Report on the Evaluation of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I Programs in Newfoundland and Labrador

Prepared For:

Department of Education
and
Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland and Labrador

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Executive Summary

Overview

The evaluation of Basic Literacy/Adult Basic Education Level I (ABE) programs in Newfoundland and Labrador was commissioned by the Department of Education and the Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland and Labrador. It was carried out by Goss Gilroy Inc. in association with Stan Jones Consulting and the Institute for Human Resource Development.

The evaluation is intended to identify what is working well now with the current approach to this programming and to identify gaps that need to be addressed in order to better meet learner needs. The results are to be used to help strengthen program delivery and to guide government expenditures and other supports for program providers.

ABE Level I is a program developed by the Department of Education, as part of the overall ABE program. Private and community-based providers certified to deliver the ABE Level I program must meet standards established for staff qualifications, teacher/student ratios, etc.

Basic Literacy is delivered by providers other than those certified to delivery ABE Level I. Delivery is through informal tutoring programs or in classroom settings. In some communities in Labrador, alternate methods such as community theatre are used.

Both Basic Literacy and ABE Level I programs serve learners at the lower literacy levels, from those unable to read or write through to those functioning at the approximate equivalent of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) level 2 (or grade six in regular school).

Evaluation approach

Information was gathered from representatives of all stakeholders in adult literacy through a number of methods. These included: a telephone survey of participants in Basic Literacy/ABE Level I ; a telephone survey of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I providers; a review of literature on good practices in adult literacy programs in general and documents related to literacy policy and programs in the province; case studies of four Basic Literacy or ABE Level I programs in the province; interviews with key informants and stakeholders from various government departments, literacy support

organizations, and other organizations with an interest or stake in the adult literacy situation in the province; and a review of the approaches to adult literacy programming in four other provinces.

THE ISSUE OF LITERACY

The IALS is the most recent comparative study of literacy skills in 20 countries, and represents a successive cycle of data collection between 1994 and 1998. IALS defines literacy as: the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community - to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.

The final IALS report, *Literacy in the Information Age*, released in June 2000, concluded that improving literacy levels and narrowing the gap between those with high and low literacy skills have been shown to lead to benefits for both individuals and society at large.

Of the 20 countries included in IALS, Canada ranked 5th, 8th and 9th respectively in the three areas measured - prose, document and quantitative literacy. However the survey found that the discrepancy between people with high and low literacy skills is far larger in Canada than it is in many European countries such as Denmark, Norway, Germany, Finland and Sweden.

CURRENT PROGRAM FUNDING

The primary funding sources for Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs are the provincial Department of Education (through the Literacy Development Council) and the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) of Human Resources Development Canada. The NLS provides the largest proportion of funds and these are allocated (as per the NLS mandate) only for improvements in programming, not for delivery.

Based on a review of projects approved in 1999-2000, it is estimated that:

- The province provided $147,600 and NLS provided $946,000 to adult literacy grants;
- Half the total provincial grant funding for literacy is allocated to adult literacy;
- Federal funding (for improvements) is more than double provincial grant funding which is primarily for delivery;

- 22 percent of the federal funding (for improvements) are allocated to projects that involve some program delivery;
- Only 27 percent of funding overall is allocated to program providers for delivery.

This situation creates a mis-match in provider needs for ongoing operating funds versus the funding response. The result is not enough funding to support consistent, accessible programs and a limited capacity to actually use the improvements developed. This was the key concern of the providers and stakeholders we interviewed.

PROFILE OF CURRENT PROGRAMS

Adult Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs are currently delivered by community-based organizations (primarily Laubach Councils) and public and private colleges/organizations. Highlights include:

At the time of the research, adult Basic Literacy or ABE Level I programs were delivered at about 55 sites across the province. These are offered in most geographic areas, with the exception of some areas of coastal Labrador.

There is a varied mix of approaches used: Basic Literacy is offered in classrooms or through tutors and ABE Level I is offered as a standalone or with Levels II and III. There is a significant level of volunteer effort in managing and delivering community-based programs.

Most providers are delivering their programs to small numbers of learners. Of the organizations that provided learner names, 61% served only one to five learners at these levels during 1998 - 2000. This is a common finding in adult literacy programs. Estimates in the literature of participation rates in adult literacy programs range between 6% and 10% of those who could or should be in these programs.

Learner assessments are for the most part carried out informally, based on interviews or observation of ease with use of materials. This is the case when participants begin programs, as well as for periodic assessments of progress, and of readiness for completion.

Programs focus on reading, writing and numeracy skills. Limited time is devoted to life skills, although programs use materials that are relevant to daily living in their teaching of literacy and numeracy skills.

While there are individual examples of innovative programming, programs generally are not as learner-centred as those in other provinces we reviewed. This is attributed to the environment in which programs currently operate which lacks continuity in funding and central supports for program and materials development and results tracking. Most programs in this province are using Laubach programming which is subject centred and providers supplement this with materials that are relevant to the learner. Other provinces, such as Manitoba, use a more "learner-centered" approach, using a structured curriculum that covers common literacy skills but using materials, instruction and assessment tools that are based on individual learner goals.

Linkages among providers and other organizations vary - where these are strong, the result is stronger coordination of efforts and resources to ensure a continuity of supports for learners. Few learners require referrals to other organizations for personal counselling, but where this is needed, providers cite it as an important support. Computers were available in virtually all programs, but this tool was not often described as a significant component of programming. There is room for additional use of computers for networking, professional development and instruction.

Informal programs typically require coordinators to have a degree or equivalent work experience. Many tutors come from professional backgrounds.

Key concerns of providers are the lack of sustained funding, which leads to uncertainty for staff and participants, undermines the credibility of programs, and impacts on participation levels; the need for ongoing professional development; the need for better coordinated information on what resources and tools are available; and the need for leadership in the literacy movement.

PROFILE OF LEARNERS

Interviews were conducted with 138 learners who had participated in programs in the 1998 - 2000 period, representing 61 percent of the individuals identified by program providers. The survey included a self-assessment by learners of gains they had made in their literacy and numeracy skills. Highlights include:

- Two-thirds of learners left regular school because they had done poorly. Providers indicated that some learners may have learning disabilities, which providers are not qualified to assess.

- One quarter of learners appear to have been at the higher end of Basic Literacy before attending, which may indicate they were not in the best program to meet their needs.
- Most learners attended to improve their overall quality of life and their job prospects. More men than women attended for employment reasons; more women attended in order to help teach their children.
- Learners come from the full age spectrum. A greater proportion of men attended full-time, while more women attended part-time.
- Two-thirds of all learners attended for 10 months or less. Those with less formal education attended for longer periods.
- A minority of learners had problems that interfered with learning (primarily learning difficulties or family problems); similarly a minority experienced financial difficulties.
- There was high satisfaction with all aspects of programming. Learners said the emphasis on reading and the supportive environment in programs were the key factors that helped them reach their goals.
- A significant proportion of learners increased both their literacy and numeracy levels. Learners also made progress in daily living skills such as reading the newspaper and using the library.
- Learners in full-time and part-time programs made similar gains, regardless of the overall duration they were in programs. Gains in literacy and numeracy declined somewhat the longer participants were in programs.
- Most of those who did not complete were unable to because of ineligibility for funding (there have been policy changes on individual and program funding) or family reasons.
- 25 percent of learners no longer in literacy programs have gone on to other training. Two-thirds of this group found this transition difficult, mainly because of the lack of support. 36 percent of those no longer in programs are working or volunteering.

In summary, learners generally feel that programs are meeting their needs. A minority have learning difficulties or personal problems that were not met by programming or

access to other supports. There is a need to ensure that screening and assessment processes in programs identify these higher need clients and that a continuum of supports from various agencies is available to meet these needs.

A significant proportion of learners are making gains in their literacy and numeracy levels, and are moving on to other training or employment. There is a proportion of learners who appear to be beyond the levels covered in this programming prior to entry and who likely should be in more advanced ABE programs with remedial supports. Also there is a proportion who stay in programs for longer periods for minimal incremental gains. Again this calls for appropriate screening, linkages among various programs and tracking of progress.

GAPS IN CURRENT PROGRAMMING

Providers of ABE Level I follow the guide for this program which provides a structure for teaching and learning based on general learning objectives. The basic literacy programming in Newfoundland and Labrador generally falls short on the standards for quality adult literacy programming identified in the literature search. While there are innovative approaches within individual basic literacy programs, there are no "across the board" standards in place to guide basic literacy programs, as there is with ABE level I. It is our view that this is because of the lack of a structured approach to programming and funding in the province. Pockets of innovation and quality exist in isolation and without many of the central supports that are needed. In other provinces that have invested in adult literacy, central supports are a key element of the models used.

The primary gaps identified were:

- the lack of a commitment and leadership on the part of the provincial government in addressing the needs of adults with low literacy levels;
- the lack of adequate and sustained funding for program delivery;
- the need for strengthened linkages among various provincial departments in supporting adult literacy;
- the need for reexamination of the respective roles of the Department of Education and the Literacy Development Council so that the central supports are provided appropriately;

- the need for a provincial level network to allow learners and providers to carry out advocacy and communications work;
- the need to improve on the overall program delivery including curriculum, professional development, and accountability for results.

To address these gaps, the key needs to be filled are:

- Adequate and sustained funding
- Program standards, including those for professional development
- Coordination and networking
- Accessibility to programs appropriate to learners needs
- Better tracking of results.

A PROPOSED PROGRAM MODEL

While literacy is a multi-faceted issue, stakeholders see the accountability for an improved approach to adult literacy starting with the Department of Education making clear its commitment before other actions can be expected. This commitment must necessarily identify what resources (financial and expert) the department will bring to adult literacy.

The report includes a model to address the weaknesses in current programming, one that would:

- be affordable within the current fiscal situation;
- reflect the overall government direction for an integrated approach to social and economic programs (as described in the Strategic Social and Literacy Plans);
- build on the strengths of community organizations and the public college system;
- provide learners throughout the province with equitable access to programming to meet their needs and goals;
- equip the various stakeholders to play their respective roles;
- include a process for accounting for results to learners and all other stakeholders.

MODEL COMPONENTS

Central leadership

While literacy is a multi-faceted issue, stakeholders see the accountability for an improved approach to adult literacy starting with the Department of Education making clear its commitment before other actions can be expected. This commitment must necessarily identify what resources (financial and expert) the department will bring to adult literacy.

The Department of Education would play a lead role in developing and delivering central supports to community-based programs, and coordinating the funding and program supports of government departments with a stake in adult literacy. These departments include Education, Human Resources and Employment, Health and Community Services, Justice, Development and Rural Renewal. The Department of Education would also be the lead for coordinating policies and funding with federal departments, in particular the National Literacy Secretariat.

A Provincial Literacy Network, comprised of Community Learning Networks (described below) and provincial level organizations with an interest in adult literacy (for example, organizations involved in learning disabilities) would lead advocacy, communications and fund raising activities. The Literacy Development Council could be refocused to become this Provincial Literacy Network if its current mandate under the legislation were revised to focus only on these areas.

Funding from the province would be allocated to cover program delivery. Funding from the HRDC National Literacy Secretariat would be allocated to program development and improvements, including professional development, public awareness and tracking of results. Where adult literacy programs also include family literacy, funding for the latter could be coordinated with that of the Department of Health and Community Services and Health Canada.

Community leadership

Community Learning Networks, comprised of organizations in each Strategic Social Plan region with a stake in adult literacy and representatives of learners, would plan and manage the delivery of community-based adult literacy programs. These networks would be responsible for leveraging in-kind contributions and funding to complement that of government. These networks could build on existing coordinating bodies.

Local program delivery

Community-based adult literacy programs would be delivered in classroom settings, primarily on a part-time basis (with scheduled hours of 15-20 hours per week), delivered by a paid instructor complemented by volunteer tutors. Programs would be designed locally to meet local needs and objectives within provincial standards, and could be linked to family literacy programming. Typically a program would include 15-20 learners at any one time. Over time, workplace based literacy programming might also be part of the mix of offerings.

Community-based programs would be well linked with the public and private colleges in the area to provide expert supports from these institutions to learners. Examples of these expert supports include assessment of skill levels at program entry, screening for learning disabilities, career counselling. The linkages would also ensure a seamless transition to higher ABE levels or skill training at the colleges for learners moving to those levels. Both public and private colleges would provide flexible programming so that learners who require limited literacy skill development are able to obtain this at college or community-based programs while beginning studies in their chosen skill area.

FUNDING

The estimated contribution of government to each program would be $25,000 per year. This would be multi-year funding for up to three years, renewable based on an annual report of results against learner and program goals and an annual program improvement plan. Community Learning Networks would leverage additional cash or in-kind contributions to supplement the government contribution to programming as needed.

The total annual costs in a mature program year are estimated as follows. This is based on a scenario of 10 community learning networks delivering 20 community-based programs to up to 400 learners at any one time:

COMPONENT	PROPORTION OF TOTAL COSTS	COST	SOURCE
Program delivery (20 @ $25,000)	65%	$500,000	Province
Professional development	10%	76,925	NLS
Program development/accountability tracking	15%	115,385	NLS
Curriculum/materials development and dissemination	10%	76,925	NLS
Total cost		$769,235	

In addition, funding will be required to administer the program by the Department of Education/ Literacy Development Council (estimated at $200,000 annually).

INCREMENTAL COSTS

The following is an estimate of the incremental costs for grants compared to that provided now for adult Basic Literacy grants:

SOURCE	CURRENT FUNDING FOR ADULT BASIC LITERACY	REQUIRED UNDER MODEL	INCREMENTAL FUNDING REQUIRED
Province (Department of Education)	$147,600	$500,000	$352,400
National Literacy Secretariat	$752,000	$269,235	nil

As the above table indicates, additional provincial funding for grants will be required. The current NLS allocation for the province exceeds the basic need for the model and leaves room for further enhancement to program design and delivery.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of study

This report describes the findings from an evaluation of Basic Literacy/Level 1 ABE programs currently delivered in Newfoundland and Labrador. The evaluation was commissioned by the Department of Education and the Literacy Development Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, and was carried out by Goss Gilroy Inc. in association with Stan Jones Consulting and the Institute for Human Resource Development.

The evaluation is intended to identify what is working well now with the current approach to this programming and to identify gaps that need to be addressed in order to better meet learner needs. The results of the evaluation are to be used to help strengthen program delivery and to guide government expenditures and other supports for program providers. Specifically, the evaluation addresses the following topics:

- the profile of current participants (learners) in Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs;
- the profile of providers of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs;
- the outcomes being achieved by these programs;
- good practices (what works) and outstanding challenges (gaps) in meeting learner needs through the current approach to Basic Literacy/ABE Level I in the province;
- considerations to be addressed in future government policy and programming for Basic Literacy/ABE Level I.

ABE Level I is a program developed by the Department of Education, as part of the overall ABE program. This is delivered in a classroom-based approach by public colleges as well as private colleges and community-based organizations.

Basic Literacy is instruction delivered by providers other than those certified to delivery ABE Level I. Delivery is through informal tutoring programs or in classroom settings.

Both types of programs serve learners at the lower literacy levels, from those unable to read or write through to those functioning at the approximate equivalent of the IALS level 2 (or grade six in regular school).

1.2 Methodologies

The following methodologies were applied in this evaluation:

- telephone survey of participants in Basic Literacy/ABE Level I;
- telephone survey of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I providers;
- review of literature on good practices in adult literacy programs based on a search using the Internet and referrals from key informants in the province;
- review of documents related to literacy policy and programs in the province. This included a review of selected submissions (those which addressed adult literacy) made to the provincial government during the consultations on the Strategic Literacy Plan, as well as other documents provided by the Department of Education and key informants from various organizations;
- case studies of four Basic Literacy or ABE Level I programs in the province, which were selected as examples of programs using different program approaches. Three of these examined specific programs and one examined a community-wide approach to literacy programming;
- interviews with 46 key informants/stakeholders from various government departments, literacy support organizations, and other organizations with an interest or stake in the adult literacy situation in the province (listing in Annex A);
- reviews of the approaches to adult literacy programming in four other provinces, through interviews with the manager of the program and selected providers, and a review of program documents.

1.3 Report organization

The report is organized as follows:

Section 2 provides an overview of the context for the evaluation in terms of the current situation for adult literacy in the province, and the evolution of policy and roles of various organizations. It also provides an overview of the current funding of adult literacy programs.

Sections 3 through 7 set out the findings in relation to each of the topics addressed. These sections include a profile of current programs, a profile of learners and learner outcomes, gaps in the current programming, what works in the current approach in the province, and the programs in other jurisdictions.

Section 8 includes the conclusions reached and considerations to be addressed by government as it develops its future approach to Basic Literacy/ABE Level I policy and programming. This section also includes a proposed model for program development and delivery.

2.0 Context for adult literacy programs

In this section the definition of literacy used in the evaluation is given and followed by a discussion of what is known about literacy levels and the relationship of literacy to social and economic well being of citizens.

2.1 The issue of literacy

2.1.1 The definition of literacy

The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) is a comparative study of literacy skills in 20 countries. The final report from this survey *Literacy in the Information Age*[1] was released in June 2000 and provides the world's first reliable and comparable estimates of the level and distribution of literacy skills in the adult population.

IALS defines literacy as: *the ability to understand and employ printed information in daily activities, at home, at work and in the community - to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential.*

In order to measure proficiency levels in the processing of information, IALS examined three literacy domains: prose, document and quantitative. For each domain, literacy proficiency was measured on a scale from 0 to 500. The scale was then divided into five broad literacy levels. More complete definitions are in the following table. Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs in Newfoundland and Labrador are designed to provide people with the skills to the IALS Level 2.

IALS LITERACY DEFINITIONS

Prose literacy: the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts including editorials, news stories, poems and fiction.

Document literacy: the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats, including job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables and charts.

Quantitative literacy: the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as balancing a chequebook, figuring out a tip, completing an order form or determining the amount of interest on a loan from an advertisement.

Level 1 indicates persons with very poor skills, where the individual may, for example, be unable to determine the correct amount of medicine to give a child from information printed on the package.

Level 2 respondents can deal only with material that is simple, clearly laid out, and in which the tasks involved are not too complex. It denotes a weak level of skill, but more hidden than Level 1. It identifies people who can read, but test poorly. They may have developed coping skills to manage everyday literacy demands, but their low level of proficiency makes it difficult for them to face novel demands, such as learning new job skills.

Level 3 is considered a suitable minimum for coping with demands of everyday life and work in a complex, advanced society. It denotes roughly the skill level required for successful secondary school completion and college entry. Like higher levels, it requires the ability to integrate several sources of information and solve more complex problems.

Levels 4 and 5 describe respondents who demonstrate command of higher-order information processing skills.

2.1.2 The Canadian context

Of all 20 countries included in IALS, Canada ranked 5th, 8th and 9th respectively in the three areas measured, i.e. prose, document and quantitative literacy. However, the distribution of literacy skills within countries was also examined. Issues of equity arise when there is a large discrepancy between people with the lowest and highest literacy skills, and the IALS final report states . . . "questions of why countries differ in this respect ought to concern citizens and policy makers." The report found the discrepancy between people with high and low literacy skills is far larger in Canada than it is in many European countries such as Denmark, Norway, Germany, Finland

and Sweden. For example, on the prose scale, Canada had the third largest differences of all countries surveyed.

