Northern Opportunities for Women:

A RESEARCH REPORT

Conducted on behalf of

PARO Centre
For Women’s Enterprise

North Superior Training Board
Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW) research project is to provide data that will form the basis of innovative new programs and services designed to aid women in the District of Thunder Bay to become, and to remain, financially independent. These programs and services will help women in the district to better meet the challenges they encounter in their work environments in the particular geographic and socio-economic contexts of Northwestern Ontario and in the rapidly-changing socio-economic contexts of the new “information economy”, an economy that is the product of increasing globalization and the rapid spread of information technologies.

The project was conceived and initiated by a partnership between PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise (PARO) and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur (NSTB/CFNS).

The NOW project is important because it seeks to develop services and programs designed to help self-employed, employed, and unemployed women, and women in the process of making transitions in terms of employment in Northwestern Ontario.

**Why women?** Women are still hampered by traditional concepts of “women’s work” and women’s roles. Women continue to be responsible for most of the unpaid housework and for care work. Furthermore, women’s traditional care-giving roles continue to be undervalued at the same time that unpaid care work imposes constraints on women’s work choices. The “consciousness shift” that would lead to the definition of care work as “work” is only inching forward. In addition, although changes that would accommodate some of women’s needs are being made in the workplace, these changes, such as flextime and tele-work, are not primarily geared to those who need them the most, women.

Along with these long-standing “structural obstacles”, women face special challenges as a result of new trends such as globalization and technological change. At the same time that women have increased their participation in the paid workforce, the downsizing caused by globalization has led to the decline of full-time, full-benefit jobs and the rise of non-standard work, that is, self-employment and part-time, temporary, and casual work. As a result, women are more likely than men to become contingent workers. In addition, at the same time women are increasingly choosing self-employment in order to achieve sustainable livelihoods, the designation of self-employment as non-standard work by Human Resources Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) may disadvantage their access to training or employment programs.\(^1\)

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\(^1\) See p. 18 of this report.
Furthermore, in the new “information economy”, wherein the advance of technological change has made education and training primary concerns and lifelong pursuits, women are adversely affected by the ‘digital divide’, which determines that women as a social group may find themselves disadvantaged by their lack of awareness and interest in information technologies (IT).

**Why Northern Ontario?** The particular geographic and socio-economic contexts of Northern Ontario pose particular challenges for its residents. Vast distances lead to isolation, which in turn makes the delivery of services and programs problematic in the North. Demographic changes include a declining and aging population and out-migration. Industrial and occupational structures that historically relied on primary resources led to fewer employments in the professional services, in manufacturing and utilities, and in natural and applied sciences. The region is also experiencing declining labour force participation, higher unemployment rates, lower self-employment rates, lower average individual incomes, and lower average family incomes. In addition, a less educated population means more educational and training services and programs are needed in order to prepare residents of the region for the “information economy”.

**Why women in Northern Ontario?** Women in Northern Ontario are doubly disadvantaged. They are affected by the same long-standing structural barriers that affect all women, and they are also disadvantaged by the constraints imposed by the particular geographic and socio-economic contexts of Northern Ontario. In fact, women in Northern Ontario are disadvantaged in relation to both men in Northern Ontario and to women in Ontario as a whole because the dependence of Northern economies on primary resources has led to a more rigid division of labour; hence, even the current industrial and occupational structures of women in Northern Ontario are different than those of men in Northern Ontario and those of women in Ontario as a whole. In addition, a recent study about the use of IT among Northwestern Ontario business women suggests that programs are needed to help women in the North to better access and use the new technologies.

**Conclusions**

The 24 self-employed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities² have relatively positive outlooks about the economic realities in the City. In addition, many of them contribute to the economy by employing staff. They do however work very long hours, even though two-thirds of them claim that their businesses do not provide them with enough income to make them financially independent. In addition, their circumstances confirm the opinions of those who contend that women are disadvantaged by the ‘digital divide’; for example, although

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² Immediately adjacent communities are those on the outskirts of the City of Thunder Bay, communities whose citizens rely on the economic activities and resources in the City. They include Kakabeka Falls, Murillo, and South Gillies.
three-quarters of these women have websites for their businesses, two-fifths do not. Their primary reasons for not having a website include the perception they do not need one and the expense of setting up and maintaining it.

Despite the lack of awareness on the part of some self-employed women regarding the benefits of having a website, four-fifths of these 24 respondents do want to expand their businesses. The primary reasons they have not already done so include lack of finances, current personal/family circumstances, and lack of mentoring.

The kinds of business and/or support services these self-employed women claim would aid their businesses include, in order of priority, regional networking, marketing/advertising expertise, a mentoring program, information on e-commerce, business/personal coaching, and access to loan funds.

The kinds of training support services and programs they claim would aid their businesses include, in order of priority, Internet and computer training, peer networking, training subsidies, education about entrepreneurship, assertiveness training, and negotiation training.

In contrast to self-employed women in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, the 15 self-employed women respondents in outlying communities perceive economic realities in their communities to be grim. Like women in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, they contribute to their communities by employing staff, but they also work very long hours, and the majority, two-thirds of the total, do not make enough income from their businesses to be financially independent. Self-employed women in outlying communities are even less aware of the benefits of having a business website than women in the City and its environs. Reasons cited include, in order of priority, the fact that the women think they do not need one, lack of time, and lack of computer training.

However, one-half of these women do want to expand their businesses. The barriers to having done so already include, in order of priority, geographic isolation, personal/family circumstances, lack of adequate child/elder care, lack of training/education, and lack of mentoring.

The business and/or support services these women say they need to aid their businesses include, in order of priority, access to loan funds, money management advice, strategic planning advice, and good child/elder care.

The training support services and/or programs these women say they need include conflict resolution training, Internet and computer training, training subsidies, education about entrepreneurship, and management training.
The 107 employed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities have a relatively positive perception of the economic realities of their communities. Most are satisfied with their jobs and value their work because it gives them financial independence, a sense of accomplishment, and personal fulfillment. They say their job satisfaction would improve with higher pay, health benefits, training subsidies, and opportunities for advancement.

They perceive the main barriers for working women to be low-paying jobs, access to adequate child/elder care, lack of self-confidence/self-esteem, and lack of funds for training.

Training resources they find valuable include training on the job, educational assistance programs, skills upgrading, and funding for skills training.

Their choice of other employment services include sponsored training, self-employment support programs, career counselling, job search counselling, and wage subsidy programs. Although these employment services are available in Thunder Bay, many of these women, who live in the City of Thunder Bay and its environs, are not aware that these services exist. This may be because they have not needed these services; it may also be the case that these services are not well advertised.

Approximately one-half of these 107 women have considered self-employment as an employment option. The barriers they listed as reasons they have not pursued this option include no financial backing, lack of self-confidence/fear, the fact that they do not know where to start, and personal/family circumstances.

The 53 employed women respondents in outlying communities in the region perceive the economic realities in their communities to be grim. However, they do express positive job satisfaction; they feel their work enables them to make a contribution, provides them with financial independence and personal fulfillment, and allows for personal development and opportunities to socialize. They consider the main barriers facing working women to be low-paying jobs, lack of access to child/elder care, lack of access to training, and lack of funds for education/training.

The training resources they feel would be most useful to them are educational assistance programs, training on the job, skills upgrading, and funding for skills training. The employment services from which they feel they would derive the most benefits include sponsored training, self-employment support programs, and career counselling. Very few respondents knew whether these services were available to them.
Three-quarters of these women have considered self-employment as an employment option. However, they concede that the main barriers preventing them from pursuing self-employment are no financial backing, the fact that they do not know where to start, the need for specific training, the lack of a business idea, and personal/family circumstances.

**Most of the 43 unemployed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities perceive the economic realities in the City as positive.** They also rate their own job search skills and job skills as fair or as better than fair.

They consider the barriers to employment to be low-paying wages, outdated skills, lack of funds for training/education, and not knowing where to start. The employment services they consider useful for their job searches include sponsored training, wage subsidies, job search counselling, and self-employment support programs. Most respondents did not know whether or not these employment services are available in the City.

The training resources they view as most useful for the purpose of upgrading their skills include training on the job (by a large margin), retraining for a new career, subsidized apprenticeship programs, and skills upgrading. The support services they consider the most helpful include information services, employment and/or career counselling, personal coaching, and career counselling.

Eighteen of the 43 respondents said they had considered self-employment as an employment option. The barriers that prevented them from pursuing this goal include lack of a business plan, no financial backing, the fact that they do not know where to start, and the need for specific training.

More than one-half of these unemployed women asserted that a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund could help them.

**The 30 unemployed women respondents in outlying communities perceived the economic realities in their communities to be poor or very poor.** They recognized the importance of the unfavourable job market as a major factor in their unemployment.

Almost all were eager to return to the paid workforce in a short period of time. They rated their own job search skills and job skills highly. They considered the barriers women face in finding work to be low-paying jobs, lack of affordable child care, lack of skills in traditionally male jobs, lack of computer skills, lack of self-confidence/fear, welfare or other social assistance, and lack of funding for training/education.
These respondents considered the services that would best aid them in attaining employment to be sponsored training, self-employment support programs, career counselling, wage subsidy programs, and job search counselling.

They considered the best training resources to aid them in attaining employment to be training on the job, retraining for a new career, and, as distant third and fourth choices, subsidized training.

In terms of support programs and/or services to help them attain employment, they chose employment and/or career counselling (by a wide margin), career planning, information services, and personal coaching (a distant third).

Two-thirds of these women had considered self-employment as an employment option. However, they considered the barriers that prevented them from pursuing this option to be no financial backing, the fact that they do not know where to start, no business idea, and the need for specific training.

One-third of these 30 respondents believed that a Women’s Community Loan Fund could help them.

The results of the Focus Groups and the Key Interviews reinforced the Survey Results.

With the spectre of worsening employment opportunities and wage inequality for women in the City of Thunder Bay and the outlying communities in the region, the concerns exposed by the women in this report must be acknowledged and acted upon. “When women are more economically independent, it reflects on other areas of their lives. They are less likely to tolerate violence and abuse, more likely to consider their skill levels, and more likely to pursue their dreams”.  

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1. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

The purpose of the Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW) research project is to provide data that will form the basis of innovative new programs and services designed to aid women in the District of Thunder Bay to become, and to remain, financially independent. These programs and services will help women in the district to better meet the challenges they encounter in their work environments in the particular geographic and socio-economic contexts of Northwestern Ontario and in the rapidly-changing socio-economic contexts of the new “information economy”, an economy that is the product of increasing globalization and the rapid spread of information technologies.

The project was conceived and initiated by a partnership between PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise (PARO) and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur (NSTB/CFNS).

PARO is an organization that serves as a centre for women’s enterprise. The word *paro* is Latin for “I am ready”, and, in keeping with its motto, the organization’s mandate is to provide programs and services designed to increase the economic independence and self-sufficiency of women and their families. Inspired by its name and its mandate, PARO, a not-for-profit, charitable organization, provides countless services:

- it assists women in starting and building businesses by making available programs designed to train and nurture women, programs such as GATEWAY: A Path to Self-Employment, which includes On-Line Computerized Business Development Training and weekly “Biz and Bagel” lunch time workshops (funded by Human Resources Skills Development Canada), and Making a Difference program, which is offered in Thunder Bay and other regional communities in Northwestern Ontario (funded by the Government of Ontario through the Ontario Women’s Directorate);

- in 2004, it launched a new 5-year business accelerator program, designed to assist established women entrepreneurs and also to consolidate and scale-up their businesses in order to accelerate growth. The ultimate goal of the program will be to assist women to attain sustainable livelihoods (funded in part by the Economic Development Collaborative of the Canadian Women’s Foundation and FedNor);

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it hosts PARO Centre, which provides a supportive environment in which women can develop business plans, rent “office, boardroom, or training space”, and use “equipment such as computers, fax, and photocopiers”;

it supports 30 PARO groups, which are groups of 4-7 women who meet as peer-lending circles. These PARO groups, operating from Dryden to Manitouwadge, act as forums for support, discussions, and financial resources, the latter of which are disbursed by PARO through micro-loans, after circle members approve them;

it supports PARO Presents, a social purpose enterprise, which operates as a retail store to provide local and regional female artisans with a place to market their products, in order that they gain the financial means whereby to enlarge their businesses, and which offers them practical training in retailing;

it organizes networking and marketing opportunities;

it offers PARO members a website, www.paro.ca, and it is also partnered with ACTEW, in order to develop and support a Canadian source for business information, learning opportunities, and networking connections related to women entrepreneurs, www.entrewomen.ca;

it supports a Thunder Bay alterNet site (21 partner CAP site), which provides free computer and high-speed Internet access;

it partners with 7 other community organizations to provide mentoring through the Thunder Bay Community Mentoring Program;

it transmits a weekly, on-line newsletter called PARO Link;

it partners with other national, provincial, and local organizations, in order more effectively to provide public awareness of issues that impact women. The Executive Director of PARO is a founding member of the Canadian Women’s Community Economic Development Council (CWCEDC), a member of the Women’s Reference Group for the North Superior Training Board, a member of the Ontario CED Network, the editing committee for the special edition of Making Waves, special edition on Women and CED, and serves on the policy council of the Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNET).
It is in its capacity of providing public awareness about equality for women in the area of economic development that PARO found it advisable to commission a study on women’s awareness of and access to skills development opportunities in Northwestern Ontario.

