Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment

Strategic Plan For Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08



Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08

Message from the Minister

It is my pleasure to present the strategic plan for the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment for fiscal years 2006-07 and 2007-08. The strategic directions of government (see appendix) were carefully considered in the preparation of this plan. As a category-one government entity, my department has developed goals and objectives to assist people to enter the labour market and reduce their dependency on Income Support.

The department has laid out an aggressive approach to help clients achieve self-reliance and to participate fully in society.

To this end, the department is placing greater emphasis on the delivery of career and employment services while making it easier for clients to access the Income Support Program from the privacy of their own homes.



Honorable Paul Shelley, MHA Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment

We are establishing and strengthening linkages among key labour market stakeholders at the regional and provincial levels to respond to current and future labour market challenges and to position the province strategically in the global market.

The priorities outlined in this plan will enable us to build on the successes the department has already achieved. Our goal is to help vulnerable clients get the support they need to prepare for work and play an active role in our communities. We are also taking steps, especially for at-risk youth, to help them make a successful transition from Income Support to long-term meaningful employment. We are developing a poverty reduction strategy and an immigration strategy. These priorities support government's goals by addressing barriers to employment and enabling people to become more self-reliant.

I look forward to the next two years as we reach our goals. Through this plan we have made it a priority to provide employment supports for young people who receive Income Support, provide labour market information and services to help people enter the workforce and improve the delivery of services to our clients.

This strategic plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with Government's *Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the preparation of this plan and for achieving its specific goals and objectives.

PAUL SHELLEY, MHA Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment

Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08

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Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08

1.0 Introduction

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to greater transparency and accountability. In accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, passed in December 2004, the strategic plan for the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE) identifies key priority areas for the next two years.

This plan addresses three strategic issues: employment supports for youth recipients of Income Support, support for labour market development and implementation of a new service delivery model. Youth (age 18-29 years) make up one-quarter of the Income Support caseload; in 2005 almost half of all new entrants to the program were youth. Assisting youth to reduce their dependency on Income Support and acquire the skills and work experience they need to make a successful transition to employment is a priority. Having current labour market information and working closely with partners is key to understanding the strategic challenges and opportunities facing the province in the coming years. Implementing a new service delivery model allows staff to use more effective business processes and modern technology to administer the Income Support Program while focusing additional human resources on helping people gain greater attachment to the labour market.

To address the strategic issues outlined in the plan, three goals, along with corresponding objectives for each of the next two years, have been developed: decreased number of youth cases on Income Support, increased access to labour market information and supports and implementation of a new service delivery model.

Using measures and indicators specified, a performance report will be tabled in the House of Assembly each year to provide a summary of the progress that the department is making on achieving the goals and objectives set out in this plan.

2.0 Plan at a Glance

Vision

Newfoundland and Labrador will have a diverse, self-reliant population with minimal dependency on Income Support and a labour market supply that meets the economic development requirements of the province.

Mission

By 2011 the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment will have enhanced supports and services to better assist people, particularly youth, to enter the labour market and reduce dependency on Income Support.

Goals				
Goal 1:	BY 2008 HRLE WILL HAVE DECREASED THE NUMBER OF YOUTH ON INCOME SUPPORT.			
	Objective 1:	By 2007 HRLE will have increased the participation of youth in employment programs and services who are receiving, or are at risk of receiving, Income Support.		
	Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have reduced the number of youth on Income Support.		
Goal 2:	BY 2008 INDIVIDUALS WILL HAVE INCREASED ACCESS TO LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION AND SUPPORTS.			
	Objective 1:	By 2007 HRLE will have established an infrastructure to gather and disseminate labour market information.		
	Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have developed a process to monitor and forecast current and emerging employment demands and skills gaps.		
Goal 3:	BY 2008 HRLE WILL HAVE IMPLEMENTED A NEW SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL THAT ALLOWS THE DEPARTMENT TO DELIVER ITS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.			
	Objective 1:	By 2007 HRLE will have implemented the service delivery model in all HRLE regions.		
	Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have evaluated and refined the service delivery model, as required.		