2.1.3 The Newfoundland and Labrador context

The most recent study that compared provincial literacy levels to those in Canada as a whole is rather dated (Statistics Canada, 1990). However, it is known and widely accepted that literacy levels are lower in Newfoundland and Labrador than they are in other provinces. Thirty-nine per cent of our population aged 25 years and over has less than a high school education compared to twenty-eight per cent of the same age group for all of Canada.[2]

In the course of the evaluation, a number of key informants commented on their perceptions of possible shifts in literacy levels given the significant change in the economy, labour market, and out-migration that have occurred since the cod moratorium, as well as the investment made through TAGS in literacy programming (albeit for a relatively short period of time). This of course remains to be seen. Most of those we talked to perceived there is still a significant proportion of the population - from across the full age spectrum - who do not have the literacy levels envisaged in the IALS model.

2.1.4 Benefits and outcomes of literacy

Literacy in the Information Age states that literacy has direct and indirect returns for societies. Several interesting findings emerged from this study that relate to both human capital and labour market outcomes.

Literacy skills yield many benefits and wider social outcomes. For individuals, literacy contributes to personal development through improved participation in society and the labour market. Literacy also contributes to economic and social performance of society.

Key findings were:

LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES

- The chances of being unemployed decrease as literacy levels increase. The decline in unemployment was found to be greatest for those in the lower range of literacy scores. *This suggests that efforts to raise the literacy skills of individuals with* ***lower scores*** *would be more effective in reducing the likelihood of unemployment than efforts directed at people with higher scores*.

- Individuals with higher prose levels participate in paid employment to a higher degree (67% of adults at levels 1 and 2 vs. 82% at Levels 3 or 4/5).
- Increasing the literacy skills of the labour force will have beneficial effects on the upskilling of the workforce by increasing the probability of being in white-collar, high-skilled occupations.
- IALS data clearly indicate the percentage of people with relatively high incomes increases with level of literacy proficiency.
- Educational attainment is the most important determinant of earnings among the factors studied. But in many of the countries, literacy proficiency also has a substantial effect on earnings, a net effect that is independent of the effects of education. Thus the analysis supports the conclusion that there is a *measurable net return* to literacy skills in many countries.

HEALTH, CULTURE AND CIVIC SKILLS

- Life expectancy is higher in countries with a higher proportion of people at higher levels of prose literacy. Studies have shown individuals with higher educational attainment have healthier habits and lifestyles. In Canada, people with more years of education are less likely to smoke and are less likely to be overweight. These risk factors which are influenced by literacy can have a strong impact on health outcomes.
- Higher levels of literacy are associated with participation in voluntary community activities. There is also a measurable association between literacy and female representation in government. Countries with higher average scores on the prose scale have a greater share of their parliamentary seats held by women.

In summary, improving literacy levels and narrowing the gap between those with high and low literacy skills have been shown to lead to benefits for both individuals and society at large.

2.2 Evolution of the provision of literacy programs

2.2.1 Government policy

Over the past decade there have been several key statements and developments in provincial government policy on literacy. These occurred through initiatives focussed specifically on literacy as well as through government-wide strategies.

A Ministerial Advisory Committee on Literacy was established in 1989 by the Minister of Education. The committee's report *Literacy in a Changing Society; Policies, Perspectives and Strategies for Newfoundland and Labrador* was presented in 1989. It included a number of wide-ranging recommendations for policies, funding, program development and research in support of quality literacy programming.

The 1990 White Paper - *Equality, Excellence and Efficiency - a Post-Secondary Educational Agenda for the Future* - included a commitment to increase the emphasis on literacy and adult basic education in the community college system.

The Department of Education issued a Policy Statement on Adult Literacy in 1990 - *Literacy in an Achieving Society* - that provided a framework for a provincial adult literacy strategy to incorporate the public, private and volunteer sectors, and that established literacy as a provincial responsibility. The policy statement committed to the principles of:

- adults having a right to the means of achieving literacy;
- partnership efforts being used to achieve improvements in functional literacy levels;
- program delivery being developed within regional strategies using local resources and approaches.

The Strategic Economic Plan issued in 1992 included a recommendation to substantially increase initiatives to address adult literacy. It was recommended that these initiatives be extended beyond the traditional school and college system and be linked with federal and provincial training programs. A workplace literacy program was also recommended.

The Strategic Social Plan released in 1998 recognized the importance of measures to overcome discrimination and to eliminate barriers to full participation in the life of communities in order to achieve a goal of self-reliant, healthy, educated individuals and families living in safe and nurturing communities. The plan included an action to

support the provision of literacy and basic life-skills education to assist people in need to make informed choices and to become self-reliant.

The Strategic Literacy Plan released in 2000 is the government's current policy statement on literacy. The Plan sets out three goals:

- literacy levels which are among the highest in Canada;
- a culture which values literacy as a desirable goal for all people;
- an integrated approach to literacy development.

It also commits to measures to improve the accessibility and quality of adult literacy programs. These included collaboration with partners:

- to address the availability and sustainability of Basic Literacy services offered by community groups which use volunteers;
- to facilitate transition from Basic Literacy to ABE Levels II and III;
- to develop, with the College of the North Atlantic (CNA), strategies for continued access to ABE Levels I, II and III;
- to monitor and assess all delivery approaches to ensure quality and goal achievement by learners.

2.2.2 Program delivery

The evolution of adult literacy programs in the province has been sporadic and influenced largely by federal policy on this programming and the levels of federal funding.

The 1960's

Prior to the mid-1960's there were few formal programs available in the province. At that time, the federal government began funding academic upgrading across the country through the Basic Training for Skills Development (BTSD) program as part of its overall strategy for labour market skills development. The program was first delivered in the province at the Stephenville Adult Centre, where upwards of 1000 students pursued all levels of ABE at any one time.

The 1970's

In the ensuing decade, following the Stephenville lead, a variety of formal courses and options were offered throughout the province. By the mid-1970's, a literacy program was offered in each of the province's ten vocational schools, federally sponsored and providing income support to participants. The vocational schools also offered seats in the program (with no allowances) for those not eligible for federal sponsorship.

The Department of Education also operated up to 150 part-time evening upgrading programs in centres located throughout the province in this period.

In 1975, the first volunteer tutoring program was implemented by Teachers on Wheels, originally set up under the federal Opportunities for Youth summer program. This became a volunteer organization when a group of college instructors decided to set up a volunteer tutoring program to fill the gap for those individuals who could not or would not avail of the College system. Teachers on Wheels remains active on the Avalon Peninsula.

The 1980's

The introduction of the Grade 12 curriculum in the regular school system in the early 80's prompted a review and revamping of the ABE curriculum, as the ABE or BTSD certificate was not recognized as high school equivalency. The ABE curriculum was revised to provide for fairly formal programming at Level III equivalent to the high school program. An ABE Level I guide was included to provide for a more flexible, learner-centred approach to programming for learners at this level.

In this period, the Laubach organization first provided tutor training and established councils that organize and deliver local programs, primarily tutor programs.

The 1990's

In the early 1990's, private post-secondary institutions were first authorized to deliver ABE.

In this period the northern cod moratorium led to high numbers of displaced workers with low formal education and a program response to provide literacy and ABE. The TAGS program response provided the federal funding to meet this demand. In this period, the public college system reduced its delivery of ABE. Private institutions

grew in number and presence in communities where previously only volunteer tutoring programs were offered.

Frontier College became established in the province in this period. In Labrador the organization works with the Labrador Institute for Northern Studies with a community development focus. In St. John's, they train tutors for other literacy organizations.

Current programming

Currently, programming is delivered predominantly through community-based organizations, with some private school delivery (for sponsored learners) and at some campuses of the College of North Atlantic.

2.3 Roles of organizations

The roles of various organizations have also changed over the years.

2.3.1 Department of Education

The Department of Education was responsible for literacy policy as well as direct delivery through the vocational schools until the establishment of the community college system, when the Department took on an arm's length role in respect to delivery. A Literacy Policy Office was established in 1988 which was intended to have a direct involvement in literacy development and monitoring of programs. Limited provincial funding led to constraints on the Policy Office fulfilling its mandate.

In 1994, the provincial government devolved responsibility for leading the literacy policy and program delivery to the Literacy Development Council (LDC). An arm's length organization, the Council was empowered to fund raise in the public, as well as to develop and coordinate a comprehensive strategy of literacy programs and services. The Council carries out a number of coordination and communications functions (through a 1-800 number, newsletters, presentations and promotional contests, and awards). It also collaborates with a range of organizations, including joint sponsorship of conferences. It is also responsible for raising funds for the new Endowment Fund.

In 1998, government again became more hands on in policy development. A Literacy Unit was established within the Department of Education to oversee the development of a Strategic Literacy Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador. In 1999, an Assistant

Deputy Minister-Literacy was appointed to assume overall responsibility for literacy development and to coordinate the implementation of the Strategic Literacy Plan.

On the programming side of the department, there have always been divisions or at least consultant resources with responsibilities for literacy programming. These resources have diminished over time. During the TAGS period, the consultant resources were augmented by monitors who oversaw the quality of ABE programming in those organizations registered as private training institutions. At the present time, there is only one consultant with responsibility for all levels of ABE.

2.3.2 Other provincial departments

The former Department of Social Services provided financial support to individuals for participation in institutional ABE programs at levels II and III. The department also funded some community organizations (primarily in St. John's) for delivery of employment preparation programming for its clients which included a literacy component.

With the formation of the new Department of Human Resources and Employment (HRE), a program redesign process was implemented. Funding and programming now focuses on two priorities: provision of income support and returning income assistance recipients to employment.

The department has also moved away from a role in directly supporting educational and community-based programs. HRE now transfers a portion of program funds to the Department of Education to be distributed to the CNA to assist in the cost of delivering ABE II and III level programs to HRE clients. They are now examining models for employment-preparation programs with a view to developing an approach that is more equitably available across the province and more relevant to their mandate. There is potential to integrate literacy training into this model, but the department does not foresee a return to sponsoring community-based programming that is primarily focussed on literacy.

The Department of Health and Community Services has an interest in ensuring a literate population, as this impacts on the effectiveness of health services in a variety of ways, including the ability of health system users to participate in primary health care programs that focus on education and prevention. They cost-share Family Resource Centres in partnership with Health Canada. A number of these centres offer

various forms of child and family literacy programs, often in partnership with other community-based organizations.

The Department of Justice supports literacy programs at the Corrections Centres in the province, most of which are delivered through CNA.

2.3.3 Human Resources Development Canada

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) first took an active role in funding provincial institutions to deliver academic upgrading in the mid 1960's. The department has been the primary funder of this type of programming, and its policies have largely shaped which organizations are involved in delivering literacy programs at any one time. The criteria for funding of academic upgrading have become more restricted over the years as the department has reshaped its policies for labour market development and moved away from funding what is seen as primarily an area of provincial jurisdiction.

The National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) was formed in 1987 and has been actively involved since 1988 in working with its partners to promote adult literacy in Canada, but not to support direct delivery. NLS funding within the province increased significantly under TAGS, and the program was the generator of much of the development of materials, community awareness activities and assessment of needs carried out in that period.

The northern cod moratorium saw a significant increase in HRDC funding of literacy programs for displaced fishery workers for a period under TAGS until the program was refocused away from training to income support. HRDC also funded additional staff within the Department of Education to monitor the quality of programs in the registered private training institutions, during a period when their numbers increased significantly.

In the mid-1990's, the elimination of Consolidated Revenue Funding for employment programs, and the move to fund all training through the EI Account, led to a gap in training sponsorship for those not eligible for EI. This was mitigated somewhat by the introduction of an expansion of the eligibility criteria for programs to people who had a previous history of EI eligibility. A new array of employment programs introduced in 1996 also provided for flexibility in funding organizations for program delivery to meet the needs of EI eligible clients. In Newfoundland this included the support of

literacy programs in open learning centres. These centres were also able to serve people not eligible for EI, since the centres were open to others at no additional cost.

More recently, HRDC has tightened its policies and usage of funds so that they focus only on EI eligible clients and on programs that show employment results. The Department now provides funding to individuals to enable them to purchase their own training as part of a back to work action plan. Organizations are not funded to deliver training programs.

2.3.4 Public colleges

The role of the public college system in delivery of adult literacy programs has fluctuated over the years. Activity has largely been dependent on federal funding and the use of grant-in-aid funding for programs has been limited.

CNA has no formal policy on their role in offering ABE Level I. In practice they see their role being to provide post-secondary programs, and do not envisage a return to offering Level I across the system, although a few campuses that have well-established evening or outreach literacy programs continue to offer these programs. CNA does see their organization playing a role in the development of a more coordinated approach to delivery of community-based literacy programs. The college president felt that they have expertise and resources to offer (e.g. staff who do learning needs assessments) that could be offered as part of a continuum of supports to learners in the community. The capacity to do this may vary among campuses depending on the level of demand from CNA students.

2.3.5 Community organizations

Community-based organizations are the primary vehicle for delivery of literacy programs. Laubach is the most extensive, with approximately 24 councils established across the province. Frontier College also plays a role in training tutors in St. John's and through a community development approach in Labrador.

While there is no provincial coalition of organizations at present, the Labrador Literacy Information and Action Network provides this link for community-based organizations in that region. LLIAN takes a community development approach to informing communities of the various options for delivering literacy programming, and then assisting them to develop the approach decided on. Non-traditional approaches such as community oral history and theatre programs have been developed in some areas. LLIAN has developed a program to assist organizations manage their literacy

programs. This has been delivered via distance technology in Labrador and the Northwest Territories.

Many other organizations that provide services, counselling and other supports to people with a range of special needs often work collaboratively with community-based literacy providers. There are more of these organizations in the urban areas of the province and it is there that the links are more established.

2.4 Current funding for adult literacy programs

In this section an analysis of the sources and level of funding for adult literacy is provided.

2.4.1 Funding sources

There are two primary sources of funds for programs:

- Provincial Department of Education - the department provides funding, through the Literacy Development Council, for providers of literacy programs for adults and children. It also provides operating funds to the Council to carry out its work.
- National Literacy Secretariat - the NLS (a branch of HRDC) provides funds for a range of adult literacy program improvements and supports (including family literacy where the central focus in on the parent), but not for ongoing program delivery.

Recently, the Province and NLS implemented a coordinated approach to their calls for proposals for funding and approval of projects. This is intended to make best use of the funds available.

Two other key sources are HRDC and the Workplace Health Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC), which fund the tuition and income support for a limited number of adults in ABE Level I programs in classroom-based programs in the province who are eligible for their respective programs. Accurate information on the amount of this sponsorship was not available at the time of this review. Programs are able to offset some general operating costs through the tuition paid on behalf of individual learners.

The College of the North Atlantic funds ABE Level I programs at two campuses we interviewed through grant in aid.

The Department of Justice covers costs of literacy programs at five correctional institutions (all but one of these programs are delivered by CNA).

The Departments of Human Resources and Employment and Health and Community Services do not as a rule fund adult literacy. However in 1999-2000 they contributed to short-term funding for the Rabbittown Learners' Program, pending government decisions on support to adult literacy programs.

2.4.2 Analysis of funding

Of interest for this evaluation is the overall level of funding that is allocated for adult literacy programming, and also the proportion of funding that is allocated for program delivery as compared to that for program improvements. A common concern of providers and key informants interviewed was the lack of sustained funding and the disproportionate funding available for improvements through the NLS compared to funding for ongoing operations.

The following table sets out the funding allocated in the 1999-2000 fiscal year to literacy programming in the province by the two primary sources - the Department of Education and National Literacy Secretariat. It should be noted that the provincial funding is not exclusively for adult literacy programming, whereas the federal funding is.

Based on the project approval information provided to us, we have made two estimates:

- the proportion of funding allocated to adult literacy *programming* (both for direct delivery and program improvements);
- the proportion of funding allocated to adult literacy *providers* for delivery.

These categories of spending are ours and not the departments'. In reality, neither the Department of Education nor NLS has sub-allocations of funding for providers versus support organizations. We took this approach in order to paint a picture of how much adult literacy is funded in relation other levels of literacy programming, and how much of these resources is allocated for delivery versus improvement type initiatives. The two main concerns of providers and key informants we interviewed were the overall

lack of sustained funding and the disproportionate amount allocated for improvements versus delivery.

Projects are approved through an open call for proposals against a series of eligible activities. In the joint call for proposals in May 2000, it was indicated that some limited funds would be used for program delivery, which was intended as a response to the system-wide concern for the lack of sustained program funding.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Half the provincial grant funding is allocated to adult literacy.
- Federal funding (for improvements) is more than double provincial grant funding.
- 22 percent of the federal funds (for improvements) are allocated to projects that involve some program delivery.
- Only 27 percent of funding overall is allocated to program providers for delivery.

The information in this table clearly substantiates the concerns of those we interviewed about the low level of funding for delivery, the disproportionate funding available for improvements from the federal government, and the use of project funding for improvements to offset program operating costs.

Table 1

Profile of funding for adult literacy programs in 1999-2000 fiscal year

	FUNDING CATEGORY	PROVINCIAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	FEDERAL NATIONAL LITERACY SECRETARIAT
A.	Total funding for *all* literacy programs	$431,000 in total comprising: $131,000 to the Literacy Development Council for its operations $300,000 for grants to organizations through the Literacy Development Council	$945,953*
B.	Total for all grants	$300,000	$945,953
C.	Estimated amount of grants to *providers of adult* literacy programs (based on a review of projects approved) for: • Direct delivery (in the case of grants approved by Dept. of Education/LDC) • Projects to improve programs that involved some actual delivery (in the case of NLS grants)	$123,627	$216,532
D.	Estimated amount of grants allocated to organizations to carry out *adult literacy program improvement initiatives* (not including delivery) to benefit programs in general (based on a review of projects approved)	$23,964	$729,421
E.	Proportion of grants made to *adult* literacy (C + D ÷ B)	49%	100%
F.	Proportion of grants made to adult literacy *providers* (C ÷ B)	41%	22%
G.	Proportion of total grants made to adult literacy providers © ÷ B) (Federal and Provincial))	27%	

* The regular annual allocation of NLS funding to Newfoundland and Labrador is $752,000. In 1999-2000, an additional $193,953 was expended. This came from TAGS funding that had been carried forward (reprofiled) from previous years' allocations for TAGS, and was the final year for this additional funding.

3.0 Profile of Current Programs

This section sets out a profile of the various approaches to delivering literacy programs for adults in the province. The distinction between these two types of programs is as follows:

ABE Level I - Program developed by the Department of Education, as part of the overall ABE program. The core resource for this program is the ABE Level I Program Guide, updated in 1995. The guide sets out general learning objectives and guidance to instructors on how to apply these in a flexible, learner-centred program. Private and community-based providers certified to deliver the ABE Level I program must meet standards established for staff qualifications, teacher/student ratios, etc.

Basic Literacy - Instruction delivered by programs other than those certified to delivery ABE Level I. Delivery is through informal tutoring programs or in classroom/group settings. In some communities in Labrador, alternate methods such as community theatre are used.

Both types of programs serve learners at the lower literacy levels, from those unable to read or write through to those functioning at the approximate equivalent of the IALS level 2 (or grade six in regular school).

This section examines characteristics of programs and the perspectives of providers' and key informants on key literacy issues.

3.1 Highlights

Program availability

- Basic Literacy or ABE Level I is offered at about 55 sites throughout Newfoundland and Labrador. Most programs offer this in combination with other literacy programming. Of the 30 providers interviewed, 14 are offering a Basic Literacy program along with family literacy and GED, 6 offer ABE Level I, an additional 6 offer all levels of ABE and one offers ABE Level I in the French language.