PARO’s two most recent research studies, *The Current Status of Information Technologies and Computer Skills Development for Women Entrepreneurs in Northwestern Ontario* and *A Literature Review Pertaining to the Employment of Women in Northwestern Ontario*, highlight the organization’s most recent primary concerns.

The NSTB/CFNS is one of twenty-one Local Area Training Boards established in Ontario. It is sponsored by and working with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU) and with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). One of the goals of the NSTB/CFNS is to bring the regional and community stakeholders together and to put a face on the training and adjustment gaps, issues, and concerns facing the region.

The NSTB/CFNS, Local Board #24, comprises the entire Thunder Bay District and the area west of White River, east of Nibinamik (Summer Beaver), and south of Kasabonika. This includes Webequie, Eabametoong (Landsdowne House) and Fort Hope. This area is the same as the Thunder Bay management area of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

Primarily, the Training Board focuses on an annual Trends, Opportunities and Priorities Report, local area planning in response to the Reports, partnership development, and the maintenance of web-based inventories of the programs and services leading to employment. The Board also carries out a number of initiatives in partnership with its labour market partners, initiatives that address priority labour force development issues in the District of Thunder Bay geographic area.

Specifically, the NSTB/CFNS sets out to:
- Identify existing employment programs and services;
- Identify existing training and adjustment needs;
- Identify economic trends and areas of growth;
- Identify trends, opportunities, and priorities in local labour force issues; and,
- Advocate life-long learning and improved access to training opportunities.

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5 *Proposal for Northern Opportunities for Women: An Innovative Skills Development Program, 2004.* Conducted by NSTB/CFNS and PARO.
Each year, Training Boards identify local training and adjustment needs and work with their community partners to prepare Local Training Board Area Plans.

The partnership between PARO and NSTB/CFNS and the NOW project is the culmination of several years, during which both organizations have done considerable research regarding the socio-economic contexts of Northern and Northwestern Ontario, the experiences and needs of women in the area, and the educational and training imperatives in the region.


Both organizations have continuously stressed the importance of expanding training funding and access for women. The NSTB recognizes that PARO has been very instrumental in furthering training for both business development programming and personal development curriculum since 1995. It has done so despite many challenges, including lack of long-term funding, vast distances, sparse population density, and the availability of few trained personnel. The lack of high-speed Internet access in most areas has further magnified the problems. In 2002, the NSTB partnered with PARO to do a relevant study entitled *Final Report: Women’s Community Training Loan Fund: A Feasibility Study to Investigate and Analyze Skills Development for Women in Northwestern Ontario*. This study made a recommendation that is important for women’s training in the future. It recommended that PARO and the NSTB partner to conduct a 5-year pilot project for a Women’s Skills Development and Labour Adjustment Program for Employment and Self-Employment. This recommendation manifested itself, in December 2002, in the Northern Opportunities for Women: An Innovative Skills Development Program (NOW), whose vision is to increase “women’s economic independence through increasing women’s access to educational and skills development”. It proposed that women’s programs should provide:

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- Access to credit, employment, training, enterprise development, incubator support, technical assistance, and mentoring;
- Education and training, marketing, integration of life skills, women-positive curriculum, appropriateness of timing and location, and on-line training;
- Building on support for effects on women and their families;
- Assessment: self-assessment and/or guided assessment to determine women’s skills levels and needs;
- Skills development/training in all viable training areas, linked to potential employment;
- Soft skills, because many women need empowerment in self-esteem, goal-setting, time management, etc.
- Computer skills and information technology courses, along with skills development/training in all viable training areas, linked to potential employment.

As a result, in March 2003, NSTB partnered with PARO to submit a proposal for this 5-year pilot project, to be entitled *Northern Opportunities for Women: An Innovative Skills Development Program (NOW)*. This proposal was presented to FedNor, the Ontario Women’s Directorate, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) for funding consideration.

**NOW is a pilot project designed to encourage women’s economic independence by increasing women’s access to educational and skills development.** It is an innovative skills development program to provide a multi-faceted, holistic program, accessible to all women, including aboriginal women or women from any other ethnic background, older women, women with disabilities, rural women and regional women.7

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7North Superior Training Board: Local Projects, 2004. [http://www.nstb.on.ca/localprojects.htm](http://www.nstb.on.ca/localprojects.htm)
Project objectives:

- Increase awareness of skills development and of entrepreneurial opportunities and supports available to women;
- Develop a loan fund and increase financial supports in order to build an environment of learning and to create access to funding;
- Include existing educational facilities that foster skills, knowledge, and training;
- Strengthen the skills and opportunities of the women in our communities;
- Increase and sustain economic development in Northern Ontario and thereby have a broad-based, positive, and permanent impact on the local and regional economies.

This study represents the first phase of the NOW project, the research phase. The NOW project is even more significant in the context of the publication of *Women and Community Economic Development (CED) in Canada: A Research Report*. The Canadian Women’s Foundation (CWF) and the Canadian Women’s Community Economic Development Council (CWCEDC) partnered to produce the first quantitative and qualitative study on the roles, needs, challenges, and achievements of women-centred CED programs for low-income women and to compile an inventory about women-oriented CED in Canada. In response to the findings garnered from questionnaires, the study concluded that

- organizations must provide women with a combination of resources and services
- women must receive social, structural, and/or economic support
- organizations should provide “post-placement” support
- organizations should provide avenues for women to engage in a wide range of economic sectors

In addition, women-focused CED Principles and Practices can also be said to form the underlying assumptions of the NOW project.

- Holistic and asset-based approaches are emphasized.
- Women’s lives and perspectives are taken as the starting point.
- Women’s unpaid work is viewed as inseparable from their paid work.
- Building partnerships and alliances is viewed as priorities.
- Approaches are democratic and participatory in nature.
- Women’s practical and strategic interests are addressed.

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Why Women?

While all workers are experiencing the transformations accompanying the globalization and technological changes that ushered in the new economy, women face particular, added challenges. They find themselves confronting new challenges at the same time that they are still hampered by traditional concepts about “women’s work” and women’s roles.9

- **Women continue to be responsible for most of the unpaid housework and for care work.** This care work, once confined to the traditional responsibilities of child care, has more recently been expanded to include the new responsibilities of elder care.

- **Women’s traditional care-giving roles continue to be under-valued.** The continuing practice of defining care work as “women’s work” has determined that many of the paid jobs that women do continue to be jobs associated with care-giving and service. These jobs, because they are viewed as extensions of women’s nurturing natures, continue to be defined as low skilled and, therefore, are less valued and, hence, lower paid. For example, the female-dominated fields of health, education, clerical, and sales and service constitute 70% of women’s paid employments. In addition, women are paid 73% of what men are paid at the same full-time jobs, and 60% of those paid minimum wages are women.

- **Unpaid care work imposes constraints on women’s work choices.** As primary care givers, women continue to be confronted with difficult choices between paid work and unpaid care work. While part-time, casual, and temporary work, so called “non-standard work”, does have some advantages, many women feel compelled to accept these options instead of full-time work or self-employment, as a way of balancing paid employment and family life. This “structural” barrier may explain why Canadian women comprised two-thirds of Canada’s part-time workers and 56% of Canada’s poor in 2000.

- **The downsizing caused by globalization has merely increased women’s care-giving roles, in that women are forced to accept more care work responsibilities for extended family members because of cutbacks in public sector care.**

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9 Information for this entire section can be found in Geddes, Robinson, and Lockyer, A Literature Review Pertaining to the Employment of Women in Northwestern Ontario. Conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise, 2004.
• Downsizing caused by globalization has also led to cutbacks in funding for and access to high-quality, reliable, and affordable state-funded and -regulated child care services. In 2001, regulated child care was accessible to only 12% of all children aged 0-12 in Ontario.

• In effect, the “consciousness shift” that would lead to the definition of care work as “work” and that would therefore bestow value on it is only inching forward.

• Although changes that would accommodate some of women’s needs are being made in the workplace, these changes are not primarily geared to those who need the changes most, women. Family-friendly practices, which include part-time work, flexible hours, tele-work (defined as work from home or away from the conventional office or workplace setting through the use of computers and telephone connections), and child and elder care are used to fulfill employer needs and demands. For example, part-time work, which could be used to instate flexible hours for women with children, as a tool whereby to harmonize women’s paid work with their unpaid care work, is being used instead by employers primarily to cut costs through downsizing. In addition, part-time workers are used most often in service jobs, which also pay less. In fact, family-friendly arrangements are limited in terms of availability. Flex-time, the most prevalent family-friendly practice is accessible to approximately 33% of employees. However, tele-work is accessible to only 5%, child care is accessible to only 6%, and elder care is accessible to only approximately 4%. Whereas women of child-bearing and child-rearing age require these services the most, the primary beneficiaries are youths, aged 15-24, of both sexes, and men, 44% of whom have access to flex-time, compared to 36% of women.

Along with the long-standing “structural” obstacles women face in the workplace, women face special challenges as a result of new trends, such as globalization and technological change.

• At the same time that women have increased their participation in the labour force dramatically, the downsizing caused by globalization led to the decline of full-time, full-benefit jobs and the concomitant rise of non-standard work, that is, part-time, temporary and casual work, and self-employment. Lay-offs, job eliminations, decreased work hours, outsourcing of jobs to contract workers, and longer hours for remaining full-time workers affects everyone, but especially women, because many are already at the bottom of the job ladder.
The effects of globalization are also more problematic for women because employment sectors in which women have traditionally worked are harder hit. For example, the Canadian garment industry, comprised primarily of women, is downsizing. Also, the public sector, which has recently been the source of well-paid, full-benefit jobs for women, is downsizing.

The advent of these job trends at the very time that women’s labour force participation has been revolutionary in scale means that women, rather than men, are more likely to become contingent workers. In 1999, 41% of women in paid jobs held non-standard jobs. In 2000, 27.3% of Canadian women workers worked part-time.

Women are increasingly among those workers who hold multiple forms of employment. In 2000, they comprised 53% of multiple job holders, compared to men, who comprised 42% of multiple job holders. This was so, despite the fact that women were only 46% of all workers, compared to men, who were 54% thereof.

This is significant to women because non-standard jobs often provide low wages, limited hours, and limited access to social security provisions, including Employment Insurance benefits and pensions.

Women are more affected by access to income insurance programs because they more often interrupt their paid employment by taking leave for the purposes of maternity, child care, and/or elder care.

In the new economy, in which self-employment is becoming an increasingly prevalent choice, this choice still poses particular challenges for women. Among the most pressing challenges is women’s lack of access to capital and credit. This lack of access is long-standing because of the existence of systemic barriers imposed by mainstream financial institutions. Women often have shorter credit histories and fewer assets than men. Lending institutions also prefer to extend large loans to corporate clients over small loans for the kinds of home-based micro-businesses that self-employed women often establish. At the same time that women are increasingly choosing self-employment in order to achieve a livelihood, the designation of self-employment as non-standard work by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) may disadvantage their access to training or employment programs.

Karen D. Hughes, How are Women Faring in the Entrepreneurial Economy? Presentation to “Breakfast on the Hill”, Canadian Federation for Humanities and Social Sciences, Ottawa, May 1, 2003. Note also the comments in The Prime Minister’s Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs: Report and Recommendations, October 2003: “1.11 Use of the terms “non-standard work” and “non-traditional work” to describe self-employment should be eliminated in the federal government and its departments and
In the “information economy”, wherein the advance of technological change has made education and training primary concerns and life-long pursuits, women face particular challenges.

- **Women are adversely affected by the “digital divide”**. The term “digital divide” refers to the division between that population whose members have access to the new information technologies and that population whose members do not. The term highlights the disparity between socio-economic groups who have full access to and use of the Internet and those who are ignored or shut out. Those without access will be marginalized both economically and socially. Women constitute one social sector that is especially disadvantaged for a number of reasons.

- **One is addressed by the theory of the “leaky pipeline”, which explains the disparity between the number of women, compared to the number of men, who work in the information technologies industry and who therefore have full access to the new economy**. The five barriers or “leaks” that preclude women and girls from becoming involved equally with men and boys in scientific and technological developments include:
  - outdated social and cultural values;
  - deficiencies in the educational system;
  - lack of innovation in academic staffing;
  - lack of change in science and technology professions; and,
  - the outmoded ways in which science and technology are advanced and transferred.

  These “structural” barriers must disappear before women can participate equally with men.

- **Another reason women find themselves on the wrong side of the digital divide is explained by the “gendered lens” perspective**. A “gendered lens” perspective recognizes that women view technology and its role in their lives differently than men and that they use the technology differently. Women use the technology in more practical ways, such as communicating and interacting on personal levels. Researchers have suggested that methods of teaching should recognize and incorporate women’s unique ways of seeing and experiencing.

