



## BRIEFING NOTE FOR THE CCHRD & FNHRD - TWG

**SUBJECT: HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT**

**TEAM LEADS: Judy Whiteduck, Director, Safe, Secure and Sustainable Communities**  
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### **PURPOSE**

To provide an update on issues regarding Employment, Training and Human Resources Development, in particular the work of the Chiefs Committee on Human Resources Development (CCHRD) and efforts to move toward a new labour market strategy for First Nations.

### **CURRENT STATUS**

AFN Chiefs in Assembly passed a resolution at their Annual General Assembly (39/16) which reaffirmed the establishment and mandate of the CCHRD to prioritize and focus on supporting our citizenry to participate in the labour force and to provide advice, guidance and recommendations to the National Chief, AFN Executive, and Chiefs-in-Assembly on matters pertaining to structuring to support First Nations employment, skills development, and labour markets.

The AFN First Nations Labour Market Forum was held on July 27 and 28, 2016. Minister Mihychuk met with the CCHRD on July 26 and provided opening remarks at the forum.

The objective of the forum was to allow First Nations leaders, directors and managers of labour market organizations to discuss the current partnership arrangements and labour market supports under the current strategy; solicit appropriate changes and make recommendations for consideration by First Nations leadership on a new policy framework and fiscal instruments that responds to the desired 'new relationship' with Canada that maintains the autonomous nature of First Nations governments and their mandated organizations to serve their citizens.

### **Discussion items and Considerations**

First Nations expressed that:

- The current programming for labour market, employment and training should not lose the momentum created by the Aboriginal Skills, Employment and Training Strategy (ASETS) program over the last 20 years and the successes it has accomplished.

- The current framework and business relationship with Employment and Skills Development Canada (ESDC) / Service Canada should be reviewed from the perspective of a true partnership as experienced in other strategy frameworks pre-ASETS and responds to the principles expressed by leadership on a ‘new relationship’.
- Immediate efforts should be put in place to address areas for improvement as expressed by the recent AFN and Government of Canada *Memorandum of Understanding 2016*, that direct work to be undertaken to develop a review of the existing fiscal relationship, conduct research, and develop proposals, options and recommendations for the design of a new fiscal relationship.
- Immediate measures taken to ensure that First Nations organizational capacity is developed to respond to the diverse needs of First Nations citizens and a transitional strategy established that leads toward eventual autonomous management and decision making capacity.
- First Nations need a long-term commitment for a sustainable labour market and skills development strategy, this may require that the current timelines for the formulation and launch of a new strategy for April 2017 be reconsidered and an interim agreement be put in place to accommodate the time needed to have a meaningful assessment and dialogue.

### **Outcomes and Key Messages to Minister Mihychuk**

- First Nations want a First Nations -specific process, and for the Minister to champion the development of a new relationship.
- Our new approach would be described through:
  - A jointly prepared Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) for October 2016:
    - This requires resources to participate with ESDC officials in the development of this MC and to collect the views among our diverse processes which will require capacity at the national organization.
  - To bridge 2016 – 2017 and 2017 – 2018, First Nations want an interim arrangement that reflects the flexibility and re-emergence of our authority to manage our programs.
    - Dedicate funds to assist organizations in the transition to a new labour market strategy.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- a draft report from the forum is being reviewed and will be made available to all ASETS organizations shortly.
- Follow-up with the Minister’s staff and ESDC officials on recommendations.