- ABE Level I programming is offered in only limited sites of the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) on the island (those that have had a long-standing program, well-established in the community). CNA has not offered this program recently in Labrador (despite a recognized need, especially for English as a second language programming) as no learners at this level have been sponsored by government in that region.
- ABE Level I programming is offered in a handful of private institutions and community-based settings such as the St. John's Rabbittown Learning Centre, Discovery Centres, the Corner Brook Employment Preparation Centre and a couple of Literacy Councils.
- Basic Literacy programs outside of the formal ABE Level I are being delivered by tutoring and a few classroom-based programs. Providers are primarily using the Laubach model supplemented with other materials. These programs are mainly delivered by Literacy Councils or Teachers on Wheels.

Funding

- There is clear evidence of a lack of sustained and structured funding for literacy programming.
- Several informal tutoring programs operate totally on volunteer effort.
- Funding for other programs is ad hoc through a variety of sources including the Literacy Development Council, the National Literacy Secretariat, tuition support for some learners, and in-kind contributions from other partners for rent-free space, etc. A key concern of providers is the continual requirement to apply for project funding (designed for program improvements) which helps pay ongoing operating costs.
- The level of funding varies widely among programs. Salary rates for paid staff also vary.
- A couple of CNA campuses interviewed allocate funds from their grant in aid for the ABE Level I program - others offer this only if sponsorship is available from other sources, such as HRDC.
- HRE does not support ABE Level I learners, as priority has been placed on using the program funds available for those clients deemed closer to skill training or

employment. This was noted as a gap in support by a number of providers, as many learners at the Basic Literacy level are on income support.

Program take-up

- Most providers reported delivering their programs to small numbers of learners for the 1998-2000 period. Of the 41 organizations who provided learner names, 61% served only one to five learners at the Basic Literacy/ABE Level I level. Thirty-two per cent had anywhere from six to 24 learners and only three organizations who supplied learner names served more than 25.
- Providers attributed this low utilization of programming to several contributing factors. These generally centered around learner access to suitable/sustained programming, societal stigma associated with programs, and motivational issues or the lack of a catalyst for the learner, and lack of resources to market programs.

The programs themselves

- Programs dedicate the greatest proportion of their time to reading, writing and numeracy. Those surveyed report that these subjects take up 75% to 100% of their time. Life skills were not a significant portion of programming; however, many respondents note that life skills form the companion resources needed to teach reading, writing and numeracy. Similarly, personal counselling was not prominent in the programs and most steered their staff away from providing this service unless they were qualified to do so.
- Intake assessments of the learner and their needs in both informal tutoring and classroom programs are, for the most part, carried out informally. Only a few programs develop extensive written learner plans.
- Most basic literacy programs talked of customizing the program to match the interests and needs of learners. However, this approach is not used systematically and appears to be less developed than it is in other jurisdictions which have developed province-wide programs with a structured curriculum based on learning outcomes, and using materials, planning and assessment tools that are based on the goals and needs of individual learners.
- While computers were available in virtually all programs, they were not often considered to be a big part of programming.

- Linkages with the community varied significantly from program to program. Some described themselves as independent deliverers, while others talked of the links established with numerous community organizations.

Instructor and tutor qualifications

- The Department of Education sets out academic qualifications in their Standards and Submissions Requirements for Private Training Institutions to Deliver and Certify the ABE Program.[3] Community-based organizations certified to deliver ABE Level I also are expected to comply with these standards. The College of the North Atlantic reported that their ABE instructors are required to hold the same academic qualifications as would be expected of instructors for any of their other programs.
- Academic qualifications sought for coordinators and instructors in informal programs were typically a degree or equivalent work experience.
- For the volunteer tutors used in informal programs, requirements were less stringent and programs often require only an ability to read and write competently and a commitment of tutor time. Still, many tutors come from professional backgrounds.
- Professional development for instructors and tutors was seen as seriously lacking and much needed.

Issues for providers

- Key issues among providers of both Basic Literacy and ABE Level I programs were lack of sustained funding, the need for ongoing professional development, need for leadership in the literacy movement, and the unmet need that results from the low participation rate of learners.

3.2 Detailed findings

The detailed information that follows comes from a combination of a survey of providers and interviews with key informants from organizations that provide a range of support functions for literacy programs. The methodology used to gather the information is described below.

Methodology: Survey of providers

A listing of organizations that deliver Basic Literacy or ABE programs was developed from information provided by the Literacy Development Council and Department of Education. A letter was distributed to these organizations to inform them of the study and to ask for their participation in the evaluation process. Organizations were then contacted by telephone to determine if each currently delivered or had delivered Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs in the 1998 to 2000 period. If they had, they were asked to provide the names and contact numbers for participants in that period, using a protocol for obtaining the learners permission for release of this information. They were also advised that they may be contacted later for an interview about their program. Any organizations that could not be reached by phone were sent a second follow up letter setting out the details of the information we were requesting, and asking that they contact us.

At the conclusion of this process, we had made contact with 55 organizations that currently deliver Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs or that had done so at some point during 1998-2000. Telephone interviews were set up with 30 of these. Other programs which had closed for the summer were not reached, most notably, those at the College of North Atlantic. Also, only one of the five Correctional Centre programs was interviewed.

An open-ended interview guide was faxed to organizations before the interview to allow for gathering of information and reflection on the topics covered. (See Annex B for a copy of the guide.) Interviews generally took 1.5 hours.

Methodology: Interviews with key informants in support organizations

Support organizations were interviewed using an open-ended interview guide (See Annex C).

3.2.1 Basic Literacy/ABE Level I providers

The following charts set out the organizations identified for this evaluation that currently provide or who had provided Basic Literacy/ABE Level I during the 1998-2000 period, organized by type of program provided. In some cases, organizations that use a classroom approach supplement this with on-site or off-site tutoring.

The providers have been categorized by the type of program they provide:

- an informal tutoring program (one-on-one tutoring generally provided in the learner's home or less structured environment, such as a library), or
- a part-time or full-time classroom program. Part-time programs were deemed to be those offering less than 25 hours of instruction per week.

The organizations listed consist of private training institutions, the College of the North Atlantic, Open Learning Centres, and a variety of non-government organizations. It should be noted that Spell Read Canada and the Discovery Centres operate as 'for-profit' organizations.

INTERVIEWED FOR THIS EVALUATION

INFORMAL TUTORING PROGRAMS (ONE-ON-ONE)	CLASSROOM PROGRAMS (PART-TIME) (LESS THAN 25 HOURS PER WEEK)	CLASSROOM PROGRAMS (FULL-TIME)
Battle Harbour Literacy Council	Deer Lake (Community Learning Centre)	Rabbittown Learning Centre, St. John's (also offer part time evening program on pilot basis)
Bell Island Brighter Futures	Buckmaster Circle Community Centre, St. John's	Association for New Canadians, St. John's
Burin Peninsula Literacy Council, Marystown	Operating Engineers Training College, St. John's (Hours depend on need); also deliver tutoring program to learners not on site	College of the North Atlantic Outreach, Grand Falls
Cartwright Literacy Council	College of the North Atlantic-Bay St. George Campus	Learning Centre Corner Brook
Conception Bay North Literacy Council	College of the North Atlantic - Labrador West Campus (no longer offering)	Discovery Centres (4): • Headquarters-St. John's • Bonavista • Chapel Arm • Clarenville
Fogo Island Literacy Association	Green Bay South Education Centre	
Gander & Area Literacy Council		
Hope Literacy Council, Milltown		
Humber Literacy Council, Corner Brook		
Labrador White Bear Council		
Partners in Learning Centre, Weste Ste. Modeste		
Salmonier Correctional Institute		
Spell Read Canada		
St. John's Brighter Futures Coalition Holy Cross Family Resource Centre		
Teachers on Wheels, St. John's		
The Gathering Place, St. John's		

NOT INTERVIEWED FOR THIS EVALUATION

INFORMAL TUTORING PROGRAMS	CLASSROOM
Bay St. George Literacy Council	Baltimore Community Education Centre, Ferryland
Exploits Area Laubach Council, Grand Falls	Correctional Centres (5): • Bishop's Falls Correctional Centre • Her Majesty's Penitentiary Learning Centre • Labrador Correctional Centre • Newfoundland and Labrador Correctional Centre for Women • West Coast Correctional Centre
Gros Morne Literacy Council, Norris Point	College of the North Atlantic(6): • Placentia Campus • Clarenville Campus • Corner Brook Campus • Gander Campus • Davis Inlet Learning Centre (ESL) • North West River Learning Centre
Lake Melville Literacy Council, Goose Bay	Discovery Centre (3): • Bay Roberts • Botwood • Harbour Grace
Learning Information for Everyone (LIFE) Inc., Durell	
Partners in Learning Literacy Centre, Weste Ste. Modeste	
Port Hope Simpson Learning Centre	
Tri-Town Literacy Council, Port Saunders	
St. Barbe-Castor River North Literacy Council	
White Hills Literacy Council, Green Bay	

Our research revealed a number of organizations that no longer offer ABE Level I but who had done so in the past. Most notable among these were twelve campuses of the College of the North Atlantic and one community education centre. In addition, there were two organizations that were certified to offer ABE Level I but had no applicants during 1998-2000. These were the Atlantic Training Construction Centre in St. John's and the Burgeo Education Centre. As for Basic Literacy programming, three Literacy Councils informed us they no longer offer this.

3.2.2 Program availability

Basic Literacy or ABE Level I is offered at about 55 sites across the province in most geographic areas, with the exception of some areas of coastal Labrador. Most providers offer this in combination with other literacy programming. Of the 30 providers interviewed:

- fourteen offer Basic Literacy (eight of these also offer family literacy and GED preparation programs)
- six offer ABE Level I;
- one offers ABE Level I in French at five sites;
- six offer ABE Levels I, II and III;
- one program tutors those in ABE Levels I, II and III;
- ABE Level I programming is offered in only limited sites of the College of the North Atlantic (CNA) on the island (those that have had a long-standing program, well-established in the community). CNA has not offered this program recently in Labrador (despite a recognized need, especially for English as a second language programming) as no learners at this level have been sponsored by government in that region;
- ABE Level I programming is offered in a handful of private institutions and community-based settings such as the St. John's Rabbittown Learning Centre, Discovery Centres, the Corner Brook Employment Preparation Centre and a couple of Literacy Councils;
- Basic Literacy programs outside of the formal ABE Level I are being delivered by tutoring and a few classroom-based programs. Providers are primarily using the Laubach model supplemented with other materials. These programs are mainly delivered by Literacy Councils or Teachers on Wheels.

3.2.3 Utilization of programming by learners

The actual number of participants enrolled in Basic Literacy and ABE Level I programs in the province is very low. The informal tutoring programs served in the range of less than five learners to a high of 58 learners in the last year, while classroom programs reported serving a range of less than five learners up to a high of 41. Only two programs had a wait list, and in one case this was due to a lack of tutors.

Low levels of participation is a common finding in adult literacy programs. The literature shows that participation rates for populations with low literacy levels are estimated to be between 6% and 10% of those who could or should be in literacy programs.[4]

3.2.4 Program Structure

Respondents were asked to identify what proportion of program time was spent on reading, writing and numeracy; life skills; and personal counselling.

By far, the greatest proportion of time is devoted to reading, writing and numeracy. This finding was relatively the same whether the instruction occurred in a classroom or informal setting and generally represented about 75% to 100% of time. The percentage of time devoted to life skills was low, ranging from none to 20%. Some respondents noted that life skills were blended into the reading, writing and numeracy as the materials used in daily living formed the companion resources needed to teach reading, writing and numeracy. Personal counselling also was not a significant component in programming. Some providers noted that their tutors or instructors were not professionals and steered their volunteers or paid staff away from counselling. The range of time spent on this activity was found to be in the range of 0% to 10%. One reported 15% and this was for an inmate population. Most providers said that they were able to refer learners who needed counselling to organizations for this help, although availability was usually better in urban areas. Access to this support was seen as an important factor in ensuring retention and progress of learners with non-academic needs.

3.2.5 Approach to needs assessment and learning plans

For the most part, providers described their assessment processes as informal, relaxed and non-threatening. Many providers stress that the adult learner needs early success and, for this reason, they shy away from formal testing and rely on observation techniques. The process often consists of a short interview which may include some discussion about personal goals, hours of availability in order to work out a schedule, and their school experiences. Occasionally, they may do a few short exercises with learners and give a brief tour of the facilities. The tutor/instructor may take notes for their own benefit. This non-threatening approach is consistent with the literature on good practices for literacy programming.

Some users of the Laubach curriculum may use the Laubach Challenger materials to assess learner Skill Levels from levels one to four. The Association for New Canadians use Canada Benchmarks Assessment. Spell Read Canada use a 1 - 1 ½ hour assessment process which is reviewed and interpreted by an auditory specialist in Prince Edward Island.

Only a few providers surveyed produce formal learner plans. The documents consist of learner goals, strengths, weaknesses, program needed and materials needed. Some providers spoke of informal notes that instructors kept for reference which captured similar information. For low level literacy, providers stressed it is often difficult to develop long-term plans and many only develop plans for one week at a time.

It is our conclusion that the assessment and planning processes in place are less structured than those used in other jurisdictions emphasizing learner centred programming with feedback geared to the goals of learners. For instance, in some provinces, learner portfolios were developed at the request of the learners.

3.2.6 Curriculum

The curriculum for Basic Literacy is, out of necessity, very flexible. A significant number of the Basic Literacy programs throughout the province follow the core Laubach program with some supplementation. The Laubach Way to Reading (LWR) takes learners from a zero reading level to a fourth grade level. Reading, writing and listening skills are taught together for a complete learning approach.

The Laubach program itself is a subject centered approach; it begins with core materials and recommends that the instructor supplement materials in an effort to suit the individual learner. This, however, may not necessarily result in a learner-centered approach. There is a reliance on seasoned teachers to be adept at drawing on everything they have access to and adding their own ideas to stimulate learning. Materials are often matched to learner interests and personal goals in order to stimulate learning. Providers indicated that learners often make suggestions for additions to the program materials. Additional materials mentioned were Newfoundland-based materials developed by Calvin Coish and Helen Woodrow, newspapers, cheque books, drivers' manuals, household bills, culturally relevant materials, menus, dictionaries, atlases, telephone books, television guides, etc. The Laubach program is often used as a tool to measure progress.

Other jurisdictions (such as Manitoba) use a more systematic learner centred approach. There the Department of Education has developed a core curriculum based on learning outcomes that is used by community-based organizations delivering basic literacy. Programs avoid the use of pre-prepared materials; instead instructors and learners develop and use materials that are relevant to the goals and needs of individual learners within the context of the overall curriculum. As well assessments used when the learner begins and throughout the program use materials that are relevant to the individual.

Outside of Laubach materials, the PLATO curriculum software on CD-Rom is being used in a small number of sites, and The ABCC: Literacy Program (A Basic Culture Critical Literacy Program) developed by Dr. William Fagan is also being used by a couple of the providers interviewed. Spell Read Canada follows a very specific curriculum using phonemic analysis training using 44 sounds.

For those providers who deliver the formal ABE Level I program, the approach is slightly more structured, and follows the guidelines and curriculum set out by the Department of Education. This guide requires instructors to seek out or develop materials relevant to general learning objectives.

Providers themselves did not report any extensive efforts on their part to develop materials or curricula. Some exceptions were Teachers on Wheels, which received grants to develop curriculum. In this case, dramatized radio plays on CBC were transcribed into books. The Labrador White Bear Council received an National Literacy Secretariat grant to develop two workbooks for adult learners. Culturally relevant materials, pictures and stories were gathered, customized and published by Robinson Blackmore. Workbooks contain exercises on completion of postal money orders, cheques, maps of Newfoundland and Labrador and economic zones to make the material meaningful to learners. The Grand Falls CNA Outreach began as a resource centre for instructors and continues to develop materials for its learners.

Most providers were satisfied or very satisfied with the curriculum and materials available to them to meet their learners needs. They were less satisfied with the time they consume seeking out interesting materials that relate to learners' daily lives or reflect Newfoundland or Canadian culture. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with the amount of American content in the Laubach materials. One respondent suggested the Department of Education co-ordinate the collection of all materials that have been

gathered over the years from various instructors to reduce duplication of effort by providers.

Overall, the programs in this province were not found to be as innovative in their curriculum and materials as those we interviewed elsewhere that are based on a highly learner-centred approach in curriculum, materials and assessments. For instance, Manitoba's program has the learner playing a leadership role in identifying goals, bringing materials to class relevant to their needs, and assessments which involve the individual demonstrating their skill level in using materials specific to their goals. This we conclude is a function of the environment in which programs operate in Newfoundland and Labrador.

3.2.7 Tools (computers, Internet access, computerized software)

Computers were available in virtually all programs. While some instructors commented that it is not a big part of their program, computers do enhance and reinforce the learning. Computerized literacy software is not used to any great degree.

All but one of the formal programs offer Internet access whereas four of the informal programs stated Internet access was not available. The Internet was deliberately not available to inmates for security reasons and costs were a prohibitive factor for others. Using the Internet did not play a large role in the delivery of programming, and it is used in a limited way by providers to seek out information and materials.

It is our conclusion that the use of computers for both instruction and professional development/networking is an area that should be developed in a more systematic way.

3.2.8 Qualifications of co-ordinators, instructors and tutors

According to the Department of Education Standards and Submission Requirements for Private Institutions to Deliver and Certify the ABE Program (including Level I), instructors must:

- hold an Education or Vocational Education Degree and have completed at least six university courses in the subject area they teach; or
- have completed an undergraduate degree with at least 10 education courses, including an internship/practicum program and have completed at least six university courses in the subject area they teach; and/or

- possess an Adult Education diploma from a recognized college or university with an undergraduate degree in the subject areas they teach; or
- demonstrate a combination of credentials and experiential background which is deemed suitable by the Department.

In certifying programs, the department looks for instructors with courses in such areas as special education, adult education, or the subject area within ABE that instructors teach (e.g. mathematics, English, science). There is no specific requirement for courses in reading. Private institutions are certified to deliver all levels of ABE. Only one program - Rabbittown Learners Program - is certified to deliver ABE Level I only.

With the exception of Rabbittown Learning Centre (which requires a high school certificate and personal suitability to relate to and instruct the range of learners that access their program), all surveyed providers offering classroom-based programs require instructors to hold degrees in Education, Vocational Education (Memorial University has now changed this program to post-secondary learning) or Social Sciences. The Operating Engineers Training College seeks the nine credit certificate in Vocational Education or equivalent training.

Our research showed that academic qualifications of the program co-ordinators for informal tutoring programs are typically a degree or equivalent work experience. Only one program reported advertising for a co-ordinator with no set educational criteria.

Overall, the qualifications sought for tutors were less stringent. The criteria were often an ability to read and write competently, a willingness to commit time for a period of three to four weeks per week, and in some instances character references and a certificate of conduct. Many providers stated that, despite their more relaxed requirements for tutors, their roster of tutors come from a wide variety of professional backgrounds. For the most part, attracting tutors is not seen as problematic. Issues around retention are burnout, relocations, tutor turnover in university towns, and an occasional poor match between learner and tutor.

3.2.9 Professional development

Orientation of tutors and instructors

The approaches to orientation of tutors and instructors vary. However, informal tutoring programs appear to offer more tutor and instructor orientation than do the classroom-based programs. When orientation is provided, it is done mostly through mini-workshops. Some providers offer no formal orientation to their tutors or instructors other than informal discussions about the learner and materials.