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agencies. Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) uses the term “non-standard work” in referring to the self-employed. Thirty-seven percent of Canadians are employed in non-standard work”. This is a large portion of the Canadian work force. The term “non-standard work” perpetuates the notion that the self-employed are second-class individuals, and many women entrepreneurs throughout Canada indicated that they already feel they are not taken seriously by government departments and agencies or by financial institutions.”
• Such changes are important because another barrier to women’s full employment of the new information technologies is their lack of “literary/social facilitation”, a term that refers to the skills required to access Internet information proficiently. These skills include a special kind of literacy, numeracy, and computer literacy.

• Another barrier is one that results from all the rest, that is, many women’s “lack of awareness and interest” in information technologies and the resources available to access them.
Why Northern Ontario?

This study is concerned with a geographic region that is only part of Northern Ontario. However, much of the available research deals in detail with Northern Ontario. That research is useful because all of the characteristics of Northwestern Ontario are more similar to those of Northern Ontario than they are to those of Ontario as a whole. There are, of course, differences between Northeastern Ontario and Northwestern Ontario. Where there is available research that delineates those differences, the information for Northwestern Ontario is provided. There are also differences within regions of Northwestern Ontario; for example, there are differences in characteristics among the districts of Thunder Bay, Rainy River, and Kenora. Where there is specific information on the District of Thunder Bay, it is provided. The need to use information about Northern Ontario, Northwestern Ontario, and the District of Thunder Bay interchangeably is a reflection of the dearth of information about Northwestern Ontario and about the District of Thunder Bay outside of the context of the information about Northern Ontario.

Northern Ontario is characterized by particular geographic, demographic, and socio-economic characteristics that pose special challenges for its residents.

- The particular geography of Northern Ontario and of Northwestern Ontario poses special challenges. Northern Ontario as a whole is a vast landmass; it consists of 89% of the landmass of the province of Ontario. The size is so vast that it is easily divided into Northeastern Ontario and Northwestern Ontario. Because most of the population in Northeastern Ontario resides in relatively close proximity to Southern Ontario, individuals in Northeastern Ontario have easier access to the resources of Southern Ontario. In contrast, the major urban centre of Northwestern Ontario, the City of Thunder Bay, is an eight-hour drive from Sault Ste. Marie, the most westerly urban centre in Northeastern Ontario. Citizens in Northwestern Ontario are therefore especially isolated and, as a result, face unique challenges. That isolation is felt even more keenly by residents in the numerous small, remote, resource-based and/or essentially rural outlying communities. The enormous distances, caused by the region’s vast size, divide these smaller communities both from the larger urban centre and from one another and pose special challenges in terms of isolation and a lack of sufficient support services and training programs that would significantly aid the communities’

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residents. For example, in 2001, a total population of 234,771 lived within an area of 523,252 km. Almost one-half of that population, 109,016, lived in the only major centre, the City of Thunder Bay. The rest of the population was dispersed throughout the rest of the region. In effect, although Northwestern Ontario has many of the characteristics of Northern Ontario, it must be remembered that it also faces unique challenges. More research must be done on Northwestern Ontario.

• The particular socio-economic context of Northwestern Ontario poses other challenges for its residents. More specifically, this socio-economic context means:

  o Northern Ontario is experiencing demographic changes that do not bode well for the region’s future economic growth.

    • The population of Northwestern Ontario has witnessed a dramatic decline in numbers, especially between 1996 and 2001, the very years when the populations of Canada and of Ontario as a whole increased. While the population of Canada increased by 4% and the population of Ontario increased by 6.1%, the population of Northwestern Ontario declined by 3.8%. This decline was swift and precipitous, considering the Ontario Ministry of Finance had forecast, in its Population Estimates, that the population of Northwestern Ontario would increase by 3%.

    More specifically, the District of Thunder Bay experienced the greatest population decline within the area; it lost 4.3% of its population between 1996 and 2001.

    • The age structure of its populations reflects
      • a high median age
      • a lower percentage of population aged 0-45

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• a higher percentage of population aged 45 and over
• a substantial population aged 65 and over
• a rapidly rising population aged 65 and over

The population aged 65 and over in all 3 Northwestern Ontario districts grew faster than the same age group in Ontario as a whole and than those in the other 9 Northern districts.

• Even more specifically, the District of Thunder Bay ranked sixth among the 12 Northern districts in terms of the rate at which its population aged 65 and older is growing.

- **Migration patterns, another indicator of the economic growth or stagnation of individual communities, also disadvantages Northwestern Ontario.**

  • Overall, all Northern Ontario communities receive few migrants from outside of Canada.
  
  • They continue to diverge increasingly from Ontario as a whole in terms of the number of migrants they receive from all sources combined – inter-provincial, intra-provincial, and external.
  
  • More specifically, the District of Thunder Bay is one of three, out of twelve, Northern Districts that has migration rates consistently below the provincial and regional average.

  • **Northern Ontario has a level of youth (aged 15-29) out-migration that is much greater than that of the province as a whole, and that rate increased considerably between 1986 and 2001.** The rate is also characterized by a gender imbalance, wherein a greater number of male than female youths migrate.
• In effect, the Northern Ontario age structure deviates from Ontario as a whole partly because the percentage of younger age groups to total population is markedly less in Northern Ontario.

• In addition, the divergence between the age structures of Northern Ontario and Ontario as a whole increased considerably between 1996 and 2001 because of the out-migration of its youths.

• In 2001, the youth out-migration rate for the District of Thunder Bay was -19.7%, a rate much higher than that of Ontario as a whole.

- In effect, the combination of a rapidly increasing aging population, consisting of many individuals on the verge of retirement, and a decreasing youth population promises to have serious implications for the economic futures of northern communities in general and the District of Thunder Bay in particular.

- Other socio-economic characteristics of Northern Ontario communities highlight certain structures, patterns, and trends that suggest that communities in Northern Ontario are disadvantaged in the new “information economy”.

- The industrial structure in Northern Ontario places a greater reliance on primary resource industries and a lesser reliance on professional service industries, on which the new “knowledge economy” is being built.

- The occupational structure, closely linked to industrial structure, highlights future challenges. While Northern Ontario is dependent on primary resources, primary industries, especially those associated with forestry and mining, are declining. This has meant a decline in “blue collar” jobs in the region. Technological and economic transformations have further eroded these employments. At the same time, Northern Ontario has fewer occupations in processing, manufacturing, and utilities, due to the historic difficulties of establishing secondary industries in the area. In addition, Northern Ontario also has fewer jobs in business,
finance, administration, and in the areas of natural and applied sciences. Furthermore, Northern Ontario has a lower proportion of highly paid management positions. The District of Thunder Bay has an even lower proportion of management positions (8.3%) than Northern Ontario (9.4%).

- **Labour force participation rates decreased in Northern Ontario between 1996 and 2001, the same time frame during which labour force participation rates increased in Canada and in Ontario as a whole.**

- **Unemployment rates are higher in Northern Ontario.** Whereas the proportion of those employed, between 1996 and 2001, increased by 10.3% in Canada and by 12.5% in Ontario, it declined by 0.4% in Northern Ontario.
  - More specifically, the District of Thunder Bay experienced a -7.1% decline in employment rate and a -7.4% decline in labour force participation rate.

- **Unemployment rates also increased for Northern Ontario youths, even though their labour force participation rates are similar to those of youths in Ontario as a whole.** The variance between participation rates of Northern Ontario youths compared to Ontario youths as a whole began in 1991 and increased continuously and considerably between 1991 and 2001.

- **Self-employment rates, one aspect of labour force participation, are lower in Northern Ontario than in Ontario as a whole.**
  - Among Northwestern Ontario districts, the District of Thunder Bay has a self-employment rate much lower than the rates in the District of Rainy River and the District of Kenora. In addition, Thunder Bay district’s rate of 7.9% compares unfavorably to Northern Ontario’s rate of 10.2% and Ontario’s rate of 11.4%.
Income levels in Northern Ontario also differ considerably from those in Ontario as a whole.

- The average income of Northern Ontario individuals is 16.3% lower than the provincial average.

- The divergence between the average income in Northern Ontario and that in Ontario as a whole is widening.

- The average income of Northern Ontario families is lower, by a difference of 18.6% in 2000.

- The divergence between the income levels of Northern Ontario families and provincial families has been widening.

- The difference in employment income is due to the fact that there are more part-time workers in Northern Ontario.

- Both part-time and full-time Northern Ontario workers earn less average employment income than their counterparts in Ontario as a whole.

- The divergence in average employment income between Northern Ontario full-time, full-year workers and their provincial counterparts has been increasing since 1990 and especially between 1995 and 2000.

- The divergence in average employment income between Northern Ontario part-time, part-year workers and their provincial counterparts has been continuous since 1990 and startling in scope. The gap increased from 2.4% in 1990 to 3.4% in 2000.

A well-educated and skilled population and workforce can be very instrumental in creating a prosperous economic environment. Education and training needs are greater in Northern Ontario than in Ontario as a whole.

- More people in Northern Ontario have only a grade 9 education.

- More people in Northern Ontario have only a high school diploma.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

- Fewer people in Northern Ontario have a university degree.

- Educational levels between Northern Ontario and Ontario as a whole are continuing to diverge, to the disadvantage of Northern Ontario.


- The Environmental Scan summaries of the NSTB-CFNS note the continued barriers to education and training, due to the problems of servicing countless small communities in remote areas over vast distances, the lack of training funds and subsidies, the need to improve apprenticeship training, the desirability of enhancing entrepreneurial and small business skills in an economy increasingly dependent on self-employment, the need to continue promoting and funding literacy skills, life skills, and adult literacy programs, the need to improve access to information technologies training, and the need to better service Aboriginal communities.\(^\text{13}\) The NSTB-CFNS further highlights, as one of the most important issues of 2002, the need to promote skills development and skills opportunities for women.

Why Northern Ontario Women?

While women in Northern Ontario are impacted by the same factors that disadvantage all women in the new economy driven by globalization and the advance of technology and by those historic, systemic constraints that comprise traditional women’s roles and concepts of “women’s work”, they are also impacted by the physical and social-economic constraints of Northern Ontario. As previously mentioned, while all women in Northern Ontario face special challenges that are often different from those facing women in Ontario as a whole, it is important to remember that Northwestern Ontario has unique characteristics. Therefore, where specific information about women in Northwestern Ontario exists, it will be presented. Again, more research must be done on women in Northwestern Ontario.

- The physical context of Northern Ontario, with its vast geography, sparse population, and enormous distances among communities, poses challenges for all residents of the region, but especially for women. These circumstances, for example, discriminate against women who want to enter types of employments that require them to travel within the region, because their traditional roles of care providers to children and other family members would require that a large percentage of their incomes be spent on finding alternative care providers. The same circumstances create physical barriers for women in small communities in the region in terms of networking and communicating with other women for the purposes of exchanging ideas, collaborating on projects, and organizing for political action. These contexts further pose barriers for self-employed women who seek a broader economic base for their businesses and who generally seek to maintain and expand their businesses.

- Data regarding the participation of Northern Ontario women in the economy of Northern Ontario demonstrates that the socio-economic context of the region poses certain constraints on women’s choices, circumscribes their opportunities, and presents them with special challenges. As a result, the situation of women in Northern Ontario differs from that of men in Northern Ontario and that of women in Ontario as a whole.

  - The present position of women’s employment in Northern Ontario rises out of a particular historical context. The predominance of employments directly and indirectly linked to a resource-based economy means that the majority of jobs available have been traditionally-male, blue-collar employments. In addition, the traditional dominance of

resource industries by male workers has led to a “gender imbalance in the labour force”, one that in turn has led to a “gender imbalance in the population as a whole”. The few studies that were done, during the 1970s, on women’s work in communities with resource-based economies have shown that the occupational structure in such communities comprised “a rigid sexual division of labour”. It was not just that the available employments available were primarily traditionally-male employments; it was also that women were systematically excluded from such employments. Although changes occurred as the economic bases of northern communities broadened, it continues to be true that women in Northwestern Ontario, in comparison to women in Ontario as a whole, are under-represented in traditionally-male employments and over-represented in traditionally-female employments.

- **Hence, the characteristics of the current industrial structure of women in Northern Ontario are as follows.**
  - The industrial structure continues to be considerably different from the industrial structure of Northern Ontario men and from that of women in Ontario as a whole.
  - The variance between the industrial structure of Northern women and that of Northern men is much larger than the variance between the industrial structures of women and men in Ontario as a whole.
  - Certain Northern Ontario employments continue to be more exclusively male than female:
    - The most significant difference in the industrial structures of women and men is the fact that more women than men are employed in the health and social assistance service industries. These industries comprise 20.9% of all female jobs, but only 3.5% of all male jobs.
    - A similar example can be found in the accommodation and food service industries, which comprise 12.1% of all female jobs, but only 5.5% of all male jobs.
    - Likewise, educational services comprise 10.8% of all female employments, but only 4.4% of all male employments.
Another way in which the industrial structure of women continues to be different from that of men in Northern Ontario is in the lack of women employed in all the traditional blue-collar industries.

- A major difference in the industrial structures of women and men in the region lies in the manufacturing industries. Employments in this field constitute 17.1% of all male jobs, but only 3.5% of all female jobs.

- Construction industry employments constitute 11.4% of all male jobs, but only 1.6% of all female jobs.