3.0 Overview of Department

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The Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment (HRLE) works collaboratively with other departments of the provincial government, federal government and many community partners. The department provides people with employment and income supports that reduce barriers to employment, promote dignity and self-reliance and enhance labour market development. The department assists youth to connect to supports focused on human resource development, training and employment.

The department is taking a lead role in the development of a comprehensive, government-wide poverty reduction strategy and the development of a provincial strategy to increase the number of immigrants who choose to make this province their home.

Core Business	The department plays a critical role in supporting the people of Newfoundland and Labrador by providing a range of income,		
	employment and labour market supports. The department has four		
	lines of business:		
	Financial and Social Supports		
	Employment and Youth Services		
	Labour Market Development		
	Emergency Social Services		
Branches	The three branches of the department are:		
	Labour Market Development and Client Services		
	Income, Employment and Youth Services		
	Corporate Services		
Staff & Budget	Approximately 500 staff (approximately 360 females and 140 males) in twenty-six district offices and at the provincial office provide service in four regions: Avalon, Central, Western and Labrador. With budgeted net expenditures of approximately \$264 million in fiscal year 2006-07, HRLE is one of the largest departments of the provincial government.		
Legislative Authority	Legislative authority for the department's programs and services is provided by:<i>Income and Employment Support Act</i>,		
	• <i>Support Orders Enforcement Act</i> , shared with the Department of Justice, and		
	• <i>Emergency Measures Act</i> , shared with the Department of Municipal Affairs.		



4.0 Mandate

The mandate of the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment is to support human resource development through providing:

- income and employment supports;
- youth supports;
- emergency social services; and
- policy and information services for labour market development and immigration.

5.0 Core Business

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The Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment has four lines of business:

1. Financial and Social Supports

The department provides financial and social supports to individuals and families who meet designated criteria. More specifically, the department provides:

- financial assistance with daily living expenses, such as food, shelter, clothing, medical transportation and special needs;
- additional benefits for low-income families, such as the Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit and Mother-Baby Nutrition Supplement;
- grants to designated external agencies for immigrant settlement services;
- assistance to help individuals and families leave violent situations;
- assistance to secure spousal and child support;
- counselling and assessment; and
- advocacy, service coordination and referral.

2. Employment and Youth Services

The department provides employment and youth services to individuals and groups that meet designated criteria. More specifically, the department provides:

- assistance to acquire the necessary skills and experience to prepare for, find and keep employment, including self-employment;
- career counselling services;
- financial assistance to employers offering on-the-job training and experience;
- grants to community agencies offering employment services;
- additional supports to persons with disabilities to prepare for, find and keep employment, including self-employment, and accommodation of their unique circumstances;
- youth employment initiatives, including tuition vouchers and wage subsidies; and
- support for youth leadership, including awards programs, grants to organizations and the provincial Youth Advisory Committee.

3. Labour Market Development

The department provides labour market development services. More specifically, the department:

- co-manages the federal-provincial Labour Market Development Agreement;
- coordinates partnerships between government and stakeholder groups to identify and respond to labour market issues;
- develops and disseminates labour market information;
- analyzes large-scale projects to determine potential employment opportunities; and
- coordinates the development of immigration policy and programs.