Frontier College delivers a two-day training program for students at Memorial University and places them as tutors with organizations in St. John's delivering various types of literacy programs.

Laubach Literacy of Canada offers an initial ten-to-twelve hour Laubach Way to Reading Workshop. Geographic considerations or insufficient numbers of participants sometimes mean that Laubach orientation cannot be offered as needed.

Teachers on Wheels offers a mandatory seven or eight hour training workshop over the course of two evenings. This provides an overview of the organization and offers tips. A manual outlines expectations and probationary period requirements.

Spell Read Canada has the most lengthy orientation. Instructors receive eight days of formal training in Prince Edward Island. New instructors observe qualified instructors in the classroom for two weeks to a month. This is followed by supervised classroom experience. An assessment is conducted after 10 weeks, followed by an additional four days of training and a final assessment.

A couple of providers interviewed had participated in the two-day in service that was formerly offered by the Department of Education to private institutions. In their view, this focussed on administrative details and not an actual orientation to literacy instruction.

Ongoing Professional Development Activities

Professional development often occurs at the annual general meetings of Laubach Literacy of Canada. These include workshops on various topics, and providers rated these sessions highly. Often, these meetings are the only opportunity to network.

Certified Laubach trainers travel to deliver mini-workshops on such topics as reviewing customized plans for learners. Occasionally, professional development is offered by Laubach to other community groups, e.g., Challenger program in high school and post-secondary settings.

Teachers on Wheels received National Literacy Secretariat funding last year to deliver ten professional development workshops. Topics were developed with the input of the tutors and include themes such as "How do I breathe new life for seasoned tutors?", "Current trends, theories", "How to teach spelling", "How to get learners to write for me".

One noteworthy professional development activity took place in the form of a Learners' Conference organized by an adult learner in February 1998 for adult learners, but which was also attended by literacy providers and support organizations. A panel of learners spoke on what motivated them and offered new perspectives on teaching styles, learner needs, etc.

LLIAN developed and delivered a program to assist providers to manage their literacy programs. This has been delivered via the Internet in Labrador and the North West Territories.

Professional development needs

Respondents clearly stated that there is not enough professional development offered. Recommendations were made for regular meetings of providers to allow discussion of what works and what does not and debriefing on techniques. Learner involvement in these professional development activities was suggested.

Also recommended was the development of a Literacy Certificate that perhaps the Literacy Development Council could offer. It was also suggested that the Department of Education should set up professional development activities at least once a year and that attendance be mandatory.

The Literacy Development Council is currently developing a 108 hour tutor training program, to be delivered using existing resource materials identified through a search within the province and elsewhere. Depending on the final program design, this may meet the needs of providers in the province as well as their capacity to participate. Certainly, the providers are seeking a centrally developed and delivered professional development program, with resources allocated to cover the costs of participation. Our contacts with other provinces show that there are professional development programs in place that might be helpful in the design of a program for Newfoundland and Labrador.

3.2.10 Funding

Providers were asked to estimate the annual funding they receive from various sources. It is evident that there is much variation across programs.

Informal tutoring programs

Informal tutoring programs with no paid staff (the majority of such programs) either receive no funds and operate totally by volunteer efforts, or receive a small grant (usually $300 from Laubach and LDC) each year. Some operate from or link with Family Resource Centres which provide access to some operating supports.

The budgets for tutoring programs with paid coordinators range from $28,000 to $120,000 annually. This comes primarily from provincial or NLS grants, complemented by local cash and in-kind contributions.

Classroom-based programs

Most classroom community-based programs indicated their budget was around $25,000 a year. Rabbittown is currently receiving funding for a set period. When funded annually by HRDC their requirement was $140,000 a year, which they indicate reflects their requirements. The CNA program in Grand Falls with two instructors and rented space is estimated at $140,000 a year to operate. Private schools estimate the per diem for each learner is in the $60 to $90 range.

Salaries

Salary information for paid staff was difficult to analyze comprehensively due to a number of factors. Not all respondents supplied information and those who did may not have included employment duration or hours of work.

Broadly, paid instructors and co-ordinators salaries ranged from a low of $8.16 per hour to a high of approximately $24.50 per hour or $48,000.00 annually. Salary scales for instructors within the public college system are in accordance with current collective agreements.

Due to the limitations on the data supplied, it was not possible to calculate an average or typical salary level.

3.2.11 Linkages with community

Most providers named a number of organizations that offered assistance in the delivery of their program. A small number of providers could not identify any significant linkages and felt they were independent deliverers.

Among the identified community linkages were: Community Services Volunteer Centre, MUN Learner Volunteer Centre, Laubach Literacy of Canada, High Schools, School Boards, Community Education Centre committees, Regional Economic Development Boards, College of the North Atlantic, YMCA/YWCA, Seniors Resource Centre, Town Councils, Development Councils, Emmanuel House, John Howard Society, Provincial Department of Human Resources and Employment, Unions, Ready Centre, Literacy Development Council and Human Resources Development Canada.

The supports mentioned ranged from services such as provision of space, reasonable rents and donations of resource materials to offering an extended support network for learners. The network of community links is also used by providers for many other services. These community links often provide learner referrals, networking opportunities, provide academic or technical advice, or refer learners to other social programming.

The strength of the community linkages appeared to be a definite factor in the strength of the programming. Where community linkages were strongest, this appears to translate into programming that is well supported. Partners often provided space, facilities, expertise, public relations, actual infusion of dollars, resource materials, and flexibility in policy interpretation. The strength of the relationship often depended upon the individuals involved as opposed to the government departments or community agencies they represent; in other words, some people go beyond the official policy to provide the supports that are needed.

A common observation by providers and key informants was that linkages and communication among programs needs to be improved. Many commented that this is a particular issue in St. John's where agencies and organizations are often not up to date on "who is offering what".

3.2.12 Best practices

Respondents were asked to name aspects of their programming that worked particularly well. High on their list was the use of relevant resource materials for the learner and the use of a one-to-one approach. Equally important were employing the principles of adult learning such as respect for the learner, acknowledging that the learners bring many life experiences to the learning situation, and providing flexibility in when the program is offered. The provision of a non-threatening environment was also seen as an important factor that contributes to effective programming.

3.2.13 Provider perspective on key issues

Sustainability of funding

When asked to state the key issues facing their literacy programs, the lack of sustained funding for program delivery was seen as the most pressing issue. Many providers spoke of the time they 'wasted' in proposal writing and seeking funding which could be better spent in program delivery. In some cases, providers were spending six out of twelve months seeking funding. All key informants felt this was a key issue.

Providers stated that the adult literacy issue is an inter-generational one that requires a holistic approach whereby government commits to the long-term. Several respondents spoke of the three-year funding given to Family Resource Centres through the National Child Benefit and questioned why there could not be a similar stable approach used for adult literacy. Several felt that the adult literacy movement actually stands to lose funding through the Strategic Literacy Plan released in 2000. They noted that the Plan addresses literacy at all levels - pre-school, Kindergarten to Grade 12, and adult. Their concern is that adult literacy programs will have to compete with programs for other groups from the limited funding that is available.

Professional development

Professional development and support for those involved in the adult literacy field was mentioned by many providers and key informants as an area that requires strengthening. More frequent in-services are sorely needed. Several spoke of the lack of co-ordination available with respect to materials. Respondents felt there was definite room for the Department of Education and the Literacy Development Council to play a much stronger role in the areas of co-ordinating professional development and co-ordinating access to materials. Those interviewed spoke of the duplication of effort that occurs when instructors compile materials for the Basic Literacy programs.

To a lesser extent, respondents mentioned the need for the Departments of Health and Human Resources and Employment to assume greater responsibility for promotion and referral.

Need for leadership

A lack of leadership and commitment in the whole adult literacy cause was also frequently noted. Societal attitudes are such that the value of literacy is low. There is no "champion" for the overall cause and public awareness is extremely low.

Several key informants noted that this lack of commitment was evidenced in the 2000 Strategic Literacy Plan. This plan does not include the principle that adults have a right to a means of achieving literacy, whereas this principle was included in the 1990 Policy Statement on Adult Literacy (see section 2.2.1 of this report).

Low participation rates of learners

All providers stated there are definitely people in their area who need help with Basic Literacy skills who are not in programs. The literature states there are likely four categories of reasons for low participation rates of adults.[5] These are:

1. Barriers to access and accommodation combined with the associated problems of unemployment, poverty and disenfranchisement.
2. Teaching programs themselves, e.g., instructional programs, settings, testing procedures, materials used and imposed timeframes.
3. Lack of awareness or agreement that a large number of individuals have low literacy skills.
4. The nature of programs intended to assist those in need of remediation, i.e., problems created by strict funding guidelines and/or time limitations.

When asked for reasons for low participation by learners in Newfoundland and Labrador programs, providers gave the following reasons which can be grouped into the same four categories of reasons for low participation.

1. Barriers to access and accommodation combined with the associated problems of unemployment, poverty and disenfranchisement

- Those with low literacy skills become discouraged once they are turned down for a program.

- Learners personal circumstances present barriers, e.g., no support from spouse, children, or no social assistance.
- There is a great sense of personal shame and low self esteem associated with inability to read and write.
- There is a societal stigma attached to such programming. Providers are often viewed as centres for the learning disabled.
- There is a lack of a catalyst (such as personal embarrassment) to motivate them to enroll in a program.
- Their personal circumstances presently provide them with a comfort level that does not necessitate their involvement in an adult literacy program. It was felt people have no desire to change when:
  (a) social assistance provides adequate income support levels
  (b) government provides "make work" projects
  (c) they are able to function in menial jobs with low literacy skills
  (d) local economies are doing well and the need for literacy is not viewed as critical.

2. *The teaching programs themselves, e.g., instructional programs, settings, testing procedures, materials used and imposed timeframes.*
   - Programs have no permanency and individuals are reluctant to come forward to a program that may not continue.
   - Individuals fear the institutional atmosphere
   - Individuals are apprehensive of the confidentiality offered by organizations and fear that someone will learn that they have low literacy skills.
3. *Lack of awareness or agreement that low literacy skills are either a problem for a large number of individuals*
   - Learners are simply not aware of the availability of programs.
   - Advertising through means other than print media is expensive and print media is not directly effective with target group.

4. *The nature of programs intended to assist those in need of remediation, i.e., problems created by strict funding guidelines and/or time limitations. Adults with low literacy levels who have faced past school failure do not usually see further education as a solution to their problems.*

   - Potential learners are ineligible for government sponsorship.
   - Individuals are cynical of the system. They have failed so often they do not believe they can be helped. Prior unsuccessful schooling or having been told they cannot learn are large factors.
   - Age is felt to be a barrier (learners as young as 25 feel they are too old to learn).

Many of these barriers can be related to Thorndike's three laws of learning:[6]

Law of Readiness - Adults learn when they want to, when they feel a need, when they have the urge to learn, when they are interested in what they are doing and when conditions are right for them to learn.

Law of Effect - Adults need pleasure or success in the learning process. When they are more certain of success, they will have greater desire to learn. Adults avoid learning situations that displease or annoy them.

Law of Exercise - Adult become more proficient as they practice the learning.

3.2.14 Findings from case studies

Case studies were conducted of four different programs in order to highlight in more detail the context in which programs operate, the varied approaches used and the good practices that are being used in these programs. Three of these were selected as they were considered by the evaluation steering committee members as being programs that had a reputation for offering sound programming using different approaches. These included:

- Corner Brook - where several organizations offer literacy programming in different settings to achieve a community-wide approach;
- Marystown - a Laubach tutoring program which has a paid coordinator and an extensive tutoring/learner population;

- Grand Falls - an adult literacy centre operated by CNA off campus that has been established for some time and which had one of the first resource centres for instructors in the province.

Rabbittown Learners Program was also included for review as a case study as it is a longstanding program of particular interest to the steering committee, given the need for the provincial government to decide on future funding for this specific organization.

In this section, an overview of each program is presented, followed by an analysis of the good practices included in these programs.

CORNER BROOK

Corner Brook was examined as a community case study. There are three adult literacy programs operating in the city, all of which are linked in various formal and informal ways, providing a continuum of support to learners.

The Humber Literacy Council offers a tutoring program to about 25 learners. It operates out of space provided at the learner Success Resource Centre at CNA. This linkage helps the program work with learners in a supportive environment within the college. The Council also offers family literacy programs at the local Family Resource Centre, and peer youth tutoring programs in the junior high schools. The volunteer tutor coordinator is a former learner, who was recently recognized with the Governor General's Volunteer Award.

The Council works closely also with the Learning Centre located at the Employment Preparation Centre. This centre offers Basic Literacy and ABE Level I to eight learners. The program employs a paid instructor, assisted by regular volunteer tutors. The program has developed much material tailored to the needs of learners, most of whom are in the labour market. The instructor helped all those who wanted work during the summer break to find employment. The Learning Centre participants are active in the community as volunteers. There is significant support from other organizations in the community. For example, The Western Star is very supportive in creating a public profile for the Centre, and helps in other ways - each learner gets a copy of the newspaper delivered to the Centre each morning. The program operates with an LDC grant of $25,000 for operating costs, space is provided by the

Employment Preparation Centre, and the program actively fund raises to cover other costs.

Links with CNA work well - learners who have gone on to Level II have had a smooth transition. CNA also offers ABE Level I in the evenings. The Centre maintains contact with former learners as needed.

All three programs are well connected with other agencies in the community with an interest in literacy. A Community Resource Network of 45 agencies and organizations meets informally on a monthly basis to share information and network. This helps with the informal linkages that make the literacy programs a part of the broader community.

In short, there is a supportive approach among the various organizations that works for the learners, helps the providers to share resources and manage costs. The organizations work at staying connected with others that can help them. The approach of the individuals involved, as much as the organizations they represent, plays a large role in making this all happen.

GRAND FALLS CNA OUTREACH

This Centre was originally a resource centre for literacy instructors in the college system across the province, established with funding from Abitibi Paper. It began to gradually offer tutoring and then more formal classroom instruction as learners dropped in to the Centre for help. The Centre is staffed by two CNA instructors, assisted by five tutors from the local Laubach Literacy Council. The Centre is located off site from the campus, but maintains good links with the support services at CNA. Linkages are also good with the Corrections Centre in the area and other groups serving disadvantaged people. Program operating costs are covered by the grant-in-aid funds of the college (estimate of $150,000 per year for all operating costs).

The Centre has developed an extensive inventory of instruction resources and assessment tools, and a flexible, individualized learning approach for each learner. (For example, both instructors learned sign language when a deaf learner joined the program.) The program had up to 40 learners attending during the past year. It takes learners as they present themselves (no waiting list) and teaches ABE I and II, and as well as English as a Second Language. While staff have created a welcoming atmosphere for learners, they have also set clear expectations that those attending are

there to learn. The offering of Level II courses is seen as being more effective within this setting as learners are able to make the transition to a more self-directed approach before moving to the college campus environment.

In short, the approach capitalizes on the resources of the college to offer a program in the community that is learner focussed and inclusive of all who come forward to learn.

RABBITTOWN LEARNING CENTRE

The Rabbittown Learners Program in St. John's was originally established as a adult literacy program within a community centre, and gradually evolved into a full-time classroom program offered in separate premises from the community centre. It is the only full-time Basic Literacy program for adults offered in the city. The Centre employs a coordinator, two instructors, an administrator/tutor for the day program which is offered to 15 learners, and an instructor for a pilot evening program involving 10 learners. Volunteer tutors also participate in the program.

The day program is unique among classroom programs surveyed for this evaluation, in that none of the instructors have post-secondary training in education. Instructors bring to the program varied backgrounds in working with disadvantaged groups, and one is a previous learner in the program. They have also actively participated in whatever professional development opportunities are available. Learners interviewed felt the instructors understanding of the needs and their approach was a strength of the program.

Rabbittown offers a program based on the Laubach curriculum, and adapted as needed for each learner. This is similar to the approach used by other community-based programs in the province. They were recently certified to offer Level I ABE, and are in the transition process to using this guide (they organized a workshop for staff on this recently, taught by a previous ABE instructor).

The initial assessment process is informal and a learner contract is signed. Progress is reviewed within several months and periodically thereafter. Brief weekly notes are made in a log book on the activities of each learner.

Through much of its operation, Rabbittown was funded by HRDC programs, with the level of funding being around $140,000 a year. When HRDC ceased its funding in 1999, the province provided temporary funding of $70,000 for the first six months of 2000, pending decisions on the government strategy for supporting adult literacy.

The program has developed and works with an extensive network of community organizations that provide social supports to learners, and referrals into and out of the program. The program also spends considerable effort in after-care and follow up for learners, and also tries to ensure that those who leave or complete are linked with some sort of program suitable to their needs. The program often tests out literacy materials being developed by various groups. The program's key strengths are that it is a long standing program, recognized in the community and seen as relatively stable, has created a supportive environment for learners, and partners actively with other organizations to meet the varied and often complex needs of their learners.

MARYSTOWN - LEARN FOR TOMORROW CENTRE

The Burin Peninsula area of the province has been served by the Burin Peninsula Laubach Literacy Council since 1985 and has operated the Learn for Tomorrow Centre since 1990. The program originally operated in a community centre, but has relocated to a housing unit supplied free of charge by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. The Learn for Tomorrow Centre is unique in that this Laubach Council receives partial funding for a paid co-ordinator from the Literacy Development Council; however, the co-ordinator has habitually provided three to four months of unpaid work per year for a number of years.

Learner enrolment in Basic Literacy ranges from 15 to 21 at any one time with no waiting list in place. While not certified to offer ABE Level I, they do provide tutor support to learners in ABE Levels I, II and III. The centre is also involved in family literacy through the Books for Babies program and the provision of "Parents as Teachers" workshops.

Tutors outnumber the learners. The co-ordinator has an inventory of approximately 100 to draw upon and conducts a yearly survey to update tutor availability.

Administrative processes for this program are fairly structured. The approach used begins with an interview with the program co-ordinator and an informal assessment. From there, a learner plan is developed, materials chosen and a match is made with a tutor. Learner expectations are clearly set in the initial oral interview. The co-ordinator of the program follows up with the tutors for monthly progress reports, to share successes, brainstorm on difficult areas and suggests techniques. The co-ordinator also follows up with the learner in June and December. Tutors are required to submit a written report to the co-ordinator at the end of the year.

Similar to other case study programs, community links are strong. In addition to the in-kind contribution of premises made available by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, the Council receives referrals from counsellors at the hospital, the College of the North Atlantic, private colleges and, to a lesser degree this year, Human Resources Development Canada. Private colleges such as Keyin Technical Institute and Centrac have asked the Centre to provide Basic Literacy to learners in various skills courses such as Air Brake Endorsement, embalming courses and computer courses. On a secondary level, the School Boards have purchased math and reading materials from them and they have provided resource materials to Rushoon High School. There is a Peer Youth tutor Club in operation at the Marystown Central High School. The Council has established links with the local women's shelter - Grace Sparkes House, a group home for young offenders - T. J. MacDonald House and the local Chamber of Commerce.

While the Centre welcomes the in-kind contribution of space provided by NLHC, they feel that this setting has negative connotations and is deterring learners from the community at large from coming forward. The co-ordinator states there was greater learner interest in the program when in their previous location in a community centre. However, they are unable to refuse in-kind contributions due to critical lack of funds.