- Mining industry employments constitute 5.4% of all male jobs, but only 0.4% of all female jobs.

- Transportation and warehousing industries constitute 8.4% of all male jobs, but only 2.9% of all female jobs.

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industries constitute 4.5% of all male jobs, but only 1.6% of all female jobs.

The industrial structure of Northern Ontario women is dissimilar to the industrial structure of women in the province as a whole.

- There are noteworthy variances in the areas of manufacturing, construction, mining, and transportation industries; in all these areas Northern women, compared to their counterparts in Ontario as a whole, are under-represented.

- They differ, especially, in the extent to which women are employed in manufacturing establishments; for example, whereas manufacturing industries comprise 10.5% of all women’s employments in Ontario as a whole, they comprise 3.5% of all women’s employments in Northern Ontario.
Similarly, whereas professional, scientific, and technical service industries comprise 6.7% of all women’s employments in Ontario as a whole, they comprise only 3.4% of all women’s employments in Northern Ontario.

There are also noteworthy differences in the areas of health and social assistance service industries. Whereas health and social assistance service industries comprise 15.7% of all women’s employments in Ontario as a whole, they comprise 20.9% of all women’s employments in Northern Ontario.

Likewise, whereas accommodations and food services industries comprise 7.9% of all women’s employments in Ontario as a whole, they comprise 12.1% of all women’s employments in Northern Ontario.

As for the District of Thunder Bay specifically:

- the percentage of women’s employments comprising manufacturing industries in the District of Thunder Bay was 3.3%, compared to 10.5% in Ontario as a whole and 3.5% in Northern Ontario;

- the percentage of women’s employments comprising public service sector industries in the District of Thunder Bay is 41.4%, compared to 29.7% in Ontario as a whole and 39.3% in Northern Ontario;

- the percentage of women’s employments comprising professional service industries is 14.8% in the District of Thunder Bay, compared to 22.2% in Ontario as a whole and 14.2% in Northern Ontario.

The current occupational structure of women in Northern Ontario, which is directly related to the occupational structure, is very different from that of men in Northern Ontario.
In addition, the divergence between women’s and men’s occupational structures in Northern Ontario is greater than the divergence between women’s and men’s occupational structures in Ontario as a whole.

The occupational structure of Northern Ontario offers women more employments than it does men in:

- Business, finance, and administration occupations – This category represents 24.7% of all female employments, but only 6.2% of all male employments. However, these are primarily at the bottom rung of the business ladder; for example, 72.5% of women employed in business occupations are in secretarial or clerical occupations.

- Sales and service occupations – In fact, sales and service occupations comprise the largest category of occupations for Northern Ontario women.

- Health occupations – These comprise 10% of all female employments, compared to 1.8% of male employments, in Northern Ontario.

The occupational structure of Northern Ontario offers women less employments than it does men in:

- Traditional ‘blue-collar’ occupations – Employments in trades, transport, and equipment operators and related occupations comprise 33.1% of all male employments, but only 2.6% of female employments. Employments in occupations involving processing, manufacturing, and utilities comprise 8.5% of all male occupations, but only 1.5% of all female occupations. Employments in occupations representing primary industries comprise 7.4% of all male employments, but only 1.4% of female employments.

- Science – The occupational structure of Northern Ontario offers women fewer employments in occupations in and related to natural and applied science. Occupations for men in this category comprise 6.7% of all employments, whereas occupations for women in this category comprise only 1.6% of all employments.
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- The occupational structure of women in Northern Ontario differs from that of women in Ontario as a whole in that
  - sales and service occupations comprise a greater number of employments for women in Northern Ontario, by 30.5%,
  - manufacturing occupations comprise fewer employments for women in Northern Ontario (1.5%) than for women in Ontario as a whole (6.2%),
  - science occupations comprise fewer occupations for women in Northern Ontario (1.8%) than for women in Ontario as a whole (3.4%).

- The labour participation rate, the proportion of the population aged 15 and over who are employed, unemployed, and actively seeking work, of Northern Ontario women is also different from both that of men in Northern Ontario and from that of women in Ontario as a whole.

- The labour participation rate of Northern Ontario women is lower than that of Northern Ontario men. The rate for women is 56.3%; that for men is 66.8%, a full 10.5% greater than that for women.

- The labour participation rate of Northern Ontario women is 8.4% lower than that of their provincial counterparts.
  - More specifically, the participation rate of women in the District of Thunder Bay is 58.9%, compared to that of women in Ontario as a whole, which is 61.5%.

- The self-employment rate of women in Northern Ontario, although it has increased considerably between 1986 and 2000, has not increased as much as either that for women in Ontario as a whole or that of men in Northern Ontario.
  - The self-employment rate has not increased as much as the self-employment rate of men in Northern Ontario. Northern Ontario women became self-employed at a rate 38% lower than the rate of Northern Ontario men.
In addition, even though all self-employment rates increased between 1986 and 2001, the variance between men and women did not.

The self-employment rate for Northern Ontario women increased 126%, while that for women in Ontario as a whole increased by 150%.

The percentage of women who are self-employed in Northern Ontario is 7.7%, compared to that of women in Ontario as a whole, which is 8.3%.

More specifically, the District of Thunder Bay has among the lowest percentages of self-employed women in Northern Ontario. While the rate of self-employment of women in Northern Ontario is 7.7%, that of women in the District of Thunder Bay is only 6%, the lowest percentage of women in all of Ontario.

Women in Northwestern Ontario also encounter special challenges in terms of accessing and using information technologies. Studies about the problems encountered by residents of Northwestern Ontario in general are noted in a number of studies conducted between 2001 and 2003. They attest to the need for more training for residents and for more trained personnel in the region. In 2001, the Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce, in its Survey of Electronic Commerce, assessed the barriers businesses encounter in making more use of the Internet. The report states that “the greatest barrier to Internet activities reported by organizations in the start-up stage of business development was insufficient knowledge” and that, during the growth stage of development, “the barrier most often reported was insufficient knowledge”. On the basis of such information, the report concludes: “it would appear that while the majority of businesses are not transacting on the Internet, they do not have any particular reason as to why they are not. It may be a case of businesses not knowing what they do not know (insufficient knowledge) to even assess the issue of e-business”. Another study, entitled Barriers to E-Commerce Use (Non-Internet Users), notes that 10% of respondents who were asked why they did not use the Internet to purchase and sell answered “lack of skilled employees to develop, maintain and use technology”.

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The need for more and better training is reiterated by research done by the NSTB/CFNS. In the June 2002 Progress Report, prepared for the NSTB/CFNS and entitled Socio-Economic Trends and Training Needs in the District of Thunder Bay: Environmental Scan Summary, Chris Southcott notes that a “new issue”, which in past years had only been “mentioned”, was now important enough to be “highlighted”; that issue was “the need for enhanced information technology infrastructure in the region, the training to use it, and the professionals to run it”. He elaborates that establishing “the flexible training delivery mechanisms so badly needed” in Northwestern Ontario requires not only completion of the infrastructure that would deliver high-speed Internet, but also the attraction of trained technicians, who would then train others, and the provision of continued retraining opportunities that would allow those professionals to retain their credentials. The same concern about training is reiterated in the NSTB/CFNS Environmental Scan Progress Report 2002-2003; it recommends that Certification Training Courses in information technologies be made available to businesses and organizations in Northwestern Ontario.

The NSTB/CFNS reports also address issues related specifically to women’s training needs. Its Environmental Scan Progress Report of 2002-2003 recommends that “skills development opportunities for women in the region be enhanced through research and by developing an innovative approach encompassing existing educational facilities fostering skills, knowledge and training” and that women “partner with a loan fund to build an environment of learning and accessible funding that will strengthen the skills of women in our community”.

In 2003, PARO undertook a study on, as its title describes, The Current Status of Information Technologies and Computer Skills Development for Women Entrepreneurs in Northwestern Ontario. This study examines the issue of IT access and use among self-employed women in Northwestern Ontario and, more specifically, their needs in relation to the new technologies. The study offers suggestions to improve access to and use of IT by businesswomen. It also offers suggestions regarding ways of meeting the needs of women interested in starting up their own businesses and of women who are underemployed or unemployed. The paper also discusses the special challenges inherent in both developing relevant programs for and delivering them to women in the Northwest.

The study comprises the responses of 50 self-employed Northwestern Ontario women to an Internet Needs Assessment Survey that was sent to 100 women living in the City of Thunder Bay and in communities both immediately adjacent to the city and in outlying northern, rural communities. Questions sought to gauge the respondents’ access to and use of the new information technologies.
The results of the study led to a number of conclusions:

- While many survey respondents stated that they were aware of the information technologies available to them and felt confident they could use them effectively, that they recognized the positive impact on their businesses of being on-line, in terms of increasing their businesses’ visibility, advertising and promoting their products, and reaching their customers more easily and more quickly, and that they knew the Internet provided benefits in terms of gathering and transmitting information and accessing on-line education programs, a full one-fifth to one-quarter of respondents stated that they were not aware of the benefits of e-commerce.

- More significantly, the fact that exactly one-half of the women who were sent surveys did not respond, after repeated solicitations, suggests that these women may very well have been uninterested in, unaware of, and/or unable to access and use the computer.

- In addition, awareness did not translate into effective use. Some women were prevented from using the new technologies by lack of access to the necessary infrastructure, prohibitive costs, and inadequate levels of skill.

- Prohibitive costs were often cited as a barrier. These included the costs of monthly access fees, buying computers and software, upgrading software, developing and maintaining websites, hiring technicians when equipment fails, and training staffs and themselves.

- Lack of adequate skills in the computer and its many uses was also cited as another major barrier. Many who sought out training found it difficult to access and to upgrade. Lack of computer training and experience caused some respondents to fear the technology itself, the costs, possible failure, and what they perceived to be the invasion of unwanted (junk) E-mails and computer viruses. Lack of computer training also forced many of these respondents to rely heavily on the altruism of others to fix their equipment.

- Respondents wanted assistance in the way of financial aid, access to public facilities, such as Community Access Program (CAP) sites, especially if these sites could be more welcoming, comfortable, supportive, and women-centred environments that could also serve as information resource centers and computer training centers, and more and continuous access to women’s service organizations that offer training and support.
2. METHODOLOGY

The NOW research study is based on three kinds of information, gathered from surveys, focus groups, and interviews.

SURVEYS:

The input of women with a broad range of work experiences and from a wide range of settings was gathered through the administration of surveys designed to solicit their experiences in seeking employment, in changing employment, in navigating the opportunities, barriers, constraints, and challenges they encounter in their workplaces, and in opening, maintaining, and expanding their businesses.

Because women engaged in different aspects of work life have somewhat different work experiences, it is important to address the different experiences of self-employed women, employed women, unemployed women, and women in employment transition. The original survey was 8 pages long. In order to encourage women to fill out the surveys, it was considered advisable to shorten the survey by isolating specific questions for respondents. The result was three separate surveys, albeit all are adaptations of the original. One survey addresses the experiences of unemployed women engaged in seeking employment and of women who are in transition from one career to another. Another survey addresses the experiences of employed women. Still another survey addresses the experiences of self-employed women.

In order to identify the different work experiences of women who live in the larger urban centre of the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, with access to particular resources, and of those of women who live in much smaller, more isolated communities within the District of Thunder Bay, surveys were distributed within the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities and in many outlying communities within the District of Thunder Bay.

Surveys compiled for women in outlying communities were distributed in the following communities: Manitouwadge, Nipigon, Red Rock, Lake Helen First Nation, Longlac/Geraldton, Pic Mobert First Nation, White River, Marathon, Schreiber/Terrace Bay, Pays Plat First Nation, and Rocky Bay First Nation.

Approximately 1,000 surveys were distributed in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities. The number is approximate because some recipients stated that they had duplicated copies to distribute to others. The surveys were distributed at malls and other business centres where both working women and customers congregate, at government agencies such as Ontario Works, at community organizations
such as the Ontario March of Dimes, and at community events such as the Women’s Festival and the Career Fair. The number of respondents included 24 self-employed women, 107 employed women, and 43 unemployed women and women in employment transition.

Approximately 600 surveys were distributed in communities in the region. Again, the number is approximate because contact women in the communities often made copies in order to distribute more widely. The number of respondents included 15 self-employed women, 53 employed women, and 30 unemployed women and women in employment transition.

FOCUS GROUPS:

The input of women who attended 5 focus groups, each group comprised of 3 to 13 women, who were randomly chosen, was also gathered. The focus groups were held in the City of Thunder Bay and in the communities of: Manitouwadge (9 participants); Nipigon/Lake Helen Reserve (5 participants); Thunder Bay (13 participants); White River (13 participants); and, Longlac/Caramat (3 participants).