4. Emergency Social Services

The department provides emergency social services in partnership with community volunteer agencies, integrated health boards and municipalities. This response includes the provision of:

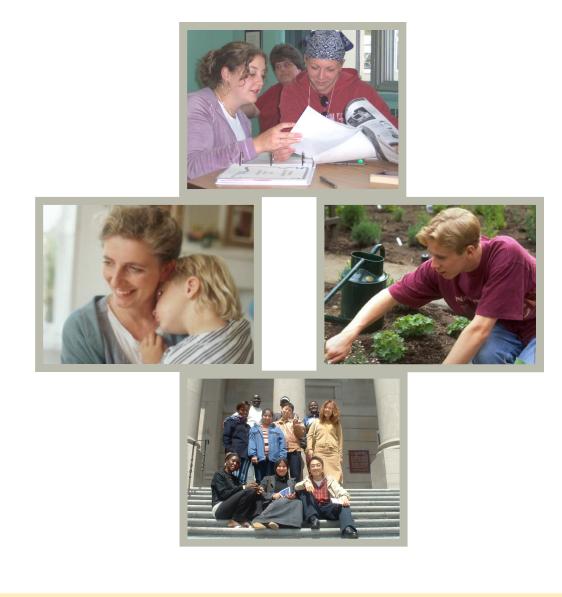
- food, clothing and shelter;
- registration and inquiry; and
- personal services, including crisis intervention counselling and other psycho-social services.

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6.0 The People We Serve

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The Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment serves people: who are in need of financial, employment and medical supports; who are victims of violence; who are homeless or hard to house; seeking spousal and child support; with disabilities; and with complex needs, whether or not they receive Income Support. The department supports a variety of community groups, including those that focus on youth, women, persons with disabilities, labour, employers, immigration, education and community and economic development. The department works in cooperation with other provincial government departments and the federal government.



7.0 Guiding Principles

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Employees of the department are committed to respect, self-reliance, fairness, confidentiality, inclusion, partnership and plain language. The action statements below demonstrate how these values are reflected in the conduct of staff.

Respect

Employees treat the public and other employees with courtesy and tolerance and make the workplace a productive and healthy environment. Employees are committed to making the experience of dealing with government as congenial, satisfying and helpful as possible.

Self-reliance

Employees support people to gain maximum independence and contribute to their own wellbeing and the well-being of their families and communities.

Fairness

Employees treat all members of the public and other employees fairly and seek solutions based on each person's needs and abilities.

Confidentiality

Employees are committed to ensuring that sensitive information is held in confidence, is shared only with those who need to know and is treated with care and responsibility in order to protect people's privacy.

Inclusion

Employees support clients and other employees to participate in the decisions that affect them. Employees are committed to dialogue and consultation with the public. Within their capacities, citizens have a right and a responsibility to participate in the economic and social life of their communities.

Partnership

Employees are committed to building strong networks with counterparts in other departments, governments and community agencies. Employees engage partners to ensure that appropriate supports are developed and delivered.

Plain Language

Employees use clear and simple language to provide clients and other employees with the information they need about programs, policies, decision-making processes and appeals.

8.0 Vision

Newfoundland and Labrador will have a diverse, self-reliant population with minimal dependency on Income Support and a labour market supply that meets the economic development requirements of the province.

9.0 Mission

The mission statement identifies the priority focus area of the Minister over the next two planning cycles. It represents the key longer-term result that the Minister and the department will be working towards as they move forward on the strategic directions of Government. The statement also identifies the measures and indicators that will assist both the department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

By 2011 the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment will have enhanced supports and services to better assist people, particularly youth, to enter the labour market and reduce dependency on Income Support.

The department will focus investments on active measures to assist people, especially youth, who are most vulnerable to exclusion from the labour market. The department recognizes that ensuring people have the opportunities to reach their potential for selfreliance increases their overall quality of life and inclusion in the economic and social fabric of their communities.

In 2005 youth (18 to 29 years old) represented one-quarter of the Income Support caseload and almost 50 per cent of all new entrants. The department has therefore placed a renewed focus on the young people of Newfoundland and Labrador, especially youth who live in poverty and who rely on Income Support.