This Centre is an example of a program that has stood the test of time through the dedication and resolve of its volunteer network and established community linkages.

GOOD PRACTICES IN THESE PROGRAMS

The publication of the Province of Nova Scotia - *Enhancing Program Quality: Standards for Community-based Adult Literacy Programs* is used as the framework to highlight the good practices in the above four programs. This same framework is used later in this report to provide an overall assessment of programming in the province. The examples of practices or program features that were identified through our case studies and which are relevant to these standards are detailed below.

STANDARDS	FINDINGS IN CASE STUDY SITES
Has a commitment to, and strong support from, the community	All four programs have developed linkages with the community using different approaches. In Corner Brook, three adult literacy programs all work together and provide a continuum of support to the learner. The College of the North Atlantic provides a student reading centre on their campus and provides space to the provincial Laubach co-ordinator. The Employment Preparation Centre provide space to Level I learners; the local newspaper creates a high profile; the local cable channel plays Literacy 1, 2, 3 video twice monthly; and a community network of 45 agencies and organizations meet monthly to share information and network. The Humber Literacy Council began in 1987 and is unique in that learners sit on the Board as directors. In Marystown, the Learn for Tomorrow Centre opened in 1990 and has an established community presence. A volunteer Board of Directors is in place and the centre operates in rent-free space from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. Ties exist with the public college system in the form of access to materials. There are also established ties with private schools that request tutoring assistance for students enrolled in skill programs. Also, numerous community links have been established with school boards, high schools, the women's shelter, group home for young offenders, and the Chamber of Commerce. Grand Falls CNA Outreach began in 1990 as a resource centre for ABE instructors, with funding from Abitibi Price. Present staff consists of a combination of paid college instructors and volunteer Laubach tutors. Media provide good coverage of their programs. The Rabbittown Learners program is a well-established program having opened its doors in 1988. It has a Board of Directors with community representation, and has actively developed a network with other organizations to support learners during and after their participation.
Is committed to staff training, development and support	All four programs take advantage of whatever professional development opportunities are available. Rabbittown sought out a facilitator to deliver a workshop for their staff on the ABE Guide following their certification to deliver ABE Level I.
Is accountable to all its stakeholders: learners, practitioners, sponsors, and funders.	In Marystown, the approach from start to completion is a structured one that consists of an interview, informal assessment, development of a student plan, matching with a tutor and regular follow-up. The co-ordinator meets in June and December with each student and a written report on each student is required of the tutor at the end of the year. Grand Falls develops a structured learning plan for each learner and carries out periodic assessments against the plan.
Responds to the needs of the learner	The "store front" style of the Grand Falls CNA Outreach works well and is not intimidating to the learners. The instructors offer a flexible program that accommodates a range of learners with varied needs.

STANDARDS	FINDINGS IN CASE STUDY SITES
	Rabbittown learners interviewed indicated that the environment in the classroom and the support of instructors was a strength of the program. In Marystown, a core program is followed but this is supplemented with other materials. Seasoned tutors are encouraged to add their own experience. Instructional hours are arranged to suit both tutor and student. In all case studies, providers spoke of social and non-academic needs that they are not well equipped to meet. In these cases, referrals to outside agencies are made.
Has sufficient and appropriate resources available	In Corner Brook, the integrated community approach is a boost to ensuring access to appropriate resources. The sharing of physical space, resource materials, human resources helps make the best use of the limited resources of each organization. The Grand Falls CNA Outreach is an integral part of the college and, as such, learners have access to college resources and services. Rabbittown has been used as a testing site for new materials from a range of other organizations.
Evaluates the learners using the appropriate tools and strategies	Grand Falls CNA Outreach uses testing and reports back to learners are prepared.
Has adequate, ongoing funding that allows it to fulfill its mission	Similar to all programs in the province, most face challenges with respect to lack of stable funding. However, the selected programs do have a higher degree of stability than most of the other programs in the province, which appears to have been achieved through varied approaches to garnering community support. All four are in established locations and project some sense of "permanency". Grand Falls CNA Outreach is funded via the College's Grant in Aid. This eliminates the problem faced by other community-based programs that cite the frustration with expending their energies in fundraising and proposal development.

In summary, the four case study programs each have a number of strengths in relation to good practices in adult literacy that might be drawn on in the development of a model in the province. The case studies also highlight that there are some areas where standards and supports need to be developed in the province (particularly in the area of learner-centred approaches to curriculum, materials and learner assessments). The case studies also highlight that even programs that are considered to reflect best practices in adult literacy are operating in an environment of uncertainty in funding which distracts from their work with learners.

4.0 Profile of Learners

One of the objectives of this evaluation was to develop a profile of learners - their background, motivation for participating in programs, their experience in programs and the learning results they have achieved. The profile is intended to answer two questions that are important in the decision-making on future investment in this type of programming:

- How well does current programming meet learner needs?
- Are learners learning?

This section sets out the key findings from the learner survey, which was designed to obtain information on their previous education, other demographic information, reasons for attending, satisfaction with the program, perspectives on what they had accomplished. The interview also included a series of questions to assess the change in literacy and numeracy capabilities that had occurred in the program, *from the perspective of the individual*. The comments from providers are provided for topics where these were addressed by providers. The learner survey is contained in Annex D.

4.1 Survey of learners - approach

41 program providers supplied names and contact numbers for 322 learners who had participated in Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programming during the 1998 to 2000 period. This group was reduced to 226, following elimination of 70 without a correct telephone number, 19 who had attended outside the reference period, and 7 English as a Second Language learners who could not be interviewed due to communication difficulties.

We completed interviews with 138 (61%) of the remaining 226 learners. Of those not interviewed, 17 had moved away, 55 were not reached after five attempts, and 18 were not willing to be interviewed.

Learners currently enrolled in programs in St. John's were interviewed in person. These in-person interviews numbered 34 (of whom 31 were enrolled in the Rabbittown program). All other interviews were conducted by telephone.

4.1.1 Limitations

The survey population is not fully representative of the population of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I learners in several respects:

- Current participants in classroom programs in the St. John's area are over-represented in the survey. Visits were made to sites during class hours so the survey completion rate was higher for this group.
- Learners at Correctional Centres are under-represented. Permission to release the names of learners was obtained after the program had terminated for the summer break, so we were only able to obtain names of learners for one out of five programs.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) learners were not included. In discussions with providers it was deemed that telephone interviews with this group would not be appropriate.
- The characteristics of those we could not reach are unknown. For about 27 percent, we did not have a current phone number, which is an indication they have moved. The reasons for any mobility are unknown, so it is not possible to say if they differ in any respect from those interviewed.

4.2 Learner profile highlights

- Two-thirds of learners left regular school because they had done poorly. Providers indicated that some learners may have learning disabilities, which providers are not qualified to assess.
- One-quarter of learners appear to have been at the higher end of Basic Literacy before attending, which may indicate they were not in the best program to meet their needs.
- Most learners attended to improve their overall quality of life and their job prospects. More men than women attended for employment reasons; more women attended in order to help teach their children.
- Learners come from the full age spectrum. A greater proportion of men attended full-time, while more women attended part-time.

- Two-thirds of all learners attended for 10 months or less. Those with less formal education attended for longer periods.
- A minority of learners had problems that interfered with learning (primarily learning difficulties or family problems); similarly a minority experienced financial difficulties.
- There was high satisfaction with all aspects of programming.
- Learners said the emphasis on reading and the supportive environment in programs were the key factors that helped them reach their goals.
- A significant proportion of learners increased both their literacy and numeracy levels. Learners also made progress in daily living skills such as reading the newspaper and using the library.
- Learners in full-time and part-time programs made similar gains, regardless of the overall duration they were in programs.
- Gains in literacy and numeracy declined somewhat the longer participants were in programs.
- Most of those who did not complete were unable to because of ineligibility for funding (policy changes on individual and program funding) or family reasons.
- 25 percent of learners no longer in literacy programs have gone on to other training. Two-thirds of this group found this transition difficult, mainly because of the lack of support in moving to a new learning environment.
- 36 percent of those no longer in programs are working or volunteering.

In summary, learners generally felt that programs met their needs. A minority have learning difficulties or personal problems that were not met by programming or access to other supports. There is a need to ensure that screening and assessment processes in programs identify these higher need clients and that a continuum of supports from various agencies is available to meet these needs.

A significant proportion of learners are making gains in their literacy and numeracy levels. There is a proportion of learners who appear to be beyond the levels covered in this programming prior to entry and who likely should be in more advanced ABE programs with remedial supports. Also there is a proportion who stay in programs for

longer periods for minimal incremental gains. Again this calls for appropriate screening, linkages among various programs, and tracking of progress.

4.3 Learner characteristics

Table 2
Demographics of learners surveyed

		Gender	
	All	**M**	**F**
Age			
Under 25	15.9 %	15.7%	16.3%
25-45	57.2	57.1	57.1
45 plus	26.1	26.5	26.6
Refused	0.7		
	100 %		
Marital status			
Single	50.7 %	46.1	59.2
Married/in partnership	49.3	53.9	40.8
	100 %		
Dependent children living with respondent			
Yes	41.3 %	38.2	46.9
No	58.7	61.7	53.1
	100 %		
Single parent			
Yes	8.7 %	n/a	22.4
No	91.3	99.9	77.6
	100%		
Type of program			
Full-time (25 hours a week plus)	51.1%	53.9%	45.8%
Part-time (less than 25 hours a week)	48.9	46.1	54.2
	100%		
N	138	89	49

- Men made up 65 percent of the survey group and women 35 percent. It is not clear if this is consistent with the general population of adult literacy learners. From the interviews with providers it was determined that the participation of men and women varies among programs and communities.
- Learners surveyed attended full-time and part-time programs in equal proportions overall, but a greater proportion of men attended full-time and of women attended part-time.

- While the majority of learners surveyed are in the 25 - 45 age group, there are also significant numbers of younger learners as well as those age 45 plus. This mirrors what providers told us about their participants - the full age spectrum is seeking these programs.
- More men than women are married/in a partnership, and fewer men have dependents.
- 22 percent of the women interviewed were single parents - only one man interviewed was in this category.

Table 3
Months in program (percent and cumulative percent)

	PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Up to 3 months	24.4 %	24.4 %
Greater then 3 months to 10 months	39.5	63.9
Greater than 10 months to 18 months	15.1	79.0
Greater than 18 months to 24 months	8.4	87.4
More than 24 months	12.6 %	100 %
N	119	

- About 64 percent attended for 10 months or less, while 21 percent attended for more than 18 months.
- Half of the respondents were still attending at the time of the interview - the remainder had completed the program or terminated.
- 30 percent of learners had attended another literacy program.

Table 4
Duration in program by previous education level

	Grade Grouping			
	Grade 6 or Less	Grade 7 & 8	Grades 9 -12	Primarily Special Education
Up to 3 months	18.9%	28.1%	24.4%	50.0%
Greater than 3 months to 10 months	21.6	43.8	51.1	25.0
Greater than 10 months to 18 months	37.8	3.1	6.7	
Greater than 18 months to 24 months	5.4	12.5	8.9	
More than 24 months	16.2	12.5	8.9	25.0
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N = 118	37	32	45	4

Those who attend programs for longer periods have, as expected, less formal education. 60 percent of those who had grade six of less participated for more than 10 months, while 75 percent of those with previous high school education attended for up to 10 months.

LEARNING NEEDS

Table 5
Highest grade attended in regular school

Grade 6 or less	33.3 %
Grade 7 or 8	25.3
Grade 9-12	29
Graduated high school (grade 11 or 12)	7.3
Primarily special education	5
	100 %
N	138

While the majority of learners did not go beyond grade 8 in regular school, a significant proportion (29 percent) attended high school and 7 percent had graduated. These are high proportions of learners in a program designed for those functioning below the formal grade 6 level, and would appear these learners may not be in the right

program for their needs or have special needs that were not well met in the regular school system.

Some providers interviewed felt that there are two possible reasons for this participation of higher level learners in their programs:

- lack of access to programs more suitable for these learners (either in terms of program availability or client ineligibility for HRE or HRDC sponsorship);
- ABE Level II programs are not accepting learners who may only require some remedial assistance in certain areas. The Canadian Adult Achievement Test - CAAT is used widely as a screening tool for ABE II. A number of providers felt this was being used in a 'screening-out' approach. They cited cases of learners being rejected based on borderline CAAT scores only to come to their program seeking help.

Providers also indicated that a high proportion of learners had difficulties in school and their formal level of schooling was not a good indication of their literacy levels. This was borne out in the information from learners themselves. They were asked why they had not finished their schooling - the results are presented below.

Table 6
Main reason for not finishing schooling

Following reasons indicate person did poorly in school:	
Did not do well in school	29.7 %
Other	3.9
Did not like school (bored)	14.8
Personal illness or disability	8.6
Had enough education	1.6
Own family reasons (marriage, pregnancy)	5.5
Advised to leave school by counsellor or teacher	3.1
Sub-total	*67.2%*
Following reasons indicate person may have done okay in school:	
Parental family reasons (help family business, illness at home)	14.1%
Wanted to work/learn a trade	7

Had to work/financial reasons	4.7
School not available	5.5
Don't know	1.6
Sub-total	*32.9%*
	100 %
N	138

The reasons given for not completing school were recorded and analyzed through an approach that mirrored that of the IALS survey. Reasons for leaving school were grouped into two categories - those that indicated the person did poorly in school, and those that indicated the person may have done okay in school but left for other reasons, such as economic or family.

About two-thirds of the learners surveyed gave reasons that indicated they may have had difficulties in school. Another indicator of learning difficulties is the degree to which learners had previous remedial help. 40 percent of all respondents said they received extra help with reading in regular school. Of this group, 25 percent recalled first receiving this help in grade one, 33 percent later in elementary school, and the remainder in junior high or high school.

This profile is consistent with the perceptions of providers. Most indicated that their participants had difficulties in regular school and, in a significant proportion of cases, likely had some form of learning disability that providers were not qualified to assess.

Table 7
Reason for attending program

Reason	Total	Men	Women
Better myself	44 %	46%	41%
Employment/economic	33	42	19
Get grade 12	6	4	8
Supportive environment	5	2	10
Teach kids	12%	6%	22%
	100 %	100%	100%
N	138	89	49

A large proportion of the learners surveyed wanted to learn in order to improve their overall quality of life or their employment prospects. Providers also indicated that the majority of their participants are there for employment reasons.

There were some gender differences in reasons for attending. More men than women attended for employment reasons (42 percent versus 19 percent) and more women than men attended in order to help teach their children (22 percent versus 6 percent).

Providers indicated that learners' goals vary widely, and that these often evolve. Some, in particular those with very limited literacy skills, come to programs with very specific goals (e.g. to obtain drivers licence, to help their children). In many of these cases, these specific goals become broader once the learner makes progress. Others (often those who need to recover skills they have lost), come to programs with broader goals related to further education or employment.

4.4 Learner experiences with the program

Learners were asked a number of questions about their participation in the program. The results are discussed below.

Table 8
Learner had input into program

Yes	57.2 %
No	38.4
Don't recall	4.3
Total	100 %
N	138

The literature shows that literacy programs which empower learners through their involvement in decisions on their study plan are among the most effective. Just over half the learners surveyed indicated they recalled having had input regarding what they would study in the program. This indicates that this is an area that could be improved in program design and delivery.

Table 9
Satisfaction with program features

PROGRAM FEATURE	REALLY SATISFIED	SORT OF SATISFIED	NOT AT ALL SATISFIED	REFUSED	DON'T KNOW	NOT APPLICABLE
Time of day	88.4 %	8.7 %	2.9 %			
Number of days a week	83.3	9.4	7.2			
Place offered	83.3	15.9	0.7			
Distance to program	74.6	19.6	5.8			
Teaching/tutoring	89.9	5.1	5.1			
Books and materials	76.8	17.4	5.8			
Time spent in program	66.7	19.6	10.1		2.9 %	0.7 %
Support from family and friends	71.7	12.3	4.3	1.4 %		10.1
Support of other organizations	47.8 %	12.3 %	13.0 %	1.4 %	0.7 %	24.6 %
N	138					

Learners were generally satisfied with all aspects of the program they attended. The features that received a slightly lower satisfaction rating were the time spent in the program, books and materials, and distance to travel to the program. A few participants indicated support from government organizations was not satisfactory to them - the most frequently mentioned department was Human Resources and Employment. There were no significant differences in the satisfaction levels of men and women respondents. Those attending part-time programs (less than 25 hours a week) were slightly less satisfied with the time spent in the program and the time of day when the program was offered.

Learners were also asked if the program was what they had expected. 62 percent said it was a more positive experience than expected, the most frequent reasons being the challenging content (especially the amount of reading), the supportive environment (i.e. instructors, one-on-one approach) and small group setting. Those who said it was less positive than expected indicated either that the content was not challenging enough or that there was limited support for their needs or disabilities.

20 percent of learners said they had problems or concerns that made it difficult for them to study while in the program. The most frequent problems cited were family difficulties (illness, marital difficulties); difficulties in learning and personal self esteem; and the situation in the classroom (lack of privacy, noise). A few said they obtained the help they needed with their problems - either in the program or elsewhere. A common observation was that more tutors would have been helpful in dealing with their difficulties.

15 percent of learners said attending create extra financial needs, primarily for transportation and meals. Of this group, 85 percent said they were able to cope financially while in the program. This response varies from the literature which indicates that many participants in lower level literacy programs have financial pressures that can interfere with attendance and studies. As well, providers indicated that a high number of learners were on social assistance or in a pattern of EI and seasonal/short term work and at least some of these faced financial pressures.

4.5 Learner Outcomes

The Department of Education wished to have some estimate of the growth of literacy and numeracy skills of the learners that were surveyed as part of this evaluation. However, no scores were available for the learners either as a pre-test before entering the program or as a post-test on completion. Estimates of any gains had to be done well after the fact. The approach used in the learner survey was to ask respondents to report how well they could perform several literacy and numeracy tasks both before entering the program and at the time of the survey (learners still enrolled and in programs less than three months were not asked to assess their change in skill levels). These tasks differed in difficulty as established by the International Adult Literacy Survey (Statistics Canada, 1996). Based on this, a rating was made of their IALS Literacy Level prior to the program and at the time of the survey. This allowed us to report those who gained in level or who had no change of level. The methodology used to rate the increase in literacy and numeracy as per the IALS levels 0, 1 or 2 is described in Annex E.

This self-assessment approach has obvious limitations, as it is based largely on the respondents' perceptions of their skill level rather than demonstration of skills. However, the findings in terms of gains in comparison to previous formal education

and gains in comparison to duration in the program are consistent with what is known from other programs on outcomes. This gives the consultant team some confidence in reporting the results as an *indication* of the extent to which learners are learning. However, the findings should be considered along with other findings from the learner and provider surveys on what is being achieved in these programs.

Learners were also asked a number of other questions on their achievement of goals, what aspects of the program were most helpful to them in learning, and their activities since the program. These findings are also presented in this section.

CHANGES IN LITERACY AND NUMERACY LEVELS

The gains in literacy and numeracy are presented globally and then in relation to other factors, including previous education, type of program and duration in program.

Table 10
Change in IALS literacy and numeracy levels.