KEY INTERVIEWS:

The input of 8 key interviewees was also solicited. All of them were chosen on the basis of their familiarity with the issues, challenges, and needs of working women in the District of Thunder Bay because of their pivotal positions in government agencies and in the businesses and organizations that deal daily with women’s working life experiences. These key interviews were conducted with:

- Angie Petrie  
  Economic Development Officer, Lake Helen First Nation
- Lucy Lehoux  
  Job Connect, Marathon
- Marilyn Scobie  
  Job Connect, Marathon
- Evelina Pan  
  Thunder Bay District Labour Council, school librarian
- Emily Scott  
  Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, NSTB/CFSN
- Susan Collin  
  Manitouwadge Resource Centre, Labour Centre
- Laura Lesparance  
  Economic Development Officer, Rocky First Nation
- LaVonne Charette  
  Training Wheels Resource Centre, HRSDC, Thunder Bay
- Sherry Hogan  
  Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

The input of the members of the Advisory Committee, formed expressly for this project and comprising partner representatives, contractors, and women representing the community, was gathered. The individuals involved are:

Madge Richardson  Women’s Reference Group Representative, Schreiber
Linda Gilbert  Women’s Reference Group Chair; Women’s Representative North Superior Training Board, Economic Development Officer, Pic Mobert First Nation, Manitouwadge
Lynne Thornburg  Job Connect, Confederation College, Thunder Bay
Daina Maslach  Women’s Reference Group Representative; Owner of Event Management Services; Festival Coordinator for the Thundering Women’s Festival 2004, Thunder Bay
Sherry Hogan  A/District Manager - Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, Apprenticeship Client Services, Thunder Bay

Partners:
Rosalind Lockyer  Executive Director, PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise (formerly PARO: A Northwestern Ontario Women’s Community Loan Fund)
Marg Scott  Executive Director, Local Training Board, North Superior Training Board (NSTB/CFNS)

Contractors:
Marina-Rose Robinson  Researcher
Shannon Cormier  Program Developer/Facilitator
3. SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN IN COMMUNITIES IN THE OUTLYING REGION

Profiles of the Women

Most women who responded live in communities in the eastern region of the District, as opposed to communities in the northern region. In addition, only one respondent lives in an Aboriginal community. More specifically, they live in the communities of:

- Manitouwadge (3)
- Nipigon (3)
- Pic Mobert First Nation (1)
- Red Rock (2)
- White River (6)

Most respondents are between the ages of 40 and 65. By the age of 40, most women no longer have young children at home; after the age of 65, most women are retired. More specifically, the number of women in the age category 20-29 is 1, 30-39 is 3, 40-49 is 5, 50-59 is 4, and 60-65 is 1.

All respondents who answered the question about marital status are either married or have partners.

Two-thirds of the women stated they live in double income families; this is probably due to the fact that so many women are married or live with partners. Two women reported single incomes. One of these women lives with a partner; the other is married. Two of the women reported their sources of incomes as pensions.

Of the fourteen women who answered the question about number of children, only one has no children. The other thirteen women have between 1 and 6 children. All of the women over the age of 50 have grown children, aged 22 and over. Three of the women aged 40-49 have teenaged children, all aged 15 and older. One woman aged 40-49 has younger children between the age of 1 and 15; the other woman aged 40-49 has no children. The 3 women aged 30-39 all have children under the age of 16.

Profiles of the Businesses

The perceptions that respondents have about the economic realities within their own communities are gloomy:

- only 1 regards the economic environment as **good** (in White River);
- 4 regard it as **fair**;
- 4 regard it as **poor**; and,
- 6 regard it as **very poor**.
In effect, a full two-thirds of the 15 respondents perceive the economic environments in which they operate their businesses as poor or very poor.

Most of the respondents have businesses that are well-established. The length of time that these women’s businesses have been operating varies considerably and represents a broad spectrum of years. One-fifth of the businesses are relatively young businesses, in that they have operated for 2 years or less. However, one-third of the businesses have operated from between 3 to 6 years. Almost one-half of the businesses have been established for 7 years or longer. One business has even operated for over 20 years.

The types of businesses these women operate also vary. They do, however, reflect the demands and needs in outlying communities. The specific businesses represent the areas of:

- Accommodation (1)
- Food and/or beverages (3)
- Housekeeping/Home Maintenance (1)
- Personal Care (child/elder care) (1)
- Consulting (1)

One respondent has 2 businesses:

- Accounting & Retail (1)
- Food and/or Beverages & Housekeeping/Home Maintenance (1)

Two-thirds of the 15 respondents listed their businesses as sole proprietorships. One-fifth listed their businesses as partnerships. Two businesses remained unspecified. Regarding the three women who have partnerships in a business, two own 26%-50% of their businesses and one owns 51%-75% of her business.

Four-fifths of these businesses are incorporated. The remaining one-fifth of these businesses are not. Regarding the three women who own businesses that are incorporated, two each own 26%-50% and one owns 75%-99%.

Eight businesses are home-based; six are not. One respondent checked off both categories because one of her two businesses is home-based and the other is not.

A dramatic finding is the fact that a large majority of these women invest many more hours into their businesses than the number of hours that are considered to constitute a normal work week. Only four respondents work less than 35 hours; eleven work more than 35 hours.

More specifically,

- 3 respondents work 35-44 hours,
- 3 respondents work 45-60 hours, and
- 5 respondents work more than 60 hours.
Almost one-half of respondents do have others working for them; the rest do not. No respondents employ more than six employees. More specifically,

- 2 respondents employ 1-2 workers,
- 1 respondent employs 3-4 workers, and
- 4 respondents employ 5-6 workers.

None of the respondents employ just full-time staff. One respondent employs just part-time staff. Two other respondents employ a combination of full-time, part-time, and/or contract staff.

The vast majority (13) of respondents do not have websites. One respondent has a website for her business. Another respondent has a website for one of her businesses (retail), but not for her other business (Accounting).

The remaining thirteen respondents were asked why they do not have websites for their businesses.

- Only two are plagued by technical problems, in that they do not have access to high-speed broadband. The other respondents provide a number of other reasons.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary reason, cited by one-fifth of respondents, for not having a website is that they do not need one. The second reason is that they have no time, and the third reason is lack of computer training.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, the primary reason continues to be that they do not need one. The second reason is a tie between the fact that they have no time and the expense of setting up a website. Lack of computer training continues to be the third reason cited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to high-speed internet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of computer training</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of the new technology</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No time</td>
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<td>Expense of setting it up</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expense of maintaining it</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t need it</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
When asked if their businesses provide them with enough income to allow them to be financially independent, approximately one-third of the fourteen women who responded stated that their businesses do provide them with enough income. The other nine women responded that their businesses do not.

Nine respondents are interested in expanding their businesses. Eight of these respondents are women who have no website. The remaining five respondents are not interested.

When asked to cite barriers that prevent them from expanding their businesses, the nine respondents specify a number of barriers.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary barrier cited is geographic isolation. The barrier cited second in importance is personal/family challenges. Tied for third in importance are lack of adequate child/elder care, lack of training/education, and lack of finances.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, two barriers tie for primary importance; those two are geographic isolation and personal/family challenges. Tied for second in importance are lack of training/education, lack of finances, and lack of mentoring.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal/family challenges</td>
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<td>Lack of adequate child/elder care</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training/education</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>No access to computer/internet technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inadequate internet service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic isolation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Also working elsewhere</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of finances</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Barriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inexperience in financial management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to loan</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
Respondents were asked what kinds of business and/or support services and programs would aid their businesses.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, two services/programs are tied for first place; these include access to loan funds and money management advice. There is also a tie for second place; these include good child/elder care and strategic planning and advice.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, tied for first place are access to loan funds and money management advice. Second in priority is strategic planning advice, and third in priority is good child/elder care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
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<td>Good child/elder care</td>
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<td>Mentoring program</td>
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<td>Human resources (staffing) information</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing/advertising expertise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about commerce over the internet</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Importing/exporting advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit packages (eg. Health)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Access to loan funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic planning advice</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about taxes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money management advice</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/personal coaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked what kinds of training support services and/or programs would aid their businesses.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary training support services/programs is a three-way tie among conflict resolution training, Internet and computer training, and training subsidies. Cited second in terms of preference is education about entrepreneurship. In third place is risk management training.

- When taking into account respondent’s first, second, and third choices together, first in importance is Internet and computer training. Second is a tie between training subsidies and conflict resolution training. Third is education about entrepreneurship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education about entrepreneurship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assertiveness training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution training</td>
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<td>Legal issues training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peer networking</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet and computer training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negotiation training</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk management training</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training subsidies</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory management training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
4. SELF-EMPLOYED WOMEN IN THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY AND IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Profiles of the Women
Most of the 24 women who responded to the survey are between the ages of 30 and 65, unlike those in the surrounding region who are between the ages of 40 and 65. More specifically, the number of women in the age category 20-29 is 3, 30-39 is 6, 40-49 is 4, 50-59 is 8, and 60-65 is 3.

The respondents are almost evenly split in terms of those who live alone or with their children only and those who live with a partner. The former, who include the single, separated, and divorced, number eleven; the latter, who include the married and partnered, number thirteen.

Despite the fact that thirteen respondents live in households with other significant adults, only four state that their households enjoy double incomes. This suggests that these respondents may be the sole income earners in their households. This differs considerably from circumstances in the outlying region, where most of the women, who are married or partnered, have access to a double income. In addition, in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, sixteen respondents claim single incomes, one respondent is on social assistance, and two respondents receive pensions.

Nine of the respondents have no children. Of the remaining fifteen respondents who have children, nine have between 1 and 2 children and six have between 3 and 4 children.

Profiles of the Businesses
The perceptions that twenty-one of these respondents have about economic realities in the City of Thunder Bay are very different than the perceptions that women in outlying communities have about their communities. Whereas two-thirds of respondents in outlying communities rate their economic environments as poor or very poor and only one respondent rates her community’s economy as good, just under one-quarter of respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities rate the city’s economy as poor or very poor and just under one-third rated the city’s economic environment as good or very good. In effect, perceptions are almost entirely reversed. More specifically, in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities,

2 regard the economic environment as very good,
6 regard it as good,
9 regard it as fair,
1 regards it as poor,
1 regards it as between poor and very poor, and
2 regard it as very poor.

Most respondents also have businesses that are well-established. The length of time that these businesses have been operating also varies and covers a considerable time-frame. One-third of the businesses are relatively young businesses, which have operated for less than two years. One-eighth of the businesses have operated for between 3 to 6 years. Approximately one-half of the businesses have been established for 7 years or more. Three of the latter thirteen businesses have existed for more than 20 years.

The types of businesses these women operate also vary. The specific businesses of the twenty-one respondents who answered this question represent the areas of:

- Retail sales (5)
- Beauty (1)
- Food &/or beverages (1)
- Arts & Crafts (3)
- Health care field (3)
- Computer-based (2)
- Management/Business (1)
- Tourism/Recreation/Amusement (1)
- Financial/Accounting (1)
- Consulting/Coaching/Training (1)
- Marketing/Advertising (1)
- Computer-based & Fitness professional (2 businesses) (1)

Just over one-half of the 24 respondents list their businesses as sole proprietorships. One-sixth of respondents have partnerships. Seven respondents did not specify. Of the four who are partners, all own 1%-25% each.

Four of the respondents businesses are incorporated. Three of the respondents with incorporated businesses own 75%-99% each. The other respondent owns 26%-50%.

Exactly two-thirds of the businesses are home-based; seven are not. One respondent has one business that is home-based and one that is not.

As is the case with women in the outlying communities, many of these respondents invest many more hours in their businesses than the number of hours that are considered to constitute a typical work week. Only approximately one-third work less than 35 hours. Fifteen work many more hours. More specifically,

- 3 respondents work 35-44 hours,
- 6 respondents work 45-60 hours, and
- 6 respondents work more than 60 hours.

In effect, as is the case with respondents in the outlying region (8 out of 15), at least one-half of respondents work more than 45 hours a week.
Approximately one-half of the 24 respondents have others working for them; eleven do not. Of the eleven respondents who provided information regarding the number of employees they have, only two respondents employ more than ten workers. Approximately one-half employ only one to two workers. One respondent employs three to four, and two respondents employ five to six. Of the twelve respondents who provided information regarding the type of workers they employ, only one uses only full-time staff and only three use only part-time staff. The other 8 respondents use various combinations of full-time and part-time workers, unpaid family members, volunteers, and contract labour.

Unlike the situation among respondents in outlying communities, where few respondents (2 out of 15) have websites for their businesses, more respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities have websites (15) than do not (9).

The nine respondents were asked to specify the reasons they do not have websites.

- When first choices are taken into consideration, the most often cited reason, selected by one-quarter of respondents, is the perception that a website is not needed. The second most often cited reason, selected by one-sixth of respondents, is the expense of setting up a website. The third most often cited reason, selected by one-eighth of respondents, is the expense of maintaining it.

- When first, second, and third choices are taken into consideration, the perception that a website is not needed continues to be the primary reason some respondents do not have a website. The expense of keeping up a website and the expense of maintaining one are equally important now as reasons some respondents perceive they do not need a website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No access to high-speed internet</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of computer training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fear of the new technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>No time</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Expense of setting it up</td>
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<td>Expense of maintaining it</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t need it</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
When asked if their businesses provide them with enough income to allow them to be financially independent, exactly one-third of the 24 respondents stated that their businesses do and two-thirds stated that their businesses do not.

Approximately four-fifths of respondents are interested in expanding their businesses. The remaining one-fifth of respondents is not.