Mission Cont'd

	NCED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES TO BETTER ASSIST PEOPLE TO THE LABOUR MARKET
Indicators:	 Number of clients supported to enhance their employability Number of reports and products providing provincial labour market information Client satisfaction

	Measure 2: REDUC	CED DEPENDENCY ON INCOME SUPPORT
	Indicators:	Proportion of the population of the province receiving Income
		Support
		Number of Income Support clients available for employment

10.0 Strategic Issues

In consideration of Government's strategic directions and the mandate and financial resources of the department, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Minister for the next two years. The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected in the two-year timeframe, while the objectives provide an annual focus. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the first year's objective to assist both the department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success.

The goals and objectives in this plan will address three strategic issues:

- 1. Employment supports for youth who are receiving, or are at risk of receiving, Income Support;
- 2. Support for labour market development; and
- 3. Implementation of a new service delivery model.

Strategic Issues Cont'd

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1. Employment supports for youth who are receiving, or are at risk of receiving, Income Support

Youth (age 18-29 years) make up one-quarter of the Income Support caseload, and in 2005 almost half (44 per cent) of all new entrants to the program were youth. Sixty-seven per cent of new youth entrants in 2005 were single, down from 70 per cent in 2004. Fifty-five per cent of new youth entrants were female, up from 53 per cent in 2004. Twenty per cent of new youth entrants were single parents, up from 19 per cent in 2004. Although education levels for people receiving Income Support are improving overall, as they are in the general population, 46 per cent of new youth entrants receiving Income Support in 2005 had less than a high school education.

The issues related to youth are challenging, and addressing them will require a multifaceted approach, including increased access to employment and career supports and labour market information. The department is redesigning its youth services with increased focus on preventative strategies and transition supports to help youth integrate into the workforce and decrease their reliance on Income Support.

The department is committed to working with government and community partners to help youth make a successful transition to the workforce. Lack of education, training and work experience are significant barriers to employment for youth. Addictions, lack of child care, low self-esteem, lack of job-search skills, lack of employment and indecision about a future career are additional reasons why many youth do not achieve self-sufficiency. The department will focus on assisting youth to reduce their dependency on Income Support and acquire the skills and work experience they need to make a successful transition to employment and self-reliance.

The overall Income Support caseload has dropped significantly in recent years, from a peak of 36,600 cases in January 1997 to an average monthly caseload of approximately 27,650 in 2005. Nevertheless, Newfoundland and Labrador continues to have a significantly higher proportion of the population receiving Income Support than any other province - almost double the national average.

Strategic Issues Cont'd

2. Support for labour market development

In today's fast-paced world, labour market information is a key strategic tool that can strengthen the capacity of individuals, communities, employers, unions and learning institutions to make informed choices, plan ahead, monitor progress and adapt effectively to change. This critical information will complement the efforts to help clients of the Income Support Program enter the labour force, as well as help address barriers faced by many other populations, including women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal populations, older workers and youth.

From a gender perspective, while women's increasing participation has accounted for virtually all labour market growth since the 1970s, women still lag men on a number of key labour market indicators, including participation, employment and wages. Furthermore, despite increasing opportunities in traditionally male-dominated occupations, women's participation in some of these occupations, particularly in the skilled trades, has been low.

Having relevant and current information about the provincial labour markets is essential to understanding the strategic challenges and opportunities facing the province in the coming years. Making good decisions about what courses to take and what courses to offer, how many people to hire, where to invest, where the skills gaps are and what employment supports are going to most effectively meet the needs of this province depend largely on having the right information about the labour market. While selected labour market indicators, such as unemployment, participation and wage rates, are widely known from the national monthly Labour Force Survey, the need for more in-depth understanding of local labour markets is critical in order to assist parents, students, employees, post-secondary training institutions and government make the right decisions.

Despite the continued high, though falling, rate of unemployment in the province (15.2 per cent monthly average in 2005), changing demographics are expected to have a significant impact on the provincial labour markets in the future. The proportion of young people in the population has declined significantly since 1991, while the proportion of older people has increased dramatically. These trends are expected to continue over the next decade. As well, it is anticipated that certain skill sets will be in short supply in the near future. The department is working in partnership with employers and labour to determine the skills that will be needed and the shortages we can anticipate.

Strategic Issues Cont'd

3. Implementation of a new service delivery model

The department developed a new service delivery model that places greater emphasis on helping clients make a successful transition to the labour market. The department will increase its capacity to deliver employment supports as it realizes efficiencies in the delivery of financial supports. With the new model, more staff can focus on career, employment and youth services rather than on the administrative process of delivering Income Support benefits. All aspects of the new service delivery model have been successfully piloted in the department's Western Region.

The new model uses more effective business practices and modern technology to respond to the changing needs of clients. Staff are being realigned to enable them to help clients prepare for and find work. More efficient administration of the Income Support Program will make it easier for clients to access services. Staff will work closely with economic development boards, employers and community agencies to identify employment opportunities and support clients to prepare for work.

The new service delivery model allows the department to put more focus on working with young people to ensure they reduce their reliance on the Income Support Program and gain employment as quickly as possible. Enhancing career, employment and youth services will give staff increased ability to help these young clients. The service delivery model will allow the department to track gender differences, as well.

The department has introduced telephone application to allow people to apply for Income Support from the privacy of their homes. To improve access to services, TTY (Text Telephone) and Braille services are now available for people who are hearing and visually impaired. New liaison social worker positions are being put in place to ensure that the more vulnerable clients get the help they need and are connected to services available from government and community agencies. These changes are being introduced gradually across the province.

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11.0 Goals, Objectives & Performance Measures

Goal 1:	BY 2008 HRLE WILL HAVE DECREASED THE NUMBER OF YOUTH ON INCOME SUPPORT.			
Performance	Change in youth caseload			
Measure:	 Indicators:¹ Number of youth receiving Income Support decreased by 10%. 2. Number of recipients of Income Support who were provided 			
	employment supports and subsequently reduced or terminated their use of Income Support increased by 10%.			
Objective 1:	By 2007 HRLE will have increased the participation of youth in employment programs and services who are receiving, or are at risk of receiving, Income Support.			
	Performance Measure:			
	Increase participation of youth in employment programs and services.			
	Indicators: 1. Number of youth supported to enhance their employability increased by 5%.			
	2. Proportion of financial resources devoted to employment supports increased by 5%.			
	3. Number of youth on Income Support participating in federal programs. ²			
	4. Number of recipients of Income Support who were provided employment supports and subsequently reduced or terminated their use of Income Support increased by 5%.			
Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have reduced the number of youth on Income Support.			
1. Appropriate indicators will include the application of gender analysis.				
2. Baseline measures to be established.				

Goal 2:	BY 2008 INDIVIDUALS WILL HAVE INCREASED ACCESS TO LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION AND SUPPORTS.
Performance	Access to labour market information and supports
Measure:	Indicators: ³ 1. Number of reports and products providing provincial labour market information increased.
	2. Number of clients accessing the Newfoundland and Labrador Work Information Network, Labour Market Information website, Career Information Hotline and Labour Market Development Division services increased.
	3. Level of supports available to community partners for labour market planning increased.
Objective 1:	By 2007 HRLE will have established an infrastructure to gather and disseminate labour market information.
	Performance Measure:
	Quantity and quality of labour market information supports (services, tools and information) available.
	Indicators: ³ 1. Labour Market Development Division established.
	2. Labour market website portal launched.
	3. Reports released on: regional labour markets, labour market programs and services and marginalized workers.
	4. Labour market development symposium held.
	5. Community workshops on the effective use of labour market information held.
	6. Number of individuals accessing the NL Work Information Network, Labour Market Information website, Career Information Hotline and Labour Market Development Division services increased.
	7. Client satisfaction with access to labour market information increased.
Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have developed a process to monitor and forecast current and emerging employment demands and skills gaps.
3. Baseline measur	es to be established during 2006-07.