	LITERACY	NUMERACY
Increased	54.3 %	38.7 %
No significant change	10.1	13.1
Regressed		0.7
Level 2 prior to entry	26.1	38
In program less than 3 months	9.4%	9.5%
	100 %	100 %
N	138	137

- A significant proportion of learners increased both their literacy and numeracy levels as measured on the IALS scale.
- More learners increased their literacy levels than numeracy levels.
- A relatively high proportion of learners self-assessed at IALS level 2 in literacy and numeracy or more (the upper end of basic literacy/ABE level I) before the program.

Table 11

Percent of change of literacy by previous formal education level

GRADE GROUPING	INCREASED	NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	LEVEL 2 PRIOR TO ENTRY	IN PROGRAM LESS THAN 3 MONTHS	N
Grade 6 or Less	78.3 %	6.5 %	8.7 %	6.5 %	46
Grades 7 & 8	48.6	8.6	31.4	11.4	35
Grades 9 - 12	38	12	40%	10	50
Special Education	50.0 %	33.3 %		16.7 %	7
N					138

Table 12

Percent of change of numeracy by previous formal education level

GRADE GROUPING	INCREASED	NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	REGRESSED	LEVEL 2 PRIOR TO ENTRY	IN PROGRAM LESS THAN 3 MONTHS	N
Grade 6 or Less	66.7 %	13.3 %	2.2 %	11.1 %	6.7 %	45
Grades 7 & 8	25.7	11.4		51.4	11.4	35
Grades 9 - 12	22	12		56%	10	50
Special Education	50.0 %	33.3 %			16.7 %	7
N						137

When changes in levels are compared to previous formal education some observations can be made:

- There is a relationship between the estimated level of ability as assessed in the survey and previous achieved grades. Of those who had at least a grade 9, 40 percent were estimated to be at IALS level 2 before the program in literacy and 56 percent in numeracy. Only 9 percent of those with grade 6 or less were estimated to be at level 2 prior to the program in literacy and 11 percent in numeracy. This is the sort of direction one would expect with this assessment tool.
- Those with lower formal education levels made the most gains. (However, caution is urged in interpreting this finding as it may be that there were fewer apparent gains among those with higher education simply because the measure as designed could not pick up gains for those at the higher IALS levels prior to

the program, since the questions posed did not assess skills beyond the IALS level 2.)

Still, the fact that over a quarter of learners were at the higher end of Basic Literacy before attending, and their apparent limited gains are indications that this group may be clogging up the Basic Literacy program system and may not be as well served as they could be by a different programming approach. By this we mean that they may be better served by access to ABE II programming with proper supports to *recover* skills they have lost than by attending Basic Literacy programs that are also trying to serve those at lower literacy levels who are trying to *acquire* skills.

In some other jurisdictions there has been a move to accept learners for institutional skill and ABE programs while they get remedial help with literacy and numeracy skills. A few providers in the province are already working collaboratively with the colleges in their area to provide the extra tutoring that is needed while learners attend ABE Level II. These are the kind of program linkages that should be developed more widely in the province.

Table 13
Percent change in literacy for those attending literacy full time/part time

CHANGE IN LITERACY	INCREASED	NO SIGNIFICANT	LEVEL 2 PRIOR TO	IN PROGRAM LESS THAN 3	N
Attending full-time	52.9%	8.6%	30.0%	8.6%	70
Attending part-time	55.2%	11.9%	22.4%	10.4%	67

Surprisingly, there were similar gains for learners in full-time and part-time programs. The gains were also similar in full-time and part-time programs when the duration in the program was factored in. This is contrary to adult education literature which places enormous emphasis on learner retention and attendance (that is, the length of time learners stick with a program and how often they attend). The literature also indicates that in the absence of data on learner gains, retention data have become a substitute for achievement data. It is *assumed* that the longer a learner stays in the program, the greater the learning gains.[7] The results from this assessment indicate this assumption is inaccurate.

Table 14

Change in literacy by duration in program

Change in Literacy	Duration in program				
	Up to 3 months	Greater than 3 months to 10 months	Greater than 10 months to 18 months	Greater than 18 months to 24 months	More than 24 months
Increased	45.0%	44.7%	88.9%	80.0%	73.3%
No significant change	25	10.6			6.7
Level 2 prior to entry	30	42.6	11.1	20	20
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N = 109	20	46	18	10	15

Table 15

Change in numeracy by duration in program

Change in numeracy	Duration in program				
	Up to 3 months	Greater than 3 months to 10 months	Greater than 10 months to 18 months	Greater than 18 months to 24 months	More than 24 months
Increased	35.0%	26.1%	83.3%	50.0%	53.3%
No significant change	10	13			26.7
Regressed		2.2			
Level 2 prior to entry	55	56.5	16.7	50	20
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total N = 109	20	45	18	10	15

The data indicate that, as expected, a higher proportion of those who were in programs longer than 10 months increased their literacy and numeracy levels, but that this increase declined somewhat for those in programs longer 18 months. Also a significant proportion in programs for shorter periods made gains. This is generally consistent with the consultant team's experience with programs elsewhere - those in programs the longest usually make the least gains (i.e. if a learner is not making it in a year, they are unlikely to do so) .

OTHER PROGRAM RESULTS

The survey also asked learners a number of other questions about the impact of the program and what they had been doing since the program. The highlights of the findings are as follows:

PROGRAM COMPLETION/GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

One-third of the 66 respondents no longer attending said they had 'completed' the program. The reasons given by the two-thirds who had not completed are set out in the Table 16. A variety of family needs (illnesses, marital problems, etc.) was the most common reason, as well as program unavailability (the recent change in eligibility rules and closure of the Open Learning Centres).

Table 16
Reason for not completing program

REASONS	PERCENT
No longer eligible for HRDC support	25%
Program closed	15
Program not supportive of needs	14
Found work	14
Family reasons	32%
N	44

Respondents were also asked if they had achieved what they had set out to do in the program. Two-thirds of those who were no longer in programs said they were able to achieve what they set out to do. Learners said the aspects of programs that helped most in reaching their goal was the content (especially the help with reading) and the support from instructors and tutors.

The most frequent reasons given for not achieving what they had set out to do were having to leave for work, program closure or change to full-time from a drop-in type program (and consequent ineligibility), lack of support for learning or physical disabilities. About equal numbers of respondents gave each reason..

Those still attending programs were more optimistic about their achievements - 95 percent felt they were making progress towards their goal.

PARTICIPATION IN FURTHER TRAINING

25 percent (17) of learners no longer in programs have gone on to other studies - 15 percent to another level of ABE, and 10 percent to skill training. 79 percent of those still in the program intend on doing more ABE or skill training once they complete.

Only a third of those who have taken further training said the transition to the new program was easy. Reasons given included being treated like adults in the new program, familiarity with the program before going on, and the confidence they had gained in the literacy program. Those who found it difficult said this was because they received less one-on-one help, or they were generally apprehensive about moving to a different setting.

IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

While the majority of learners attended to improve their employment prospects, most are still not working. Still a substantial proportion are employed or volunteering given the socio-economic profile of this group. Also 35 percent of those still attending are also working or volunteering, an indication that programs need to be accessible to this group.

Table 17
Currently working in paid or volunteer position

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	STILL ATTENDING PROGRAM	NO LONGER ATTENDING PROGRAM
Working in a paid job	23.6%	30.3%
Working as a volunteer	12.5	6.1
Neither	63.9%	63.6%
N	72	66

Learners recognize the value of literacy and numeracy skills to their employment prospects. Of those that are working, 56 percent said that reading and working with numbers are important in their job. The majority of this group also felt that further improvement of their reading and writing skills would help them in finding better work. Similarly, 75 percent of those who are not working felt that better reading and numerical skills would help them in finding work.

IMPACT ON DAILY ACTIVITIES

Literacy programs are intended to help people function in daily living situations. The survey asked questions related to this goal.

70 percent of learners said they read the newspaper more frequently than they did before the literacy program and 81 percent find it easier to do so.

While there was some change in use of libraries, it was not as dramatic as the change in reading of newspapers. 75 percent of learners said the nearest library was close by or within reasonable distance. About 42 percent said they now visit the library once in a while and 6 percent visit it often. 45 percent say this is more often than they did before the program. The results indicate that programs are helping participants develop skills and behaviours for every day living.

OTHER LEARNER COMMENTS

Learners were given the opportunity to provide additional comments on the program they attended or their experience in going back to continue their education. About half of the learners provided comments (mostly positive), particularly about the help offered to improve their reading and the supportive environment (especially the one-on-one help) in the program. Only a few felt the program was not supportive of their needs. Several expressed concerns that the program they attended had been closed or that future program funding was uncertain.

4.6 Summary

Learners represent the full spectrum of ages, previous education, learning needs and goals. The findings highlight the need for programming that is supportive of those who have not succeeded in the regular school system; programming that is well linked to higher ABE Levels; and where initial and ongoing assessments are able to channel learners to the right programming for their needs. Currently most learners say the programs meet their needs, but a high proportion appear to be better suited to a different approach to recovering skills or who have learning difficulties that programming and instructors are not equipped to address.

5.0 What works in the current approach

This section presents the key findings on what is working well in the current approach to funding and delivering Basic Literacy/ABE Level I programs in the province. This section brings together the key findings from the various methods used in the evaluation. The findings on programs in the province are presented in the context of what was learned from the literature on good practices in adult literacy programs.

5.1 Lessons learned from the literature

There is much literature available on evaluations of specific programs but limited documentation of the features of programs that lead to good outcomes for learners. There are also very few empirical studies that measure the impacts of literacy programs or identify the predictors of program success. This is partly due to the lack of common criteria against which to measure outcomes.

HRDC recently issued an *Adult Literacy Lessons Learned* document that is a comprehensive overview of Canadian and international program evaluation documents.[8] The overall conclusion of this synthesis of lessons was that there is no one way to deliver literacy programs - different approaches work for different populations. Features of good practices in adult literacy from the various studies are as follows:

RESOURCES

- Adequate and sustained funding;
- Teachers skilled in accommodating different learning styles, acknowledge prior learning, and foster independent learning strategies;
- Volunteer tutors who are given initial and ongoing development and linked to specialists who can serve as consultants;
- Commitment to and strong support from the community.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

- Teaching materials that reinforce the learners' experiences in home, school and community. Context specific materials (e.g. workplace reading in workplace learning) are most successful;

- Programs that offer more than just reading and writing instruction - access, child care, transportation, community orientation and personal meaningfulness;
- Non-threatening environment;
- Flexibility to accommodate different skill levels and personal goals;
- Support services and linkages to other service providers;
- Traditional and non-traditional learning strategies.

This Lessons Learned document identified only one study that assessed empirically the outcomes of ABE programs - the U.S. *National Evaluation of Adult Education Programs* conducted in 1993.[9] This study reached a number of conclusions that are similar to some of the above conclusions from more qualitative studies. It also reached some different conclusions regarding outcomes:

- The strongest predictors of learner retention and attendance were the presence of support services such as counselling, instruction during the day (presumably because this meant longer hours of instruction), and the type of learning environment. However, it found that improved retention does not necessarily lead to increased achievement.
- Increasing hours of instruction was not sufficient to assure increased skill development. This is further complicated by the need for practice after skills are acquired.
- Only one variable was consistently and substantially related to the literacy gains for all types of learners: their prior achievement level.

5.2 Program standards

A number of other provinces have developed standards for planning and implementing adult literacy programs and for tracking accountability. One of the most recent is a document issued by the Nova Scotia Department of Education entitled *Enhancing Program Quality: Standards for Community-based Adult Literacy Programs*. This was developed based on extensive consultations with various stakeholders, and a review of the literature. These standards provide a relevant reference reflecting the latest thinking on standards against which to present the findings on programs in Newfoundland and Labrador. Table

18 presents these, along with our assessment of how the situation in Newfoundland and Labrador compares.

Table 18
Quality standards for community-based adult literacy programs

STANDARDS	FINDINGS ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROGRAMS
Has a commitment to, and strong support from, the community	At the provincial level, key informants feel there is a lack of commitment by the provincial government to funding and leading the development of adult literacy programming. Unless this commitment is forthcoming, many have little hope that much will change in the state of programming. We concur with this observation. At the local level, commitment varies widely throughout the province. In some instances, literacy stakeholders are members of an informal community network or serve on regional economic development boards. In other instances, community ties exist with the public college system to assist with delivery or in the transition process from Basic Literacy to more formalized instruction as part of a continuum. There were reports of inconsistent policies and other supports among government agencies such as HRE and HRDC. Attracting and retaining board members from the community is always a challenge. Some providers describe themselves as independent operators and the sense of commitment to the community is weak. Support from the private sector and workplace based literacy is in the infancy development stage.
Is committed to staff training, development and support	Program providers clearly recognize their developmental needs but have limited resources to meet them. There is limited co-ordination of professional development other than sporadic workshops or annual general meetings. A support network is lacking in the province. Providers described themselves as very much isolated and unsure where to turn for expertise, advice and guidance. Providers and key informants saw this as a key concern.
Is accountable to all its stakeholders: learners, practitioners, sponsors, and funders.	No providers reported any accountability measures in place for outcomes for reporting to learners, practitioners, sponsors and funders. Occasionally, instructors and tutors serve probationary periods. Also, instructors/tutors do some tracking of progress of learners toward their stated or implicit goals. However, there was no clear sense of what are reasonable expected learner outcomes, nor is there any sense of a greater program accountability to sponsors or funders. One provider specifically requested that their records be monitored as they felt financial accountability was sorely lacking.

STANDARDS	FINDINGS ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROGRAMS
Responds to the needs of the learner	Formal and informal providers endeavour to make their programs flexible and geared to meeting the learners' goals. Some providers questioned their ability to deal with learners with special needs. Most frequently mentioned were the needs of learners with learning disabilities (diagnosed or otherwise). Providers estimated there was a high percentage of learners with learning disabilities. Other needs that are not considered to be well met were those of the visually or hearing impaired, and non-academic needs such as child care or dealing with severe mental health needs. The learners surveyed were generally satisfied that the programs met their needs, but a number said their learning or other disabilities were not well accommodated, which created difficulties for their progress.
Uses a learner-centred model of instruction [10]	Since the evaluation process did not include monitoring of actual instruction, various teaching styles could not be assessed. Providers described a learner-centered model of instruction, particularly in the Basic Literacy programs. This included determination of individual learner goals and tailoring materials to these goals. However, programming is generally based on the Laubach curriculum (which is subject based) complemented with materials of relevance to each learner. Programs in the province do not go as far as some of the more innovative learner-centred programs in the country (for example Manitoba) where program design starts with the learner needs and where the learner plays a significant role in deciding on and finding or contributing to the materials that will be used in their studies. As well, about 40 percent of the learners surveyed could not recall being asked to provide input into what they would be studying, another indication that this is an aspect that could be improved in programming.
Has sufficient and appropriate resources available	For the most part, providers were generally satisfied with curriculum and what was felt to be a growing amount of local and culturally relevant materials. However, providers perceived wasted effort on their part in becoming knowledgeable about the best sources of such materials and gaining access to them. Many report their comfort level with the various resources grows as they gain more experience but experience frustration in trying to find *interesting* reading at the appropriate levels. Learners often make suggestions themselves for additions to program materials. Also, there is no consistent orientation provided to instructors nor any central co-ordination of resource materials.
Evaluates the learners using the appropriate tools and strategies	Overall, programs lean toward informal testing, and this is an area that could be strengthened. The Laubach model provides assessment tools such as chapter tests, major checks at the end of every third or fourth lesson and informal quizzing at the end of each module. Spell Read Canada conducts an initial, middle and end assessment orally in small group sessions.

STANDARDS	FINDINGS ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROGRAMS
	A couple indicated they followed the ABE Level I program but did not elaborate on how they actually assessed progress. Others described processes such as keeping daily or weekly diaries, weekly reviews, reading paragraphs from text, answering comprehensive oral questions and writing six to eight sentences. While some instructors stated that learners occasionally requests tests, others felt their learners would not like this. Other provinces have begun development of more structured learner portfolios with periodic examination. Manitoba's assessment process is carried out by an independent evaluator and is highly individualized.
Provides recognition for learning that is portable to and accredited by other programs both inside and outside the delivery organization	This is an area for development - there is no organized approach in the province to this aspect of programming. Several of the other provinces examined have taken steps to articulate the various approaches to adult literacy and education.
Has appropriate learner support services available or provides referral to services	Providers recognize their own limitations in providing learner support services. Informal arrangements are often made with various social agencies. Contacts and referrals have been made where needed to HRE, NLHC, Career Development Specialists, Unions, Women's Centres, Mental Health Services, etc. While most providers indicated they were able to refer learners who needed help to other sources, it is done in an ad hoc way and could be strengthened by better networks to support community-based programming.
Empowers learners	A high number of learners surveyed indicated that the supportive environment in the program helped in development of their confidence and self esteem. However, only two-thirds recalled being asked what they wanted to study in the program, which is a feature of an empowerment approach. Some programs case studied used approaches that are elements of an empowerment approach - encouraging self-direction in learning (Grand Falls) and involvement in the community (Corner Brook). However, the empowerment of learners is a program element that generally needs refinement across programs.
Has a mission statement	Not assessed
Respects cultural diversity	Several providers described their efforts to use program resources that respect Newfoundland or Aboriginal cultures and our style of daily living. There is some sense that the quantity and quality of these materials are improving. Labrador has been producing an Oral History Collection. Cal Coish and Helen Woodrow materials were frequently cited. Regardless, some providers still felt there was too much American and mainland Canada content.

STANDARDS	FINDINGS ON NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR PROGRAMS
Contributes to lifelong learning	Not assessed. However, the lack of continuity in program funding is likely a deterrent to the promotion of the lifelong learning theory. Learners will find it difficult to commit to lifelong learning when the lack of permanent programming sends a message that society does not value literacy.
Has adequate, ongoing funding that allows it to fulfill its mission	Lack of adequate sustained funding is a pivotal concern. Many hold the view that a large infusion of funds is not necessarily the answer and that small amounts of *strategically directed*, multi-year funding could have better impacts.

In summary, the programming in Newfoundland and Labrador generally falls short on all the standards for quality literacy programming. While there are innovate approaches within individual programs, there are no "across the board" standards in place to be met. It is our view that this is because of the lack of a structured approach to programming and funding in the province. Individual pockets of innovation and quality exist in isolation and without many of the central supports that are needed. In other provinces that have invested in adult literacy, central supports for program design, coordination, professional development, and monitoring/ evaluation are key elements of the models used. This is examined in the next section of the report.

6.0 Other jurisdictions

One of the objectives of this evaluation is to inform the development of an approach to the support for adult literacy programming in the province. Research was conducted on the approach taken in four other provinces, as a means of informing this aspect of the evaluation. With the input of the steering committee, these jurisdictions were selected as representing different ways of delivering and funding programming. In all cases, the information was obtained through telephone interviews with the lead provincial government manager for adult literacy programs. In Nova Scotia and Manitoba, interviews were also held with selected providers.

This section describes the approach to the provision of adult Basic Literacy in these four provinces. In each case, information is provided on the following program elements, which are ones of most interest in this current study:

- Program design;
- Funding;
- Staffing and participants;
- Accountability processes; and
- Professional development activities.

For a more detailed profile of each of the four jurisdictions, readers are directed to Annex F.

6.1 Highlights

The four provinces profiled have each developed different approaches to delivering adult Basic Literacy and ABE. The degree of structure in delivery and consistency in program standards/expectations varies.

The key features of relevance for this evaluation are:

- Each developed their approach from some form of consultation or review of the need for adult literacy programming.
- Each developed an approach that was seen to be responsive to community and learner needs and was affordable within resources available. Three of the four

deliver literacy through community-based programs. All programs include or are well linked to the higher ABE levels.