When asked to cite the barriers that are preventing them from expanding their businesses, they specify a number of barriers.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary barrier, cited by almost one-third of respondents, is lack of finances. The barrier cited as second in importance, by exactly one-sixth of respondents, is personal/family circumstances. A distant third choice, cited by one-sixteenth of women, is lack of mentoring.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, almost one-third of respondents indicate, as their first choice, lack of finances. Close behind, chosen by just under one-third of respondents, is personal/family challenges. Tied for third choice, by exactly one-sixth of respondents, is fear and the fact that respondents also work elsewhere. A notable mention must go to the fourth choice, lack of mentoring, which was selected by exactly one-eighth of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal/family challenges</td>
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<td>Lack of adequate child/elder care</td>
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<td>Lack of training/education</td>
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<tr>
<td>No access to computer/internet</td>
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<tr>
<td>technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inadequate internet service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic isolation</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also working elsewhere</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of finances</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Barriers</td>
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<td>Inexperience in financial management</td>
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<td>Access to loan</td>
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</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the amount of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked what kinds of business and/or support services would aid their businesses.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, almost one-fifth of respondents chose regional networking as their first priority. Second in priority and chosen by one-sixth of respondents, is marketing/advertising expertise. Three business and/or support services tied for third place, according to the choices of one-eighth of the respondents; these include a mentoring program, information on e-commerce, and business/personal coaching.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, regional networking, chosen by exactly one-third of respondents, is a clear winner in terms of priority. Tied for second in terms of priority, and chosen by exactly one-quarter of respondents, is a mentoring program. A three-way tie for third, as selected by just under one-fifth of respondents includes marketing/advertising expertise, business/personal coaching, and access to loan funds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good child/elder care</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human resources (staffing)</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information about commerce over</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>the internet</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing/exporting advice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefit packages (eg. Health)</td>
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<td>Employment insurance benefits</td>
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<td>Legal expertise</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Regional networking</td>
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<td>Access to loan funds</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic planning advice</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about taxes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money management advice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/personal coaching</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the amount of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked what kinds of training support services and/or programs would aid their businesses.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary training support services/program, as chosen by almost one-fifth of respondents, is Internet and computer training. Tied for second, as chosen by exactly one-sixth of respondents, are peer networking and training subsidies. Tied for third, as chosen by exactly one-eighth of respondents, are education about entrepreneurship and assertiveness training.

- When taking into account respondent’s first, second, and third choices together, three training support services/programs, selected by just over one-fourth of respondents, tied for first in terms of priority; these include peer networking, Internet and computer training, and training subsidies. In lone second, according to the choice of almost one-fifth of respondents, is education about entrepreneurship. Tied for third place and chosen by exactly one-eighth of respondents are assertiveness training and negotiation training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
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<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Education about entrepreneurship</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Legal issues training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Peer networking</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet and computer training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiation training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk management training</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training subsidies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inventory management training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the amount of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
5. EMPLOYED WOMEN IN COMMUNITIES IN THE OUTLYING REGION

Profiles of the Women

Most of the 53 women who responded live in communities in the eastern region of the District, as opposed to communities in the northern region. Almost one-quarter of the respondents live in Aboriginal communities. More specifically, they live in the communities of:

- Longlac (2) 
- Manitouwadge (7) 
- Marathon (4) 
- Nipigon (4) 
- Pays Plat First Nation (10) 
- Red Rock (7) 
- Schreiber (1) 
- Terrace Bay (3) 
- White River (14) 
- Other: Nakina (1)

Most respondents, four-fifths of the total, are between the ages of 20 and 49. The latter are relatively evenly distributed between the three age categories of 20-29, 30-39, and 40-49. More specifically, the number of women in the age category 15-19 is 2, 20-29 is 13, 30-39 is 15, 40-49 is 14, 50-59 is 9.

Three-fifths of the respondents are either married or partnered. Still, less than one-half live in double-income families. Almost two-fifths are single, separated, and divorced. Approximately two-fifths live in single-income families.

Approximately four-fifths of respondents have children. Approximately three-fifths of the latter have one to two children and approximately one-fifth has three to four children.

One-half of respondents work full-time. Approximately one-quarter of the 53 respondents work part-time. Six respondents have temporary/casual employment. Three respondents do contract work. Four respondents work a combination of full-time, part-time, and more than one job.

Respondents engage in a wide range of employments, including academic, professional, managerial, administrative, financial, business, government service, retail, and health care.
The perceptions that respondents have about economic realities within their own communities are gloomy. Only approximately one-seventh of respondents regard the economic environment as better than fair. Approximately three-fifths regard the economic environment as poor or very poor.

More specifically,

4 regard the economic environment as very good,
3 regard it as good,
14 regard it as fair,
19 regard it as poor, and
12 regard it as very poor.

Despite perceptions of the economic environments that are not primarily positive, respondents do express considerable satisfaction in their occupations. Only one respondent is not satisfied at all. Seven respondents are somewhat satisfied. Twelve respondents are moderately satisfied. Fourteen respondents are fairly satisfied. Sixteen respondents are very satisfied and three respondents are extremely satisfied. In effect, three-fifths of the 53 respondents are at least very satisfied.

Respondents were asked what aspects of their current employments they enjoy the most.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the most enjoyable aspect of their current employments is making a contribution. The second most enjoyable aspect is financial independence. Two aspects are tied as the third most enjoyable aspect; they are personal fulfillment and socializing.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the most enjoyable aspect is financial independence. Tied for second is making a contribution and personal development. Third is personal fulfillment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making a contribution</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal empowerment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t enjoy my job</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial independence</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued learning</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
Respondents were asked what would improve their satisfaction with their current employments.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, respondents cited higher pay, by a very large margin, as the condition that would most improve their satisfaction with their current employments. Second in importance is opportunity for advancement. Third in importance is training subsidies.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, respondents cite higher pay as the condition that would most improve their satisfaction with their current employments. Second in importance is opportunity for advancement. Third in importance is training subsidies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training subsidies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher pay</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different position</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer networking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health benefits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement opportunities</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay with men for equal work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment insurance benefits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents

Respondents were asked to choose the minimum wage they require in order to make working outside the home worthwhile. The amount chosen most often, by one-third of respondents, is $11-12. However, almost one-half of respondents cited amounts higher than $12. More specifically, respondents made the following choices:

1 chose $7.15
5 chose $7.16-10
18 chose $11-12
3 chose $13-14
10 chose $15-16
6 chose $17-18
4 chose $19-25
Respondents were asked to choose the main barriers facing working women in their communities.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the most prominent barrier is low-paying jobs. The second most prominent barrier is access to adequate child/elder care. The third most prominent barrier is access to education/training.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices, the most prominent barrier, by a wide margin, continues to be low-paying jobs. The second most prominent barrier continues to be access to child/elder care. The third most prominent barrier is lack of funds for education/training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to adequate child/elder care</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-paying jobs</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal pay with men for equal work</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled for traditionally male jobs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of funds for education/training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to on-the-job training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of self-confidence/self esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to education/training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to internet/computer training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

Respondents were asked to rate their employment skills. Three-fifths of the 53 respondents rate their skills as good to excellent. More specifically,
  - 3 respondents regard their employment skills as poor,
  - 17 regard them as fair,
  - 17 regard them as good,
  - 11 regard them as very good, and
  - 4 regard them as excellent.
Respondents were asked what training resources would be most useful in their current and/or in future employments.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, respondents most often cited educational assistance programs as the training resource that would most help them in their employments. Respondents’ second choice is training on the job. Respondents’ third choice is skills upgrading.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices, respondents most often cited skills upgrading. Their second choice is educational assistance programs. Their third choice is funding for skills training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on the job</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Re-training for new career</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational assistance programs</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills upgrading</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular tele-class workshops</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer-sponsored training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Career planning</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for skills training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked to consider whether there are other employment services from which they could benefit.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the employment service that was cited as the most useful is sponsored training. In second place are self-employment support programs, and in third place is career counseling.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the employment service that was cited as most useful is sponsored training. In second place is career counseling. Two employment services, self-employment support programs and wage subsidies, share third place.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment support program</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored training and/or education</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job search counselling</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

The extent to which respondents are aware of the availability of employment services depends on the service.

- Two-thirds of respondents do not know whether career counselling is available.

- Almost one-half of respondents do not know whether self-employment support programs are available.

- More than three-fifths of respondents do not know whether sponsored training is available.

- Approximately one-fifth of respondents do not know whether job search counselling is available.

- Almost one-half of respondents do not know whether wage subsidy programs are available.
Respondents were asked whether they had considered self-employment. Three-fifths responded yes, and two-fifths responded no.

Respondents were asked what the main factor is in preventing them from opening their own businesses.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the main factor cited is no financial backing. The second factor cited is that respondents do not know where to start. The third factor cited is the need for specific training.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the main factor cited, by a considerable margin, is no financial backing. The second factor cited is that respondents do not know where to start. The third factor is a tie between lack of a business idea and current personal/family circumstances.

<table>
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<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need specific training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No peer networking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence/fear</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No employment insurance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(computers, fax, photocopiers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from resources in major urban centre</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No business idea</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No financial backing</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current personal/family circumstances</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No benefits</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

6. EMPLOYED WOMEN IN THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY AND IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Profiles of the Women

The ages of the 107 respondents ranged from 15 to 59. The largest number of women, one-third of the total, is in the age category 20-29. The second largest group, approximately one-quarter of the total, is in the age category 40-49. One-fifth of respondents are in the age category 30-39. More specifically, the number of respondents in the age category 15-19 is 8, 20-29 is 35, 30-39 is 21, 40-49 is 28, and 50-59 is 12.

Respondents are almost equally divided in terms of whether they live alone or only with their children and those who live with partners. They are just as equally divided in terms of whether they live on a single income or a double income.

Slightly less than one-half of respondents have no children. Slightly more than one-half have children. Almost all respondents who are parents have one to two children. Slightly more than one-tenth of parents have three to four children.

More than three-fifths of respondents work full-time; approximately one-quarter work part-time. Only one-twentieth of respondents work more than one job.

Respondents work in a wide range of employments, including academic, professional, managerial, administrative, financial, educational, business, government service, retail, health care, food and/or beverages, tourism/recreation/amusement, and traditionally-male employments.

The perceptions of respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities about economic realities in the City are much more positive than those of respondents in outlying communities about the economic realities in their communities. Slightly less than one-quarter of respondents perceive that reality as poor or very poor. Slightly less than one-half perceive that reality as fair. Slightly less than one-quarter perceive that reality as very good. More specifically,

3 regard the economic environment as excellent,
8 regard it as very good,
24 regard it as good,
46 regard it as fair,
19 regard it as poor, and
4 regard it as very poor.
Respondents demonstrate the same perspectives when they assess their job satisfaction. One-seventh of respondents are extremely satisfied with their employments. Somewhat less than one-third of respondents are very satisfied. Approximately one-quarter of respondents are fairly satisfied.

Respondents were asked what aspects of their current employments they enjoy the most.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the aspect that was cited most often by respondents is financial independence. The second most enjoyable aspect is accomplishment, and the third most enjoyable aspect is personal fulfillment.

- When taking into consideration respondent’s first, second, and third choices together, the aspect that was cited most often by respondents is financial independence. The second most enjoyable aspect is accomplishment, and the third most enjoyable aspect is personal fulfillment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making a contribution</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal empowerment</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplishment</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal fulfillment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t enjoy my job</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial independence</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socializing</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued learning</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked what would improve their satisfaction with their current employments.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, respondents cited higher pay, by an enormous margin over other choices, as the condition that would most improve their satisfaction with their current employments. Second in importance are health benefits, and third in importance are training subsidies.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, respondents cited higher pay, by a wide margin, as the condition that would most improve their satisfaction with their current employments. Second in importance is opportunity for advancement, and third in importance are health benefits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training subsidies</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher pay</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different position</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer networking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health benefits</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancement opportunities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay with men for equal work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment insurance benefits</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

The 107 respondents were asked to specify the minimum wage they require in order to make working outside the home worthwhile. Choices are fairly evenly distributed between $7.16-10, $11-12, $13-14, and $17-18: approximately one-tenth of respondents chose $7.16-10; approximately one-ninth chose $11-12; approximately one-eighth chose $13-14; and, approximately one-seventh chose $17-18. More specifically, respondents made the following choices:

- 11 chose $7.16-10
- 13 chose $11-12
- 14 chose $13-14
- 7 chose $15-16
- 16 chose $17-18
- 4 chose $20-25
- 43 did not answer this question
Respondents were asked to choose the main barriers facing working women in their communities.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the most prominent barrier is low-paying jobs. The second most prominent barrier is access to adequate child/elder care. The third prominent barrier, far behind the others, is lack of self-confidence/self-esteem.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the most prominent barrier continues to be low-paying wages. The second most prominent barrier continues to be access to adequate child/elder care. The third most prominent barrier, far behind the others, is lack of funds for education/training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to adequate child/elder care</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-paying jobs</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal pay with men for equal work</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled for traditionally-male jobs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funds for education/training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to on-the-job training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of self-confidence/self esteem</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to education/training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to internet/computer training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents

Respondents were asked to rate their employment skills. Approximately four-fifths of respondents rate their skills as good to excellent. More specifically,

1 respondent regards her skills somewhere between very poor and poor,
2 regard them as poor,
19 regard them as fair,
20 regard them as good,
40 regard them as very good, and
22 regard them as excellent.
Respondents were asked what training resource would be most useful in their current and/or future employments.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, respondents most often cited training on the job as the training resource that would most help them in their employments. Respondents’ second choice is educational assistance programs. Respondents’ third choice is skills upgrading.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, respondents most often cited skills upgrading. Their second choice is a tie between training on the job and educational assistance programs. Their third choice is funding for skills training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on the job</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-training for new career</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational assistance programs</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills upgrading</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular tele-class workshops</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer-sponsored training</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding for skills training</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked to consider whether there are other employment services from which they could benefit.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, two employment services, self-employment support programs and sponsored training, are tied for first place. Second place is a three-way tie among career counseling, job search counseling, and wage subsidy programs.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, two employment services, career counseling and sponsored training, share first place. In second place are self-employment support programs. In third place is job search counseling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment support program</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored training and/or education</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search counselling</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

The extent to which respondents are aware of the availability of employment services depends on the service.