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Goal 3:	BY 2008 HRLE WILL HAVE IMPLEMENTED A NEW SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL THAT ALLOWS THE DEPARTMENT TO DELIVER ITS PROGRAMS AND SERVICES EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.					
Performance	Effective and efficient service delivery					
Measure:	Indicators: 1. Proportion of regional client services staff dedicated to the delivery of employment services increased from 10% (2004/05) to 30%.					
	2. Number of employment interventions increased by 5%.					
	3. Proportion of clients participating in employment interventions in rural communities. ⁴					
	4. Client satisfaction. ⁴					
Objective 1 :	By 2007 HRLE will have implemented the service delivery model in all HRLE regions.					
	Performance Measure: Implementation of service delivery model in regions.					
	Indicators: 1. Cheque production centralized.					
	2. Telephone application system implemented.					
	3. Client inquiry monitoring process implemented.					
	4. Client survey tools to measure satisfaction piloted.					
	5. New management structure in place.					
	6. New staff roles assigned and new positions established					
	7. Number of youth transferred from the Department of Health and Community Services with case plans. ⁴					
	8. Number of days spent in emergency accommodations. ⁴					
	9. New computer pay and records management systems operational in all offices.					
	10. Referral protocols with agencies implemented.					
	11. Payment authorization units in place in each region.					
Objective 2:	By 2008 HRLE will have evaluated and refined the service delivery model, as required.					
4. Baseline measures	s to be established.					

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Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES, LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

Further information about the services offered by the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment may be obtained from the department's web site at **www.gov.nl.ca/hrle**. To access career and employment information, please visit the Newfoundland and Labrador Work Information Network at **www.gov.nl.ca/nlwin** or call **1-800-563-6600** (709-729-6600 in St. John's). Additional information may also be obtained by contacting the district or regional office in your area.

Provincial Office Confederation Building, 3rd Floor, West Block P. O. Box 8700, St. John's, NL A1B 4J6 Telephone: (709) 729-2480					
Avalon Region	Central Region	Western Region	Labrador Region		
TOLL-FREE All offices in the Avalon Region can be reached Toll-Free at: 729-7888 or 1-877-729-7888TTY: 1-888-380-2299	TOLL-FREE All offices in the Central Region can be reached Toll-Free at: 1-888-632-4555TTY: 1-877-292-4205	TOLL-FREE All offices in the Western Region can be reached Toll-Free at: 1-866-417-4753 TTY: 1-888-445-8585	Happy Valley- Goose Bay 896-8846 Hopedale 933-3887 Mary's Harbour 921-6246 Nain 922-2871 Wabush 282-5313 TOLL-FREE Mary's Harbour 1-866-921-6246		

Appendix

Strategic Directions

Strategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through platform documents, Throne and Budget Speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments.

The directions related to the Department of Human Resources, Labour and Employment are provided below. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of components, or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed through the various planning processes of the department. As indicated in the table below, some have been addressed in this strategic plan while others are addressed in the operational or work planning processes.

1. SELF-RELIANCE

Outcome Statement: Reduced dependency on Income Support. This outcome supports a policy direction of government and requires systemic intervention in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is Addressed in the Departmental:		
		Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Work Plans
1. Labour market attachment				
2. Financial supports				
3. Social supports				
4. Youth				
5. Non-traditional labour pools, including women, immigrants and persons with disabilities				\checkmark

2. POVERTY

Outcome Statement: Reduced poverty and alleviation of its negative effects. This outcome supports a policy direction of government and requires systemic intervention in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is Addressed in the Departmental:		
		Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Work Plans
1. Social and financial supports				
2. Labour market attachment				
3. Social housing	\checkmark			

3. LABOUR MARKET DEVELOPMENT

Outcome Statement: Improved labour market conditions. This outcome supports a policy direction of government and requires systemic intervention in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is Addressed in the Departmental:		
		Strategic Plan	Operational Plan	Work Plans
1. Labour market analysis and information		\checkmark		
2. Immigration			\checkmark	

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