- The lead department in each case has been assigned and has carried out clear responsibilities for design and delivery of a program model.
- Tools for program planning, management and evaluation have been developed.
- Each has an established budget for this programming, and there is a good degree of sustainability of funding for individual programs, based on performance.
- Professional development and coordination services are resourced and seen as important to the program success.
- Linkages with family and workplace literacy are in place or are being developed.

6.2 Nova Scotia

6.2.1 Program Design

Community Learning Initiative (CLI)

The Nova Scotia Department of Education initiated the Community Learning Initiative (CLI) in 1994. Twenty-seven (27) community-based networks and a Provincial Advisory Committee support more than 140 literacy and upgrading programs at all levels. Networks are regionally-based and develop programs to meet geographic and diverse needs, e.g., Acadian, African-Canadian, the deaf, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Mi'Kmaq.

The various models eligible for funding include:

- Co-ordination of a volunteer tutor program: a paid co-ordinator matches volunteers with adult learners. The co-ordinator supports, liaises with and conducts assessments. The program targets between 15 to 30 matched pairs.
- Delivery of upgrading programs through group instruction: paid qualified instructors deliver to groups of 10 to15 adult learners.
- Upgrading programs with a family literacy component: the primary objective must be delivery of adult academic upgrading to 10 to15 learners.

The Nova Scotia Adult Basic Education (ABE) program serves as the basis for programming except for Acadian and ESL communities. Most CLIs offer Levels 1 and 2 of this program, the equivalent of the Newfoundland ABE Level I.

Workplace Education

This is an essential skills program for working Nova Scotians that provides learning opportunities at worksites in the areas of reading, writing, math, oral communications, problem solving and critical thinking skills. Annually, there are 80 or more programs initiated across the province and each accommodates seven to 12 learners. Workplace Education is sponsored by the Department of Education, National Literacy Secretariat (NLS), Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), and business and labour.

6.2.2 Funding

The Literacy/ABE program is funded through two sources:

Federal/Provincial - Under the Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA), literacy has been identified as one of three priorities and $4.5 million has been targeted for expenditures in 2000-01. Strategic directions set by the Literacy Task Team include family literacy, workforce skills development, and community-based literacy.

Provincial - Annual provincial funding for Community Learning Initiatives (CLI) is $1.6 million, of which $1.4 million is used for grants to Learning Networks and $200,000 is used for administration by the Department of Education. CLI is now part of the Department's core budget. Most of this funding is for programs at the lower literacy levels.

Learning networks apply for program grants annually which cover programming from September to June for up to 40 weeks. These program grants have three components:

- program delivery (covering instructor or co-ordinator salaries at a set rate of $15.00 per hour. 25% of instructor/co-ordinator time may be used for preparation and record keeping)
- administration and resources (optional and can be up to 15% of total program delivery)
- educational resources for print materials, audio visual and educational software (4% of program delivery up to a maximum of $4,000)

6.2.3 Staffing and participants

The Community Learning Initiative serves more than 2100 learners at all levels. Most CLIs offer programs only at the lower literacy levels.

There are 150 paid tutor co-ordinators and instructors and a network of 600-800 volunteers who provide tutoring or assist with programming or the network.

6.2.4 Accountability processes

Through Letters of Agreement, all networks are recognized by the Department of Education as representing the community they serve. Each Learning Network must submit an annual Final Report which is used by the Department of Education in reviewing the Program Grant application for the following year. Networks must also submit Learner Profile forms for each attendee which are used to generate provincial statistics. Networks must also use the recently developed *Enhancing Program Quality: Standards for Community-Based Adult Literacy Programs* as a guide for planning and evaluation.

The Department of Education provides co-ordination, monitoring and evaluation of programs and services. This is an area which they recognize needs strengthening.

6.2.5 Professional development activities

The Department of Education requires programs to employ instructors who have either an education degree or equivalent educational training, plus experience in adult education. The department provides training through a 30 to 33 hour Tutor and Instructor Training and Certification program delivered through ten workshops. This is currently being revised to address emerging needs such as the use of technology. Other ongoing professional development is organized by the Department as well as information sharing and networking, access to educational resources, and program advice through Department staff.

The CLI also provides a Professional Development Grant in the amount of $2,000 per CLI. This supports other professional development opportunities for tutor co-ordinators, instructors, volunteer tutors and network members.

6.3 Prince Edward Island

6.3.1 Program design

The 1996 strategy for adult literacy/education *Tough Challenges: Great Rewards* guides the development of the current approach in PEI to community-based adult literacy/ABE programs. This covers all levels of literacy.

The Department of Education plays a key role in leading policy development and building partnerships. The manager is seen as a key champion for literacy who has successfully engaged various organizations in supporting the program model.

The PEI Institute of Adult and Community Education (an affiliate of Holland College) is contracted by the Department of Education to centrally deliver and administer the program with guidance from an Advisory Committee. The Institute hires and trains instructors,

contracts with community-based organizations for accommodations and is responsible for program marketing. There are 18 community-based learning centres offering literacy, ABE programs and other complementary programs. Programs are full or part-time depending on need.

Workplace Education PEI, an organization comprising two levels of government and labour and business is leading the development of workplace literacy.

6.3.2 Funding

The Literacy/ABE program is funded annually at $1.224 million through three sources:

$700,000	Canada-PEI Labour Market Development Agreement
$300,000	Departments of Education, Health, and Development each contribute $100,000
$224,000	Department of Education funding for night school program

In addition, $20,000 is provided to five Laubach councils, and $200,000 is allocated to support workplace programs annually.

6.3.3 Staffing and participants

In 1999-2000, there were 692 adult learners of which 68 were lower level learners at lower literacy levels equivalent to Newfoundland ABE Level I.

Instructors are required to have a PEI teacher's license, as well as a diploma and experience in adult education. Instructor salaries are $20.00 per hour. A learner to instructor ratio of 6:1 has been established for lower level learners with a 10:1 ratio for higher level learners.

6.3.4 Accountability processes

The Department of Education establishes standards and monitors and evaluates the program. Core standards for programs are in place and a learning outcomes approach to assessments was recently introduced. A clear and consistent intake process has been implemented, including an assessment of psychological and social support needs.

6.3.5 Professional development

The Department of Education requires instructors in Literacy/Adult Basic Education Program to have a PEI teachers' licence and a diploma and experience in adult education.

The professional development program is in the early stages of development. A committee is in place to plan professional development activities. Work is being done on an individualized learning program for each instructor. Each instructor participates in four professional development days per year. This past year, two of these days were used for a

group workshop on the new curriculum being used in the program and on prior learning assessment.

6.4 Manitoba

6.4.1 Program design

Stemming from recommendations of a 1989-90 provincial task force, Manitoba has implemented a community-based approach to adult literacy with a goal of delivering programming which contributes to the IALS definition of literacy for everyday living. The program is highly learner focussed, with learning plans tailored to the learners' interests and goals and assessments being based on demonstrated achievement of these specific goals. Learners also contribute in other ways, including participation in a speakers bureau that makes presentations to potential learners and supporting organizations.

There are 40 literacy working groups (LWGs) made up of community representatives who serve as advisory boards. They conduct community needs assessments, promote awareness, develop local programs and manage program implementation. The Department of Education has developed guides for conducting community needs assessments, quality programming, program development and managing volunteers.

The program is strongly learner-focussed. A core "Stages' curriculum sets out general learning objectives that takes the learner to the high school entry level. Few pre-existing materials are used. Rather these are developed for each individual based on their needs and goals. Each learner plays an active part in deciding on what they will study and bring materials to class in line with their needs. Similarly the assessment of progress is done in terms of demonstrated evidence of achievement of specific goals for each individual.

The curriculum is currently being revamped to align it with the IALS levels and the essential skills profiles developed by HRDC.

Most programs are part-time (they are more commonly day programs in urban settings and evening programs in rural settings). Most programs are located in high schools where space is provided free of charge. Programs deal with the equivalent of Newfoundland's ABE Level I.

The Department of Education is now working on an articulation of the community-based literacy credit program through to adult high school to college.

6.4.2 Funding

The annual provincial budget is $1,213,500 which funds 40 programs at an average cost of $30,300 per program. Space is normally supplied free of charge at high schools.

Funding is renewed annually for established programs based on submission of a financial report, evaluation report and a program development plan for the following year.

6.4.3 Staffing and participants

The number of learners per program ranges from 15 to 30. Most programs employ a paid co-ordinator or instructor at the rate of $18.00 per hour and engage volunteer tutors.

6.4.4 Accountability processes

The Department of Education actively manages and delivers the Adult Literacy Program. A manager and three co-ordinators direct the program, monitor program delivery, participate in learner assessments (coordinators actually conduct the assessments of progress of each learner) and provide professional development.

Learners develop a portfolio to measure growth, a tool that was requested by learners. The Department of Education issues certificates at various progress stages based on the co-ordinator's assessment and meetings between departmental staff and the learner.

6.4.5 Professional development

The Department of Education has not set specific qualifications for instructors; however, many have a teacher's certificate.

Professional development is provided by the Department of Education but has been cut back significantly due to resource reductions. A voluntary 18-hour certificate program for instructors is offered, and volunteers are also encouraged to participate.

The Province delivers mandatory workshops for LWG boards, co-ordinators and instructors. There are also optional workshops on various topics depending on need.

6.5 British Columbia

6.5.1 Program design

Literacy/ABE is delivered through the public system. Basic Literacy/ABE programming is delivered through the post-secondary education system (colleges, university-college institutes, and the Open Learning Agency). All institutions are offering instructor-based teaching through class or individualized instruction. Smaller learning centres may offer

self-paced instruction. Others have volunteer literacy outreach programs or may choose to deliver a literacy program in partnership with community groups.

Another provincial department, the Ministry of Education (MOE) funds adult programs in school districts. Many school districts offer adult literacy programs through their adult learning centres.

The ABE Transitions Project initiated in 1998 aims at developing a more integrated learner-centred approach to ABE programming with common credentials to facilitate transfer of learners between the two public systems. This includes a policy of tuition-free ABE programming. In September 1999, the new British Columbia Adult Graduation Diploma replaced the former adult high school and ABE diplomas.

6.5.2 Funding

More than $9 million in provincial funds is allocated this year for delivery of the fundamental ABE level up to Grade 9 through the post-secondary education system. This represents approximately 20% of the total ABE budget.

6.5.3 Accountability processes

Accountability is seen as strong with performance indicators in place and funding linked back to capacity utilization. The ABE Articulation Handbook sets out the learning outcomes expected in the four levels of the program.

An Accountability Framework was developed last year. This acknowledged access, employability skills, and life management skills as ABE program goals in addition to more traditional academic skills. An ABE Program Quality Framework has been developed primarily for institutional program review.

6.6 Summary

Perhaps the most useful finding from this examination of other provinces is that much of the work has already been done in developing programming, learner plans and assessment techniques and in developing collaborative approaches that involve a range of stakeholders in the public and private sectors. In other words, if there are improvements initiated in Newfoundland and Labrador, there is really no need to reinvent the wheel in many aspects of programming design; rather effort should be made to contact those provinces and national organizations that have developed program components.

7.0 Gaps in the current approach

In this section, the findings regarding the significant gaps and weaknesses in current policies and delivery of Basic Literacy/ABE Level I are presented. This includes observations make by key informants and providers and our analysis of the findings from the various methods used.

7.1 Policy commitment

The evaluation process identified that stakeholders universally perceive a lack of commitment and leadership on the part of the provincial government in addressing the needs of adults with low literacy levels. Stakeholders do not think the Strategic Literacy Plan addresses the issues about current programming that organizations raised in the consultations leading to the Plan. The Plan does not give an assurance that real action will be taken. This policy gap must be addressed before any other actions will be seen as relevant.

7.2 Funding

The funding of adult literacy programs is inappropriate from at least the following perspectives:

- community-based programs do not have access to sustained funding;
- the proportion of provincial funding allocated to adult literacy for delivery is minimal in relation to need;
- there is an imbalance in the amount available for enhancements (through the federal government) and that available for program delivery (through the province);
- the current funding levels and approach sets up a competitive rather than collaborative environment for programs.

The funding allocated to adult literacy program delivery and supports is only about one third of the total literacy funding provided by the provincial government. The remainder is allocated for LDC operations, and family and child literacy programs. This level of funding makes it difficult to achieve any significant distribution of funds across the province to ensure equitable access to programs. As a consequence only a few programs are actually funded on an ongoing basis, and the levels approved vary.

The funding provided by the National Literacy Secretariat for program development and enhancements is five times that of the funding for adult literacy program delivery provided by the provincial government. As a result, organizations indicated that they force-fit their requests to fit NLS criteria (for short term improvement projects) in order to offset operating costs. Their real need is a reasonable level of funding for ongoing program delivery. This also dilutes the value-added of program improvement initiatives, as there is a weak sustained program infrastructure able to make use of the improvements that are developed through NLS funded projects.

Finally, program providers are placed in a competitive position for the few funds available for delivery and this does not nurture the collaboration needed to address the literacy issue.

7.3 Roles

The roles of a number of key players in adult literacy are not clear or well understood.

Government

The Department of Education has not demonstrated to stakeholders in the province that they are committed to leading and resourcing adult literacy programming in the province. Until this commitment is evidenced through a clear policy statement and a concrete plan for programming in which the Department has a hands on role, the stakeholders we consulted feel it is unlikely that much will change in order to meet the needs of adult learners.

The majority of the current programming is delivered through community-based organizations. However, there is a perception among a large number of stakeholders that the Department of Education is not well positioned (in resources or orientation) to work with these organizations. This is a constraint that will need to be addressed to make any plan effective.

Departments other than Education (Human Resources and Employment, Health and Community Services, Justice, Development and Rural Renewal) have a stake in the quality and outcomes of adult literacy programs. It benefits achievement of their mandates if the population at large and their particular client groups have strong literacy skills.

The responsibility for literacy programs is seen as resting with Education, and there has been no real effort to coordinate mandates and programs to tackle the literacy problem. As evidenced by the IALS research on linkage with employment, health, crime and citizen participation.

This lack of an integrated approach is partly the result of resources - departments have to priorize their limited funds to meet their primary goals. However, in a number of cases,

priorities and programs could be implemented in a way that would complement the work of the Department of Education in providing a continuum of supports for adult learners in family, community and workplace programs. Such a collaborative effort to identify possible linkages and complementarity would be consistent with the approach set out in the Strategic Social Plan. Indeed these same departments are already collaborating on harmonizing their mandates and programs as part of the SSP.

Literacy Development Council

The provincial government has delegated to the Council, through legislation, a wide range of responsibilities for development of a strategic literacy plan, management of all aspects of literacy program design, implementation and monitoring, communications and coordination of programs and services, approval of projects and fund raising. The Council collaborates with the Department of Education in carrying out these roles.

Many key informants expressed the concern that the functions related to literacy program planning and management are the responsibility of government and should be performed by government, as is the case for other levels of education. They also noted that it is unfair and inappropriate to expect a volunteer provincial board, operating with limited number of staff and limited resources to carry out the full range of responsibilities set out in the LDC legislation.

The delegation has not been effective for these reasons. While the various communications activities of the Council (1-800 number, newsletters) are seen as useful and necessary, many commented that the Council is not providing the continuity and level of support that is needed in the key areas of program development, professional development and program monitoring. As well, a number observed that the assigned roles create some potential for conflicts. Council members decide on priorities for funding and have input to the decisions on individual applications, yet Council members are often part of organizations which make application for funding from the Council. The Council assists providers in developing proposals for funding and a number of key informants had concerns that this role creates the potential for conflict with the decision-making role.

Key informants and providers noted that there is a need for an organization to lead the networking, communications and advocacy activities required by learners and literacy organizations, and that these are more appropriately carried out by an organization outside government.

It is our conclusion that the role and structure of the Council must be carefully thought through in any changes to the model for adult literacy in the province so that there is an

appropriate delegation of tasks that are best done by an arm's length organization (such as advocacy, communications, networking, and fund raising) leaving the bulk of the policy and program development and management work to the department.

Community

There is no provincial coalition or network of literacy organizations and learners. This limits the opportunities for these stakeholders to play a leadership and advocacy role. While the LDC sees itself as carrying out this role (and is currently developing a Learner Action Network) the majority of people we interviewed perceive the Council as an arm of government, not sufficiently independent of government to perform the advocacy they feel is needed, particularly given the perception that government is not committed to the issue of adult literacy.

College of the North Atlantic

The College of the North Atlantic does not consistently play a role in the community in regard to literacy. Only a few campuses are well linked with community groups to provide a continuum of literacy/ABE programming. There is a perception among many stakeholders that the College generally lacks the flexibility and openness to playing such a role. However, in an interview the President of CNA indicated an interest in developing these linkages to support community-based programming for Basic Literacy.

Employers

Employers are involved in very few community-based programs and workplace literacy is only in the early stages of development in the province, yet this group has a large stake in the literacy levels of current and future employees. Provinces that are moving ahead with literacy programming are placing emphasis on workplace literacy programming.

7.4 Program delivery

Program design varies across the province. While most community-based programs use the Laubach curriculum as the primary resource, and a few follow the ABE Level I guide, there is no consistency in the extent to which instruction (and materials) are tailored to the individual learner or in which initial and ongoing assessments are done. As the learner-centred approach is key to literacy programming, this is an aspect that needs structure and central guidance and support.

Volunteers play a key role in delivery of community-based programs. Only two tutoring programs (Burin Literacy Council and Teachers on Wheels) have paid coordinators.

Community-based classroom programs largely have a combination of an instructor with a team of volunteer tutors. The supports available for tutor coordination and professional development are uneven across programs and generally not meeting all the needs across the province.

Supports for program providers in working with learners with special needs (particularly those with learning disabilities and mental illnesses) are almost non-existent, yet providers feel a large proportion of learners have such needs.

There is no effective information sharing on instructional materials and tools developed by various programs or available from other sources. Many providers were not aware where they could go for help when it was needed (this may be partly a function of the staff turnover in some programs that are operated for short periods of time). As a result providers spend time unnecessarily in developing or seeking out resources that could be better spent in using what is available.

7.5 Accountability for outcomes

With the lack of policy, organized programming, and a clear sense of the outcomes expected from programs, there is no clear sense of what government and organizations are accountable for in addressing adult literacy needs.

8.0 Conclusions and recommendations for a model

8.1 Conclusions

The following are the conclusions of the evaluation:

Conclusion 1: **Adequate and sustained funding is needed**: Provincial policy and programming for adult literacy has been largely driven by federal policy and funding. While there have been several policy statements and some attempts by the provincial government to operationalize these, there has been no sustained effort to see the policies actually move to action. This has led to cycles of investment and (currently) minimal support for actual program delivery. In particular there is no sustained programming and funding for adult literacy.

Overall, there is a lack of demonstrated and practical commitment by the provincial government to the needs of this group and a lack of understanding by government that the return on an investment in adult literacy warrants spending.

Conclusion 2: **Program standards are needed**: Programs are operating without a consistent framework of curriculum, materials, standards, program supports (professional development) and accountability measures. As a result, the relevancy and accessibility of programs varies.

Conclusion 3: **Coordination and networking are needed**: Community-based adult literacy programs are not consistently linked to other adult education programs to provide a continuum of education appropriate to the needs of learners, with appropriate linkages to higher level ABE programs and skill training. This local networking could be better supported by networking among providers at the provincial level.