- One-third of respondents do not know whether career counselling is available.

- Approximately two-fifths of respondents do not know whether self-employment programs are available.

- Approximately one-half of respondents do not know whether sponsored training is available.

- Approximately one-quarter of respondents do not know whether job search counselling is available.

- Approximately one-third of respondents do not know whether wage subsidy programs are available.
Respondents were asked whether they had considered self-employment. Approximately one-half responded yes and somewhat less than one-half responded no.

Respondents were asked what the main factors are in preventing respondents from opening their businesses.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the main factor cited is no financial backing. The second factor most often cited comprises a tie between lack of confidence/fear and current personal/family circumstances. The third factor is the fact that respondents do not know where to start.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the main factor cited is no financial backing. The second factor cited is lack of confidence/fear. The third factor is the fact that respondents do not know where to start.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need specific training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No peer networking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence/fear</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No employment insurance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(computers, fax, photocopiers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from resources in major urban centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No business idea</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No financial backing</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current personal/family circumstances</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No benefits</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
7. UNEMPLOYED WOMEN IN COMMUNITIES IN THE OUTLYING REGION

Profiles of the Women

Most of the 30 women who responded live in communities in the eastern region of the district, as opposed to communities in the northern region. Furthermore, only two respondents live in an Aboriginal community. More specifically, they live in the communities of:

- Manitouwadge (9)
- Nipigon (3)
- Red Rock (7)
- Pays Plat First Nation (2)
- Schreiber (2)
- Terrace Bay (1)
- White River (6)

Respondents comprise all age groups. The largest number of respondents, just over one-third, is in the age group 20-29. One-sixth of respondents are aged 40-49, and another one-sixth of respondents are aged 50-59. More specifically, the number of women who are in the age category 15-19 is 1, 20-29 is 11, 30-39 is 7, 40-49 is 5, 50-59 is 5, 60-65 is 1.

Almost two-thirds of respondents live in couple households; these include respondents who are married and partnered. Just over one-third of respondents are single; these include respondents who are single, separated, divorced, and engaged. Only two respondents stated that they live in double-income households. One respondent reported both a single income and employment insurance. All other respondents receive single incomes. One of the latter receives a pension, and six are on social assistance.

Almost one-quarter of respondents have no children; just over two-thirds do. Of those respondents who have children, nineteen have between one and two children, and only three have between three and four children.
Just over two-thirds of unemployed women in communities in the outlying region regard the economic realities within their communities as grim; all these respondents describe those realities as somewhere between poor and very poor. The rest of the respondents describe the economic realities within their communities as fair. Not one respondent views the economic environment as better than fair. More specifically,

9 regard the economic environment as fair,
13 regard it as poor,
1 regards it as between poor and very poor, and
7 regard it as very poor.

Exactly one-half of respondents have been unemployed for one year or less. However, almost one-third of respondents have been unemployed for over three years. More specifically, the number of respondents who have been unemployed for

6 months or less is 13,
7 months - one year is 2,
1-2 years is 4,
3-4 years is 3,
5-6 years is 2,
7-8 years is 1, and
more than 10 years is 3.

Most respondents judged their unemployment situations to be the direct result of unfavorable job markets. Almost one-half of respondents cited the lack of jobs in their communities as the reason they are unemployed. Another one-sixth stated that they had been laid off. One respondent cited stress as the reason why she quit her job; in effect, her unemployment seems also to be related to stresses caused by economic factors. More specifically:

Finishing education/training was cited by 2 as a reason for their unemployment;
Being laid off was cited by 5;
Choosing to stay home was cited by 7;
Childcare/Eldercare was cited by 5;
Being between contracts was cited by 1;
Being unable to find a job was cited by 2; and,
Lack of jobs in the community was cited by 13.

Some of these respondents chose more than one reason.

When asked if they are currently seeking employment, exactly two-thirds responded that they are. Of the remainder, nine responded they are not, and one responded that she had “just found” a job. Of the nine who are not seeking employment, one is retired, and one is waiting for another contract. The remaining seven have chosen to stay home.
Five of the nine respondents who stated they are not currently seeking employment had chosen to stay home for the sake of their children. All five plan to return to the paid workforce. Two of these five women plan to return within 6 months to 1 year. One of the latter has two children aged 2 and 7; the other has one child aged 5. Another two of the five women plan to return within 1-2 years. One of the latter has children aged 6, 9, and 11; the other has children aged 2 and 4. One of the five women plans to return to the paid workforce within 5 years; she has one child aged 7 months and is expecting another child.

Since all five women who cite child care as the reason they are choosing to stay home presently plan to return to the paid workforce, only two of the respondents who are staying home plan to do so permanently. Both of these women are in the age category of 50-59. Even one of these women, however, stated that she could be enticed back by the prospects of self-employment.

Women were asked to specify the minimum hourly wage they require in order to remain financially solvent when they return to the workplace. Only two found the minimum wage of $7.15 viable. The majority, almost one-half of respondents, chose $11-12. More specifically, respondents made the following choices:

2 chose $7.15  
12 chose $11-12  
4 chose $13-14  
5 chose $15-16  
3 chose $17-18  
1 chose $19  
1 chose $20

Some of these figures no doubt reflect the costs of child care.

Respondents were asked to rate their job searches. They obviously understood this question to mean the amount of effort they are making in trying to find employment. While they are very negative about the economic environments in their communities, they perceive their job search efforts in much more positive terms. Approximately one-third rate their job searches as good, and approximately another one-third perceive their job searches as fair. Less than one-eighth rate their searches as poor or very poor.

Respondents are even more positive about their job skills. All respondents view their job skills as at least fair. Only one-sixth of respondents rate their job skills as fair. Exactly one-third rate their job skills as good, and almost one-half rate them as very good. In addition, one-fifteenth of respondents rate their skills as excellent. These figures lend more support to the conclusion that respondents see the economic environment as the reason for their unemployment.
Respondents are realistic about the fact that they may not find employment in their chosen fields. Almost one-half of respondents are willing to take any available employment. Exactly one-third of respondents are seeking employment in more than one job category.

When asked to cite barriers that are preventing them from attaining employment, respondents cited a number of barriers.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the primary barrier cited is low-paying jobs. Tied for second in terms of priority are lack of affordable child care and lack of skills in traditionally-male employments. Tied for third in terms of priority is lack of computer skills, lack of self-confidence/self-esteem, and welfare or other social assistance.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, the primary barrier cited is low-paying jobs. Two barriers tie for second place in terms of importance; those two barriers are lack of affordable childcare and lack of funds for training/education. There is another tie for third place in terms of importance; those two barriers are lack of skills in traditionally-male employments and welfare or other social assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of reliable child care</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable child care</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to care for another family member (parent)</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low paying jobs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdated skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of computer skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of self-confidence/self esteem</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funds for training/education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to training/education</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On disability pension</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On welfare or other social assistance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents noted that a number of services would aid them in searching for employment.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the most useful job search service is sponsored training. The second most useful service is self-employment support programs. Career counselling and wage subsidy programs are tied for third as the most useful services.

- When taking into consideration first, second, and third choices together, respondents chose career counselling as the most useful job search service. A close second is sponsored training. The third most useful job search service, according to respondents, is job search counselling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment support program</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored training</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search counselling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents

An interesting finding is the lack of awareness on the part of respondents regarding the availability of these services in their communities.

- Respondents differ on the issue of whether career counselling is available in their communities. There are as many respondents, one-fifth of the total, who stated that it is available in their communities as there are respondents who said it is not. More significantly, almost two-thirds of respondents do not know if it is available.

- Respondents differ on the issue of whether a self-employment program is available in their communities. Only one-tenth believe that it is available, while almost one-third believe that it is not available. More significantly, almost two-thirds do not know if it is available.

- Respondents differ on the issue of whether sponsored training is available in their communities. While one-fifth stated that it is available, almost one-third stated that it is not available. More significantly, more than one-half of respondents said it is not available.
• Respondents differ on the issue of whether job search counselling is available in their communities. Almost one-half noted that it is; one-sixth noted that it is not. More significantly, more than one-third of respondents do not know if it is available.

• Respondents differ on the issue of whether a wage subsidy program is available in their communities. Exactly one-sixth of respondents noted that it is available; almost one-quarter noted that it is not available. More significantly, almost two-thirds of respondents do not know if it is available.

Results suggest that there is a lack of awareness of services in the outlying communities and that, where such services exist, they are not sufficiently advertised and/or promoted.

Respondents were asked what training resource would be most useful in assisting them to upgrade their skills.

• When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the training resource that respondents claimed would be most useful to them is training on the job; exactly one-third of respondents chose this resource as their first choice. A close second is retraining for a new career, which was chosen by almost one-third of respondents. A distant third choice of one-fifteenth of respondents is skills upgrading.

• When taking into account respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, first preference is given to training on the job, which was chosen by almost two-thirds of respondents. Second in preference is retraining for a new career, which was chosen by almost one-half of respondents. Third in preference is subsidized retraining, which was chosen by more than one-third of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on the job</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational assistance program</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-training for new career</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills upgrading</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized apprenticeship programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular tele-class workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer-sponsored training</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized retraining</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment insurance benefits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the amount of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.
Respondents were asked what support programs and/or services would help them in obtaining employment.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, employment and/or career counselling wins by a large margin; more than one-third of respondents made this choice. Tied for second are career planning and information services; each was chosen by exactly one-sixth of respondents. A distant third choice is personal coaching, which was chosen by one-fifteenth of respondents.

- When taking into consideration respondent’s first, second, and third choices together, the clear winner is employment and/or career counseling, which was the choice of exactly two-thirds of respondents. A close second is career planning, which was the choice of just over one-half of respondents. Third in terms of preference are information services, which was the choice of exactly one-half of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal coaching</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community day care programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized day care programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and/or career counselling</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

When respondents were asked if they had considered self-employment, exactly two-thirds of the 30 respondents answered yes and almost one-third answered no.
Respondents were asked what barriers are holding them back from becoming self-employed.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices, the most prominent barrier is no financial backing, which was the choice of almost one-third of respondents. The second most prominent barrier is that they do not know where to start, a barrier that was chosen by more than one-quarter of respondents. The third most prominent barrier is no business idea, which was chosen by approximately one-eighth of respondents.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices, the most prominent barrier is no financial backing, which was chosen by exactly two-thirds of respondents. The second most prominent barriers is that they do not know where to begin, a barrier that was chosen by more than one-half of respondents. The third most prominent barrier is the need for specific training, which was chosen by exactly one-third of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Total Choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need specific training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No peer networking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence/fear</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No employment insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to technology</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(computers, fax, photocopiers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from resources in major urban centre</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of child/elder care</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No business idea</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No financial backing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current personal/family circumstances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No benefits</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents

When respondents were asked whether a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund would help them, more than one-third replied yes and exactly one-fifth replied no.
8. UNEMPLOYED WOMEN IN THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY AND IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT COMMUNITIES

Profiles of the Women

These 43 respondents comprise almost all age groups, from 15-59, but most respondents are between the ages of 30 and 59. The largest numbers of respondents, almost one-third of the total, are between the ages of 30-39. Just under one-quarter of respondents is between the ages of 40-49, and a similar number are between the ages of 50 and 59. More specifically, the number of women who are in the age category 15-19 is 1, 20-29 is 6, 30-39 is 15, 40-49 is 10, and 50-59 is 10.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents live alone or with their children; these respondents include those who are single, separated, and divorced. Approximately one-third of respondents live in couple households; these respondents include those who are married and partnered. Whether married, partnered, or single, no respondents have access to a double income. Three respondents do not receive any income. One respondent receives a pension; another receives long-term disability funds. One respondent receives a single income in the form of child support. Almost one-third of respondents are on social assistance. Three of the latter supplement that assistance with earned income. Almost one-half of the remaining respondents rely on a single income.

Almost one-third of respondents have no children; almost two-thirds do. Approximately one-half of those who have children have between one and two children. Approximately one-third have three to four children. No respondents have more than six children.

