

**ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS
FIRST NATIONS LABOUR MARKET STRATEGY
DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION – NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION
ISSUE PAPER 12 – Parallel Aboriginal Programs**

DESCRIPTION:

To develop policy on the issue of parallel programs* that address Indigenous labour market issues and that are set up parallel to and outside of the main-stream FNLMS.

OPTIONS:

1. To make representations to ESDC that all programs for First Nations be rolled into the FNLMS
2. To provide FNLMA's with the right of first refusal to be the delivery agent of parallel programs

RATIONALE:

While parallel programs address important issues and bring incremental resources, they have been designed with their own delivery strategies undermining the central role of FNLMA's.

These programs meet real needs, capturing untapped opportunity brought on by economic development or addressing issues such as welfare dependency. They offer opportunity to further build capacity and consolidate the role of FNLMA's in the context of autonomous, self-governing First Nations.

Parallel delivery strategies further fragment the institutional landscape and stretch already limited capacity even further. They often cause waste as new delivery agencies need to develop, consolidate and implement IT and case management systems and processes.

CONSIDERATIONS:

ESDC should not duplicate its own investments and treat FNLMA's as their partners of choice when dealing with First Nations.

FNLMA's are a diverse body of organizations with different levels of capacity, priorities and relationships with First Nation governments, the private sector and other program delivery bodies. Channelling all new initiatives into the FNLMS could do exactly what is being objected to, forcing priorities and objectives on First Nations organizations outside of their community and development reality

Right of first refusal would be a compromise solution.

RECOMMENDED OPTION:

To bring forward that all new labour market initiatives for First Nations be channeled through FNLMA's

This option is the clearest statement of the importance of respecting First Nation decision making, on making FNLMA's the centrepiece of government and First Nation efforts to achieve positive labour market outcomes for First Nations and of avoiding waste and duplication when leadership resources are so rare.

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DECISION:

DATE AND VERSION:

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*Examples of parallel programs are ASEP/SPF, First Nations Job Fund

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