There are existing resources and expertise within community-based organizations, colleges and government that could be better integrated to build a more effective approach to support community-based adult literacy programs, in areas such as special needs assessments, personal counselling, and career counselling.

Conclusion 4: **Accessibility needs to be improved:** Few potential learners actually have access to programs in an ongoing way. Few operate outside of project-based funding, and in most public and private colleges programs are only open to learners eligible for sponsorship. Those on income support who are at the Basic Literacy level are not eligible for funding from HRE.

Conclusion 5: **Better tracking of results is needed:** There is no structured approach to monitoring the progress of individual learners and assessing learning outcomes, nor is there monitoring of the quality and results of programs against reasonable standards.

8.2 Principles for an adult literacy model

The following principles are proposed as the basis for work by the Department of Education and the Literacy Development Council in developing a model to address the issues identified in this review. The model should:

- be affordable within the current fiscal situation;
- reflect the overall government direction for an integrated approach to social and economic programs (as described in the Strategic Social and Literacy Plans);
- build on the strengths of community organizations and the public college system;
- respect federal and provincial criteria for eligibility of individuals for sponsorship;
- provide learners throughout the province with equitable access to community-based programming that is appropriate to their needs and that reflects good practices in adult literacy;
- equip the various stakeholders to play their respective roles;
- include a process for accounting for results to learners and all other stakeholders.

8.3 Option for a working model

The following model is proposed as an option for how adult literacy programming might be designed and delivered to meet the above principles.

Central leadership

While literacy is a multi-faceted issue, stakeholders see the accountability for an improved approach to adult literacy starting with the Department of Education making clear its

commitment before other actions can be expected. This commitment must necessarily identify what resources (financial and expert) the department will bring to adult literacy.

The Department of Education would play a lead role in developing and delivering central supports to community-based programs, and coordinating the funding and program supports of government departments with a stake in adult literacy. These departments include Education, Human Resources and Employment, Health and Community Services, Justice, Development and Rural Renewal. The Department of Education would also be the lead for coordinating policies and funding with federal departments, in particular the National Literacy Secretariat.

A Provincial Literacy Network, comprised of Community Learning Networks (described below) and provincial level organizations with an interest in adult literacy (for example, organizations involved in learning disabilities) would lead advocacy, communications and fund raising activities. The Literacy Development Council could be refocused to become this Provincial Literacy Network if its current mandate under the legislation were revised to focus only on these areas.

Funding from the province would be allocated to cover program delivery. Funding from the HRDC National Literacy Secretariat would be allocated to program development and improvements, including professional development, public awareness and tracking of results. Where adult literacy programs also include family literacy, funding for the latter could be coordinated with that of the Department of Health and Community Services and Health Canada.

Community leadership

Community Learning Networks, comprised of organizations in each Strategic Social Plan region with a stake in adult literacy and including representatives of learners, would plan and manage the delivery of community-based adult literacy programs. These networks would be responsible for leveraging in-kind contributions and funding to complement that of government, as needed. These networks could build on existing coordinating bodies for literacy and education.

Local program delivery

The literature and experience of providers in the province point to the need for approaches that are relevant to the local area and needs of individual learners, within a context of standards. We recommend programming delivered through community-based organizations as the approach that would best match these features, as well as the principles set out in Section 8.2.1.

Community-based adult literacy programs would normally be delivered in classroom/group settings, primarily on a part-time basis (with scheduled hours of 15-20 hours per week), delivered by a paid instructor complemented by volunteer tutors. Programs would be designed locally to meet local needs and objectives within provincial standards, and could be linked to family literacy programming. Typically a program would include 15-20 learners at any one time. Over time, workplace based literacy programming might also be part of the mix of offerings.

The programs should be based on a learner-centred model of instruction which:

- Uses a curriculum that sets out general learning objectives, and guidance for teaching towards these objectives;
- Uses materials, resources and assessment materials that differ according to the interests and needs of individual learners;
- Assists the learner in the identification and development of realistic goals;
- Uses a participatory approach in which learners are active participants in all aspects of the program planning and implementation;
- Instructors/tutors use a variety of methods for teaching and assessment that recognize and accommodate different learning styles.

Community-based programs would be well linked with the public and private colleges in the area to provide expert supports from these institutions to learners. Examples of these expert supports include assessment of skill levels at program entry, screening for learning disabilities, career counselling. The linkages would also ensure a seamless transition to higher ABE levels or skill training at the colleges for learners moving to those levels. Both public and private colleges would provide flexible programming so that learners who require limited literacy skill development are able to obtain this at college or community-based programs while beginning studies in their chosen skill area.

Information on the various resources, tools, and development opportunities for providers should be coordinated so that these are accessible and used well. The Internet should be used to link providers and other stakeholders in the province so that there is continuous networking and more accessible opportunities for professional development.

The Department of Education should develop qualification standards for instructors and tutors, in consultation with other stakeholders. Qualifications should ensure these program providers are flexible and creative, particularly in their capacity to work in a learner-centred

approach, one where they would be required, among other tasks, to develop or re-write materials relevant to individuals.

The literature supports the use of experienced, certified instructors, but the research is inconclusive on what is the best training for literacy providers. However, the establishment of qualifications should be guided by the requirements for certification of private institutions to deliver ABE in the province, the current profile of instructors and tutors, and the standards set in other provinces. The tutor training program being developed by the Literacy Development Council should be considered in the process of establishing standards as a potential source of standards and programming.

Accountability measures

The model should include processes for:

- ensuring roles and accountabilities of the Department of Education, other partner departments, National Literacy Secretariat, Provincial Literacy Network, Community Learning Networks, and individual programs are clear and understood by all stakeholders;
- standards to be met in carrying out these roles are described;
- a process is in place for regular monitoring and reporting on performance by each of the above bodies.

The model components are set out in the following chart.

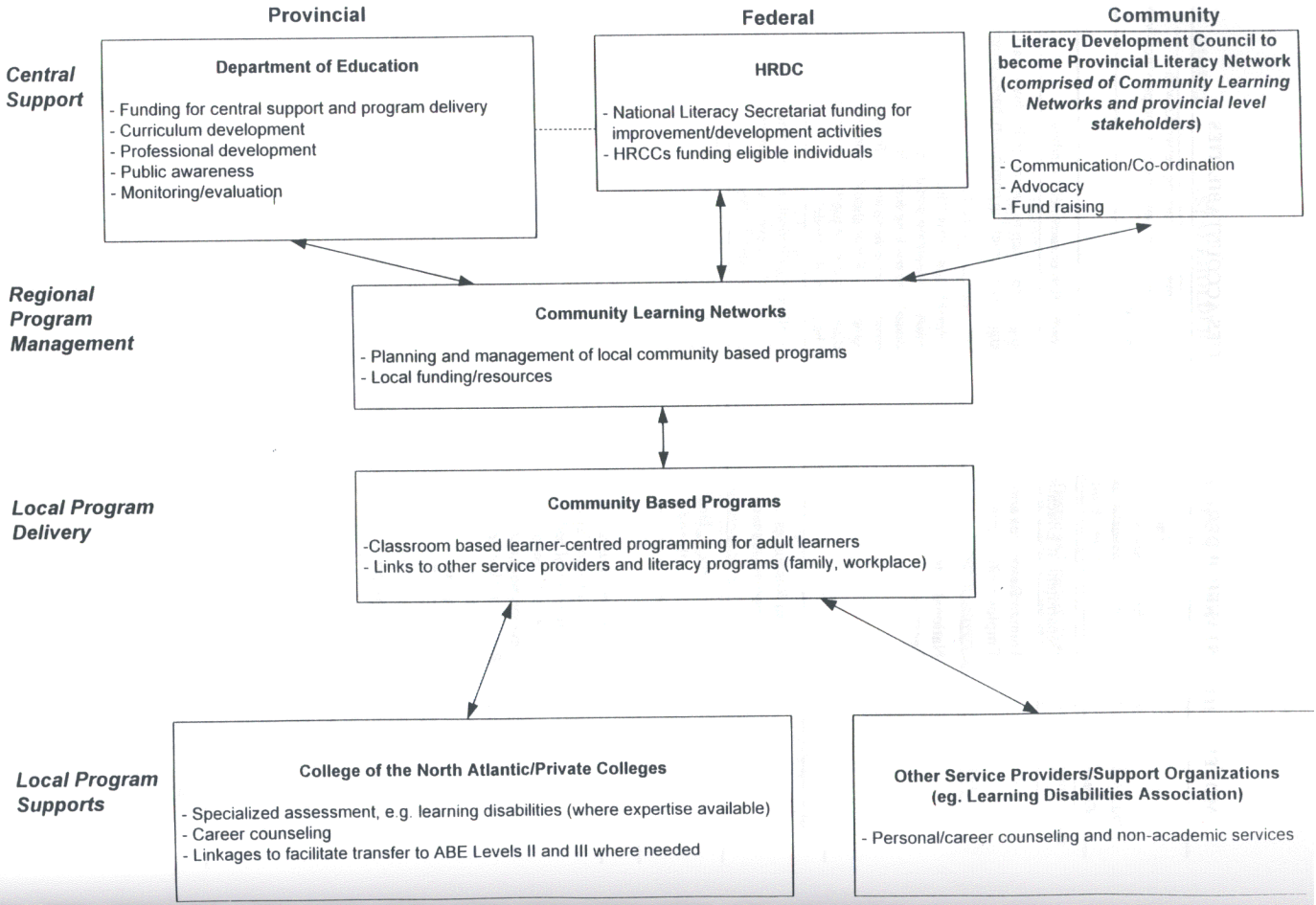
MODEL	STAKEHOLDER	ACTIVITIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES
Delivery of Programs And Services		
	Learner (all citizens)	• Request participation • Involvement in developing personal learning goals and program design • Participation in community-based training delivered in classroom settings (typically part-time programs of scheduled 15-20 hours a week) • Commitment to progress
	Instructors, Volunteer tutors	• Delivery of community-based group training in Basic Literacy/ABE Level I by instructors complemented by volunteers tutors • Design individualized programs based on learners' goals and capabilities • Participate in professional development

MODEL	STAKEHOLDER	ACTIVITIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES
		• Assess learner needs and progress using tools/approaches that conform to standards set out for the model
	Volunteer community learning networks building on existing networks (e.g. school boards, colleges, non-profit organizations, regional economic development boards, libraries, corrections institutions, Strategic Social Plan Committees)	• Design and manage local programs by organizations with a stake and interest in adult literacy • Leverage resources to complement government funding • Assess program delivery and results regularly
	College of the North Atlantic and private colleges	• Offer seamless transition to ABE Levels II and III • Provide learners in community-based programs with access to specialists in counselling, career information, and disabilities assessment.
	Government and other community services	• Provide services to meet learner needs other than literacy
Program Supports		
	Department of Education	• Design of program standards, curriculum and materials, including tools for assessment and tracking progress and results • Design and delivery of professional development for instructors and volunteers, using technology such as the Internet as well as conferences in order to maximize reach • Design of awareness campaigns for implementation province-wide or through community learning networks • Funding of community-based program • Monitor program delivery and results • Establish linkages with other federal/provincial departments with a stake in adult literacy so that policies and funding are co-ordinated to maximize the investment in program delivery
	Provincial Literacy Network	• To be developed through focusing of the Literacy Development Council on communications, advocacy, and fund raising activities. Comprised of various community learning networks with representation

MODEL	STAKEHOLDER	ACTIVITIES/ACCOUNTABILITIES
		from adult learners and province-wide organizations.
Funding		
	Department of Education	• Co-ordination of provincial funding
	Human Resources and Employment	• Change in approach to support individuals Basic Literacy/ABE Level I in community based programs.
	National Literacy Secretariat	• Co-ordinate approvals with the Province for program development and development of accountability tracking methods; curriculum and materials development; and professional development. Focus should be on seeking out and funding system wide tools and other supports that will be part of the model.
	Human Resources Development Canada	• Fund eligible individual learners who have Basic Literacy or ABE Level I as a component of their return-to-work action plan.
	Family literacy: Health Canada, Health and Community Services *Workplace-based literacy:* ACOA, provincial Department of Industry, Trade and Technology, Development and Rural Renewal, Human Resources and Employment	• Potential sources in family literacy funds for new program streams.

The diagram on the next page presents the model components and their linkages.

Model for Adult Basic Literacy/ABE Level I Delivery



8.4 Model implementation

The following are the key steps needed for development of this model:

Senior management of the Department of Education will need to articulate their commitment to adult literacy programming and the specific actions they will take to lead the development and implementation of this model.

The Department of Education will need to lead a collaborative process with other partner departments to identify the respective policies, programs, and funding that are directly or indirectly supportive of various approaches to adult literacy, and ways of coordinating these policies, programs and funding so that they support a continuum of community-based programs. This collaboration should include identification of systemic barriers to coordination inherent in the current policies and programs and a means of addressing these barriers. This process should also result in identification of specific funding to be allocated for community-based adult literacy programming and central supports.

The Department of Education will need to lead a collaborative process to design the new model. This should involve all relevant community organizations, employers, and the various departments of the provincial and federal government with a stake in adult literacy in each region. The process should build on existing processes, in particular the work underway on implementation of the Strategic Social Plan. In these consultations the department should ensure that organizations are made aware of:

- the full spectrum of potential approaches to good programming (from family, adult through to employment -preparation and work place based) and the potential linkages among these approaches;
- what can be expected from government in supporting the development and operation of programs, including sustainable funding;
- what will be expected of communities in managing program delivery and achieving results that address the goals of learners, in order to access sustainable funding.

This process must create a safe environment for existing organizations to buy into the process of change. While the model will likely result in new structures (Provincial Literacy Network and Community Learning Networks) and changes to the organization of existing programs, the process of achieving this new approach must be done in a way that builds on the strengths of existing programs, while setting the bar at a new level to create improved services for adult learners and tracking of results.

8.5 Funding

We propose that funding for Adult Basic Literacy be targeted in the following proportions:

ACTIVITY	% OF FUNDS
Program delivery	65
Professional development	10
Program development and accountability tracking	15
Curriculum and materials development and dissemination	10
Total	100%

FUNDING LEVELS

We propose that individual programs be funded for up to $25,000 per year to cover part-time instructors (at a wage rate of $20.00 per hour) and other operating costs. Community Learning Networks would provide in-kind contributions and funds to supplement the provincial allocation as needed. Materials and professional development costs would be covered centrally.

TOTAL COSTS

The total annual costs in a mature program year are estimated below. This is based on a scenario of 10 community learning networks delivering 20 community-based programs. It is likely that in the early years of the model, the number of networks will be lower than this. As well, some networks in the larger communities (particularly St. John's) will likely require more than one funded program. However, programs within each network should be well linked to meet a continuum of learners needs.

The estimated funding does not include program delivery costs of the Department of Education. Based on the experience in other provinces, there is a potential need for a program coordinator and one or two consultants at least until the program reaches full development (potential annual cost $200,000). It is our recommendation that funding from the NLS be sought for these additional staff as a necessary aspect of initial program development.

The estimated funding also does not include funds for the coordination and development work of the Community Learning Networks. This will be a necessary activity particularly in the start up phase of this model. Networks may make in kind and funding contributions towards

this activity, but it is also is recommended that NLS funds be sought for this coordination work as part of initial program development.

COMPONENT	PROPORTION	COST	SOURCE
Program delivery (20 @ $25,000)	65%	$500,000	Province
Professional development	10	76925	NLS
Program development/accountability tracking	15	115385	NLS
Curriculum/materials development and dissemination	10%	76925	NLS
Total cost		$769,235	

INCREMENTAL COSTS

The following is an estimate of the incremental costs compared to that provided now for adult Basic Literacy programs:

SOURCE	CURRENT FUNDING FOR ADULT BASIC LITERACY	REQUIRED UNDER MODEL	INCREMENTAL FUNDING REQUIRED
Province (Department of Education)	$147,600	$500,000	$352,400
National Literacy Secretariat	$752,000	$269,235	nil

Additional provincial funding will be required to deliver this model. The current NLS allocation for the province exceeds the basic needs for the model and leaves room for further enhancement to program design and delivery (potentially as suggested above to fund the up front program development work of the Department of Education and coordination by the Community Learning Networks).

8.6 Tracking results

8.6.1 Standards for performance

Standards and expectations for action at all levels - central support, community learning networks, community-based programs should be developed and implemented. Examples are as follows:

LEVEL	STANDARDS
Central support	• Active participation of relevant organizations • Strategic plan for adult literacy and plan implemented • Development of relevant curriculum and materials • Accessible and relevant advice to networks and providers • Professional development that meets provider needs • Accessing required funds • Monitoring/evaluating programs
Community learning networks	• Active participation of relevant stakeholders • Plan for developing and promoting programs, and the plan is implemented and evaluated • Leveraging resources • Improvement-oriented assessment of programs • Accounting for funds
Community-based programs	• Accessibility - location, recruitment, appropriate screening • Learner focused program - based on needs/goals/background/learner involvement • Qualified instructors • Adequate funding and other resources • Assessment of progress of individual learners • Portable recognition for learning • Linkages with other service providers

8.6.2 Reporting and renewal of funding

Annual program development/improvement plans (including goals for learner achievements) should be developed centrally and by each Community Learning Network. Community Learning Networks should be funded for a three-year period, with annual funding renewed based on reporting against goals for the previous year on program development and results for learners, and submission of an updated program improvement plan.

ENDNOTES

1. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and Statistics Canada (2000). Literacy in the Information Age, Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey. Paris, France: OECD Publications Service.

2. Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Education (2000). Words to Live By, A Strategic Literacy Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador 2000, p. i.

3. According to Department of Education Standards and Submission Requirements for Private Training Institutions to Deliver and Certify the ABE Program, instructors must: hold an Education or Vocational Education Degree and have completed at least 6 university courses in the subject area they teach; or have completed an undergraduate degree with at least 10 education courses, including an internship/practicum program and have completed at least 6 university courses in the subject area they teach; and/or possess an Adult Education Diploma from a recognized college or university with an undergraduate degree in the subject areas they teach; or demonstrate a combination of credentials and experiential background which is deemed suitable by the Department.

4. Barker, K. (1999). Adult Literacy "Lessons Learned" Project Technical Report, p. 153.

5. Barker, K. (1999). Adult Literacy "Lessons Learned" Project Technical Report, p. 154.

6. Thorndike's laws of learning [Online] Available: http://www.triangle.org/instructor.html

7. Ziegler, S. (1996). The Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Education: A Review of Issues and Literature Related to Outcome-Based Evaluation of Literacy Programs, prepared for the Ontario Literacy Coalition, p. 19.

8. Adult Literacy Lessons Learned Project, Human Resources Development Canada, prepared by Kathryn Barker, FutureEd, January 30, 1999

9. Ziegler. S. (1996) The Effectiveness of Adult Literacy Education: A Review of Issues and Literature related to Outcome-based Evaluation of Literacy Programs, Ontario Literacy Coalition.

10. Galbraith, M. W., Editor (1990). Adult Learning Methods. Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Co, p. 81. *A learner-centered education focuses upon the individual learner rather than on a body of information and is closely associated with the writings of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Subject matter is presented in a manner conducive to learners' needs. The central element in a learner-centered approach is trust; while the teacher is always available to help, the teacher trusts learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Although a teacher-centered approach is widely practiced in adult education, the learner-centered approach is strongly supported in the field's literature.*