In contrast to respondents from communities in the outlying regions, respondents residing in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities are more optimistic about the economic realities in their locales. Approximately one-third of respondents perceive the economic environment within which they are seeking work as poor or very poor. Approximately two-thirds of respondents perceive the economic environment as fair to very good. One-half of all respondents regard the economic environment as fair. More specifically, 1 regards the environment as very good, 6 regard it as good, 22 regard it as fair, 11 regard it as poor, and 2 regard it as very poor.
More than two-thirds of respondents have been unemployed for less than two years. Two-thirds of the latter and approximately one-half of the totals have been unemployed for less than six months. Only approximately one-ninth of respondents have been unemployed for more than two years.

The fact that most respondents in the City and immediately adjacent communities have not been unemployed as long as many of the respondents in communities in the outlying region may explain why the former are more optimistic about economic realities than the latter. This remains true even though respondents in the City and its immediate environs cite economic factors that suggest a depressed economic environment as the main reasons they are unemployed. Only two respondents chose to stay home. Approximately one-fifth of respondents were laid off. Another one-fifth state that they are unable to find jobs. One-ninth claim that a lack of jobs in the community is the cause of their unemployment. More specifically:

- Finishing education/training was cited by 6 as a reason for their unemployment;
- Being laid off was cited by 8;
- Choosing to stay home was cited by 2;
- Childcare/Eldercare was cited by 1;
- Being between contracts was cited by 1;
- Being unable to find a job was cited by 8;
- Lack of jobs in the community was cited by 5;
- Looking for a career change was cited by 1;
- Moving issues were cited by 2;
- Medical issues were cited by 2;
- Being fired was cited by 1;
- Quitting was cited by 2; and,
- Being out of work too long was cited by 1.

Some of these respondents chose more than one reason.

Approximately two-thirds of respondents are currently seeking employment. Of the approximately one-third who are not, all are planning to return to the paid workforce. Two-thirds of the latter are planning to return within the next six months. In effect, unemployed respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities return to the paid workforce much more quickly than do those in communities in the region. One reason may be that a smaller proportion is married; another reason may be that so many are on social assistance.
Women were asked to specify the minimum hourly wage they require in order to make it worthwhile for them to return to the workplace. A few more women than those in communities in the region are willing to work for lower wages. Whereas only one-fifteenth of women in the region stated that they could afford to work for less than $11, one-seventh of respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities are willing to work for less than $11. But it is also true that, whereas most women in communities in the region feel they need $11-12, many more respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities feel they need wages higher than $11-12. This may have to do with the differences in living expense. It may have to do with the fact that women in the City and immediately adjacent communities are accustomed to knowing that wages for women in the City are higher. More specifically, respondents made the following choices:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wage Range</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$7.15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7.16</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$11-12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$13-14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15-16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$17-18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked to evaluate their job searches, somewhat less than one-quarter of respondents rated their job searches as poor or very poor. Exactly one-quarter of respondents rated their job searches as fair. One-third of respondents rated their job searches as good to excellent. Almost one-fifth of respondents rated their job searches as good.

Respondents were positive about their job skills. Only one respondent stated that she has very poor job skills. All other respondents rated their job skills as fair or better. Almost one-quarter of respondents regarded their job skills as fair. Slightly more respondents rated their job skills as good, and almost one-third of respondents viewed their job skills as very good. Approximately one-ninth of respondents rated their job skills as excellent.

One-third of respondents are seeking any jobs available. Only one-quarter or respondents are seeking employment in one job category. All the rest are willing to seek employment in a number of job categories.
When asked to cite barriers that are preventing them from attaining employment, the 43 respondents cited a number of barriers.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, respondents cite two barriers as equally significant; these are low-paying wages and outdated skills. The barrier cited as second in importance is lack of funds for training/education. The barrier cited as third in importance is the fact that they do not know where to start.

- When taking into consideration respondent’s first, second, and third choices together, the primary barrier cited is low-paying jobs. Second in significance are outdated skills. Third in significance is lack of fund for training/education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of reliable child care</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of affordable child care</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need to care for another family member (parent)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-paying jobs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdated skills</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of computer skills</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of self-confidence/self esteem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of funds for training/education</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of access to training/education</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On disability pension</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On welfare or other social assistance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE**: the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
Respondents noted that a number of services would aid them in searching for employment.

- When taking into consideration their first choices only, the most useful employment service is sponsored training. The second most useful service is wage subsidy programs. Self-employment support programs and job search counselling are tied for third as the most useful services.

- When taking into consideration their first, second, and third choices together, respondents chose sponsored training as the most useful job search service. Second is a wage subsidy program. Tied for third are career counselling and job search counselling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employment support program</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored training</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job search counselling</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents.

Respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities are more aware than respondents in communities in the outlying region of the availability of services that can aid them in their job searches.

- More than one-half of respondents are aware of career counselling services. However, at least one-third of respondents do not know if career counselling is available.

- One-third of respondents are aware of the availability of self-employment services.

- One-third of respondents are aware of the availability of sponsored training.

- Two-thirds of respondents are aware of the availability of job search counselling.

- Almost one-half of respondents are aware of the availability of wage subsidy programs.
These figures demonstrate that respondents are more aware of job search services within the City of Thunder Bay. However, given the fact that Thunder Bay is a major urban centre in which all of these services are available, awareness of the availability of these services should be more prevalent.

Respondents were asked what training resources would be most useful in assisting them to upgrade their skills.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the training resource that is considered most useful, by a wide margin, is training on the job. The second most useful training resource is re-training for a new career. The third most useful training resource is subsidized apprenticeship programs.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the training resource that is considered most useful is training on the job. The second most useful training resource is skills upgrading. The third most useful training resource is re-training for a new career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training on the job</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational assistance program</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-training for new career</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills upgrading</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized apprenticeship programs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular tele-class workshops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employer-sponsored training</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized retraining</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment insurance benefits</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
Respondents were asked what support services and/or programs would help them in obtaining employment.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the first choice is information services. The second choice is employment and/or career counselling. The third choice is personal coaching.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the first choice is career planning. The second choice is information services. The third choice is employment and/or career counselling. These three choices predominated by a wide margin over all others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring program</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal coaching</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community day care programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subsidized day care programs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment and/or career counselling</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career planning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information services</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents
When respondents were asked if they had considered self-employment, eighteen out of forty-three answered yes, and twenty-four answered no. One answered maybe.

Respondents were asked what barriers were holding them back from becoming self-employed.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first choices only, the most prominent barrier is lack of a business idea. The second most prominent barrier is no financial backing. The third most prominent barrier is the fact that respondents do not know where to start.

- When taking into consideration respondents’ first, second, and third choices together, the most prominent barrier is no financial barrier. The second most prominent barrier is the fact that respondents do not know where to start. The third most prominent barrier is the need for specific training.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>First Choice</th>
<th>Second Choice</th>
<th>Third Choice</th>
<th>Choice Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know where to start</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need specific training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No peer networking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of confidence/fear</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No employment insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited access to technology (computers, fax, photocopiers)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from resources in major urban centre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of child/elder care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No business idea</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>Current personal/family circumstances</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>No benefits</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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</table>

**NOTE** the numbers reflect the number of times the options were chosen, not necessarily the number of respondents

When respondents were asked whether a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund would help them, more than one-half replied yes and less than one-third replied no.
9. FOCUS GROUP REPORT

The purpose of this focus group report is to provide an overview and analysis of the facilitated focus groups. To ensure this is accomplished, the report is divided into four parts. The first identifies the approach and significance of the focus groups. The second contains descriptions of the individual communities in which the focus groups were facilitated; these descriptions are included in order to ensure that the unique realities of each community are acknowledged. The third part of this report identifies overall focus group highlights, and the fourth part concludes with the recommendations suggested by participants in the different focus groups.

Part One

Approach

Site selection was based on the identification of and connection to a Key Community Contact willing to partner with the Facilitator for the purpose of organizing and promoting a focus group in her community. The focus groups ran an average of two hours, during which time discussion was guided by a pre-established set of questions. Although the questions offered a guide, each focus group was different because its participants focussed very specifically on the realities of the community in which they were being hosted.

Significance

The participants in the NOW focus groups provide valuable contributions to this research. The open discussion and guided questions encouraged the women to discuss openly the challenges they face in maintaining, seeking, and/or upgrading their training and in accessing employment and/or self-employment opportunities. The dialogue helped the women to elucidate their realities and, in the process, to receive validation in and acknowledgment of their current struggles to attain and/or maintain their financial independence. In addition, the focus groups have served as the sources of other important initiatives.

Four of the five focus groups were held in the outlying region. This is a significant factor for a number of reasons. Communities in the same region are often “lumped” together as similar entities, yet each community has its own unique issues, barriers, and realities. The focus groups provided occasions on which the unique characteristics of the host communities could be acknowledged. In addition, the focus groups offered opportunities for participants in other communities in the outlying region to voice work together in
identifying common barriers and challenges and in providing suggestions to deal with them. The outlying communities that hosted the focus groups were very excited to have the opportunity to let their voices be heard, and they now look forward to enjoying the fruits of those collaborations in the form of new services and programs.

**Part Two**

**Unique Community Highlights**

**Nipigon**

The biggest advantage, and disadvantage, of living in Nipigon is its location. Only 121 kilometers from Thunder Bay, the residents of Nipigon sit in a “catch 22” for a number of reasons. Because Nipigon is relatively close to the City of Thunder Bay, Nipigon residents are able to travel a relatively short distance to access programs, services, and opportunities in that city; this fact makes access to such resources easier for them than for residents of other communities that are more distant from Thunder Bay. However, this potential access does not solve other problems faced by residents of Nipigon. First, not all residents have the means or the ability to travel to Thunder Bay, a factor that limits their access to potential opportunities and supports. Secondly, because so many people travel to Thunder Bay for services, programs, and other related ventures, there is considerable ‘out shopping’; as a result, residents’ potential business opportunities in Nipigon are reduced because the small local market has lost patrons. This ultimately impacts on the availability of local resources. This is the “Catch 22” the residents of Nipigon face.

**Manitouwadge**

Manitouwadge is 54 kilometers from highway 17. It is approximately 4 hours’ travelling time each way to Thunder Bay and Sault Ste Marie. Manitouwadge is, therefore, the community within the District of Thunder Bay that is furthest from a major centre. This makes isolation a significant barrier to access of support services and programs for the residents of Manitouwadge.

The two major industries, mining and logging, are declining. The mine is forecast to shut down within the next year and a half to two years. The community faces potential economic ruin as a result of out-migration, increased unemployment rates, and a decreased community economic base. There have been a number of layoffs, business closures, and downsizings and a concomitant increase in stress within families, businesses, organizations, clubs, industries, and the community as a whole.
Manitouwadge is hard to get to, and from, in the winter. Therefore, winter, which averages 7 to 8 months a year, provides a definite limiting factor on the availability of services and programs, in that services and programs are less likely to be offered in the community because those offering such resources have difficulty getting into Manitouwadge and residents have difficulty getting out of Manitouwadge to access programs, resources, and/or training in larger centres.

The cost of living in Manitouwadge is high. The residents pay a significant amount for municipal taxes, food costs are high because of transportation costs, and gas prices are also high. In addition, geographical location dictates that Manitouwadge residents have access to dial up Internet services only. This further limits communication in general and E-commerce in particular.

Longlac

During the focus group discussion in Longlac, a number of challenges were identified for that specific area. There have been a number of programs, services, and initiatives designed to reach women in Longlac; however, there seems to be some apprehension on the part of women about accessing these resources. In addition, although Longlac and Geraldton are relatively close geographically, the residents of one community do not seem to use the services offered in the other; often, the residents of one community are not even aware of the resources offered in the other. An additional barrier for some women is language. There is a high Franco-Ontario population in the Longlac area; those women who are not bilingual may not have access to all available opportunities for employment.

White River

White River is faced with the unique challenge of being on the borders of both the District of Thunder Bay and the District of Sault Ste. Marie (Algoma). That poses problems of jurisdiction. For example, for some purposes, such as HRSDC programs, the community falls within the Sault Ste. Marie district, whereas for other purposes, such as voting, the community falls within the Thunder Bay district. This creates confusion, frustration, and inconsistency. Although it is not under the jurisdiction of the local board, it has been included because its residents face many of the same challenges as residents in communities that are under the jurisdiction of the NSTB/CSFN.
Many specialized training programs, such as GED and upgrading, have been made available to the residents of White River, but supports, training, and resources for those who are or seek to be self-employed are lacking. White River is a small community; as a result, like so many other communities in the outlying region, it gets lumped together with other communities for programming. Yet, there are no travel subsidies or other travel supports for residents who want to travel to other communities in order to access different or additional services.

The City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities

The City of Thunder Bay is the urban centre of Northwestern Ontario. It was, however, interesting to find Thunder Bay focus group participants identify very similar barriers, obstacles, and challenges to those identified by participants in the outlying communities. The differences are ones of scale, rather than substance.

In effect, the realities of a small community and an urban centre are very different; yet, the residents of both struggle with similar issues. