to find their paths, vocational training; 'Just woman' programs (trades, etc.)
3. More partnerships; engage communities and local resources; exposure and promotion of career options/ resources are one of the bigger priorities.

Group 6

1. Equity hiring, this does happen and would like to continue with more focus towards females; community based training, bringing the training to the people; targeting training, specifically for women; partnerships are being built between post-secondary training, mentorship and level progression.
2. Provisions in the bid package; put something that says "the successful contractor has to have a certain percentage of female"; meaningful trade experience, making sure the workers are doing the actual trade; more marketing
3. Education in early years, school and exposure; Prior Learning Assessment Recognition – alternative testing methods; community cooperation, working with the community to develop these partnerships, how do we get them to all one place for training; Strategic planning - #1 priority, developing a strategy for success to get the people to level 1. What do we need to get them there? Long term success is key.

Group 7

1. Need to look at childcare and accommodations; there could be wage subsidies, so that employers have an incentive to hire, pay equity is sometimes an issue; more dedicated programs and workshops like this one.
2. Educate at a younger age; have a dual credit system (high school and college); equal opportunity training; have dedicated mentors.
3. Employer partnerships (institution and employer); employment equity – Tradewinds program was successful, maybe include women more on that job board; resource centre for trades women, all the issues are interconnected, having a space where women can talk to people to talk about issues in the workplace from someone who has maybe been in the same position. Have a community where you have someone to talk to about this stuff.

Roundtable Discussion #3

How do we increase opportunities?

Group 1

We touched on the cultural aspect already; have more role models available for women to talk about the challenges they faced, how to mitigate those problems and who they can turn to and talk about those problems; talk with the sector and let them know why they should be hiring these people; equal pay for equal work; wage subsidies; create a network for other women in trades.

Group 2

Connect all stakeholders so that they can develop capacity and share resources, amalgamating them to have a good resource available; make it easy for contractors to facilitate and create opportunities for women on the job site and also career development activities for youth; need a central agency or organization to lead and sustain these stakeholders and activities so when industry is going into the community they will be able to point them in the right direction; training for communities to lead and guide development of their local workforce; summer camps with trade focus for youth; some kind of incentive for small to midsize companies to hire these people; offset some of the expense; reduce paperwork as it becomes a burden on smaller companies.

Group 3

Offer employment incentives; a lot of the opportunities lie with the employers so that is really important; offer incentives to complete high school; hold career fairs which create opportunities to get employer information to the potential employees; introduction to the trades for women; have a cohort of women come together to see what it's like to be in the industry; have an advocate for women in the trades, or "watch dog" to make sure women are doing actual work experience and that journeypersons are not making less money because of gender; elimination of gender discrimination – human rights, make sure there is someone to be sure that they are getting fair treatment.

Group 4

Long term planning not short term Band-Aids; live up to the commitments, follow through, say what you're going to do and do it; have skills camps, research the trade, why do you want to do it? It can't be just about the money; improve Bid processes to include equity hire with trades specific experience; target programming to viable career paths; capitalize on opportunities that do exist with the programs that are out there; recruitment

fairs; have someone in the trades come out and do a presentation.

Group 5

Engage with Aboriginal Women community organizations who work with women to understand some of these issues; work with employment agencies, employer, and industry to find out what their needs are; have a women's resource trade centre; labour market intermediary to provide support; some wrap around support would be good; somewhere you can go and speak confidentially, also will be for the employer; have a matrix of all programs and services offered; provide Employers with a cultural component to raise awareness to employers; employers could provide more education to employees on awareness, culture and understanding; Contractors set the stage; have more positive role models with testimonials; develop strategies to engage with Aboriginal communities about bringing women into the trades; employers look at their HR policies and make improvements to make sure they are useable by all.

Group 6

Host more information sessions in the communities with inspirational speakers; more awareness is needed; when done training, complete follow ups, know where people are working in the chosen fields; more non-traditional training options (off campus, high school work experience, online training); have elders in the communities get involved as they play a big part in the communities; have them share their experience, understanding, importance of getting a career and making your own money; Elders can get together like this; subsidizing utilities while in transition; help mothers transition from Social Assistance to training to the workforce.

Group 7

Implement more access to trades training in community high-schools; increase partnerships; have more connections to employment; provide scope of trades job not just "holding stop signs"; create support networks / mentorships; help women identify and evaluate their transferrable skills Track and share best practices – formalized; meet ongoing basic needs for survival, transportation, etc.

Survey Responses

The participants surveyed are Indigenous Women from across Manitoba who range in age (23 – 53 years old), have been involved in construction trades training and/or employment, and completed various levels of trades training from Level 1 to 4.

Question #1:

What influenced your decision to enter into a trade as a career?

Participant Responses:

“I became a single parent and needed a way to support my children, and I was very interested in trades.”

“My family, I have uncles who are carpenters, 2 of them are journey men. I did some research on the carpentry trade and it was something I was really interested in doing.”

“It started in high school, when I took wood shop class. I was very interested and enjoyed building and working on projects. How I found the ILDI Aboriginal Carpentry Program was through a Career Launcher Program that helped me find what I interested in as a career choice.”

“My family, I have brothers who are carpenters. I also needed a career change. I originally went to university and took fine arts but that was not something to make a living on so I decided to take on the carpentry trade because I really enjoyed carpentry related work and I needed to find a better way to support myself.”

“I saw an opportunity with taking a trade. Also my family, as I have a younger female cousin who is on her second level in carpentry. And I really enjoy carpentry related work”.

“I was a single mother and wanted to go back to school to take some type of training and an opportunity came up where I secured funding with my band and decided to go into trades to what it had to offer. Originally I wanted to be a mechanic, but once I explored the electrical trade and went into the shop, I found what I really wanted to do.”

Question #2:

Did you have to leave your community to pursue your training?

Participant Responses:

“Yes it was a challenge to find affordable housing and the funding in not enough to live with when you have a family”.

“And also child care was a big issue, I had to leave my younger children back home with family”.

“Yes, it took a little time adjusting, but it helped when I had the right supports in place and I secured a place to stay and a babysitter.”

“No, I was already living in Winnipeg”.

“Yes, at first it was hard to adjust to living in a bigger city. But once I had the right supports in place everything seemed to fall into place. I had a good support system”

“Yes, I had to go up north to Thompson. And drove home every weekend, it was tough”.

Question #3:

Did you face any challenges or barriers in your trades training program or on the jobsite?

Participant Responses:

“I experienced sexism and discrimination on the jobsite. Men on jobsite have undermined my capabilities as women in a trade. Many men have tried to relegate my duties to cleaning and sweeping the jobsite.”

“Yes, being the only female in a class of 24, there were times I have experienced many uncomfortable situations, where the guys in the class would be talking about women in a disrespectful way”

“Yes, I was the only female on the tools and some of the guys used to tell me I didn’t belong there, which only made me determined to succeed”.

“When I first started training, the only issue was I had no childcare, which made it harder”.

“The only thing is I found some of the paper work or technical work challenging (like the math involved) But I got help and some tutoring so I overcame it”.

“Just the scheduling of the training program, from 12-8pm. Because I could not take on a part-time job to better support myself. The band funding was not enough to get by”

“Just finding childcare (at first) and after hours child care, once our schedules changed to 12-8pm.”

“Yes, while in the intro to trade training, the males were very disrespectful towards me and another female (as we were the only females in the class). And also once I completed the program, to look for employment was a challenge because I know I definitely faced gender discrimination when applying for jobs, as most of the guys in class would get calls before me from the same employers we applied too”.

“Yes, there were many confrontations (with Men) at the beginning, but once I proved myself and pushed myself, I felt more empowered. I had to have a “thick skin” to deal with men in the workplace.”

Question #4:

Did you face any challenges or barriers finding trades specific employment? Please explain:

Participant Responses:

“Initially, yes, because it always seemed that I had to prove myself to the men.”

“Yes, there were no employment opportunities in my community.”

“At the beginning, but after a year or so the guys realized I was there for my paycheck and nothing else. Some men were scared about sexual harassment and harassment in general.”

“I will know once I complete my training and start looking for work.”

“I will find out once I complete training in June and look for employment”

“Yes, some of the males in my class would get calls before me from the same employers we applied to. And there were also some instances where I did get calls and once they heard my voice, they sounded like they were not interested in hiring me.”

Question #5:

Were there times you felt like quitting? Please explain:

Participant Responses:

“Yes, I almost gave up due to the issues I was faced with in the workplace. I almost changed career paths to the healthcare field. However, an opportunity came up for me to complete my 4 levels of carpentry to become a journey person, so I took on the opportunity.”

“Yes, because I had to leave my children back home, I got very lonely for them.”

“Very much, it’s a physically demanding trade- I had to adjust and get into shape.”

“Yes, mainly due to personal issues like no childcare.”

“Sometimes I get a little overwhelmed with all the work and assignments, but I just work extra hard.”

“Yes, I did have some personal issues such as finding a place to stay, but once that was ok, I was fine. Also I had one accident in the shop with machinery (sander belt) where a piece of wood came flying off the machinery and almost hit me, I got scared and a little intimidated at the time, but I overcame that.”

“Over the Christmas holidays, I got sick and ended up in the hospital, but once I recovered I made it back to the training program.”

“Yes, at times I felt like quitting but because of the program I am taking, they do whatever they can to provide the supports; it was the supports that kept me going.”

Question #6

What issues are you faced with in achieving success in the trades?

Participant Responses:

“Finding a stable and affordable place to stay. Transportation issues, food to make it by each month. Money was always an issue to make it by. And also child care was a big issue.”

“I feel that men will not help and support women in the trades.”

“Leaving my children to work away from home was a big issue.”

“I think the only issue will be dealing with men on the jobsite.”

“Just staying motivated through all the levels to get my Red Seal. And also employment discrimination because I am an Aboriginal woman in a male dominated field.”

“Finding a job and an employer who is willing to apprentice me, as a female.”

“The time it will take to achieve my red seal and staying motivated to complete all 4 levels. And also dealing with men on the job site.”

CONCLUSION

Next Steps for Continued Dialogue

The following section describes the next steps to support continued progression towards the project objectives:

A 2nd follow-up meeting to build a Community Action Plan with participants, to advance Indigenous women in construction trades, with focus on those in remote Manitoba communities who have little to no access to technical training.

The 2-Day Agenda will provide the following:

- Present the results of the March 30, 2016 discussions;
- Develop a “Community Action Plan” and select a strategy to implement;
- Establishment of a Provincial Network;
- Discuss next steps: Implementation and follow up.

This Interim Report will be posted on the ILDI, Inc. website specifically for the Advancing Indigenous Women in Construction Trades initiative.

ILDI Website: www.ildii.ca

APPENDIX A

AGENDA

Wednesday, March 30th, 2016
South Beach Casino and Resort
Scanterbury, Manitoba

Advancing Indigenous Women in Construction Trades

8:30 am Breakfast is served

9:00 am Opening Prayer: Elder Lynn Courchene

Facilitators:

Roxanne Shuttleworth - Metis Nation, MB
Kaya Wheeler - Sagkeeng First Nation, MB

Melanie Dean, Director, Executive Training
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.

9:30am **Sectoral Perspectives:**

Brenda Mazur, Dev. Officer, Programs and Partnerships
Directorate
*Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada/Government of
Canada/MB Region*

Jocelyn Burzuik, Pres., Senior Construction Manager, CSO
Sundance Construction & Safety Consulting Inc.

10:30am 15 min. Health Break

10:45am **Sectoral Perspectives:**

Heather Lambert, Journey Person
Northstar Scaffolding

Sean Ramsay, Carpenter Representative
Prairie Artic Regional Council Local 343

Jamie Grant, Project Coordinator
Northern Manitoba Sector Council

Sasha Shorting, Level 2 Electrical Apprentice
Northern Construction Trades Training

- 12:00pm** Lunch is served
- 1:00pm** Roundtable Discussion #1:
With particular focus on Indigenous women in remote Manitoba communities, what issues do they face in advancing in the construction trades?
- 1:30pm** Report back to the larger group
- 1:50pm** Roundtable Discussion #2
- What has been done to resolve these issues?
 - What can be done to resolve these issues?
 - What should be made a priority?
- 2:15pm** 15 min. Health Break
- 2:30pm** Finish discussion and Report back to larger group
- 3:00pm** Roundtable Discussion #3:
- How do we increase opportunities
- 3:30pm** Report Back to the larger group
- 4:00 pm** **Closing Comments by Facilitators**

APPENDIX B

List of Participants:

Lynn Courchene
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

Jackie Courchene
Liaison Officer
Sagkeeng First Nation Employment & Training

Lori French
Post-Secondary Programs
Swan Lake First Nation

Jamie Grant
Project Coordinator
Northern Manitoba Sector Council

Marlene Head
Post-Secondary Supervisor
Opaskawayak Cree Nation

Heather Lambert
Journey Person
Northstar Scaffolding

Larissa Mason
St. Theresa Point First Nation

Tony Scribe
Manager
Norway House Cree Nation Employment & Training

Priscilla Shorting
Little Saskatchewan First Nation Employment & Training

Rhonda Shorting
Little Saskatchewan First Nation Employment & Training

Sasha Shorting
Level 2 Electrical Apprentice
Northern Construction Trades Training

Christy Spencer
Recruitment/HR Specialist
AMIK

Ruby Ramsey
Tataskweyak Cree Nation Employment & Training

Karen Wastesecoot
Board of Directors, Employment & Training
Peguis First Nation

Amanda Wilson
Peguis First Nation Employment & Training

Noella Peters
Long Plain First Nation

Geraldine Thunderbird Sky
Long Plain First Nation

Jonas Soosay
Level 1 Carpenter

Greg Mclvor
University College of the North (UCN)

Neil Armstrong
Apprenticeship Manitoba

Josh Brown
Employment Manitoba Employment & Training

Jocelyn Burziuk
President
Sundance Construction & Safety Consulting Inc.

Jamie Carnegie
Apprenticeship Manitoba

Tyra Cox
City of Winnipeg

Alicia Desjarlais
Brokenhead Ojibway Nation

Rhonda Forgues
City of Winnipeg

Sasha Janzen
Apprenticeship Manitoba

Jacqueline Lylyk
City of Winnipeg

Vanessa May
Apprenticeship Manitoba

Troy Mercer
Employment Manitoba & Training

Sean Ramsey
Carpenter Representative
Prairie Arctic Regional Council

Ainsley Murdock
Marketing & Communications Manager
Running Deer Resources

Jamie Chahine
Aboriginal Trades Liaison
Red River College

Brenda Mazur
Development Officer, Programs and Partnerships Directorate
Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada/Government of Canada
MB Region

Diane R. Pelly
Community Education Coordinator
Community Based Services
University College of the North (UCN)

Jessica Wagner
Human Resource Manager
Bockstael Construction Limited

James Murphy
Manitoba Construction Sector Council

Melanie Dean
Director, Executive Training
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.

Amber Sumner
Project Coordinator
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.

Monica French
Financial Project Coordinator
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.

Roxanne Shuttleworth
Lead Facilitator
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.

Kaya Wheeler
Co-Facilitator
Indigenous Leadership Development Institute, Inc.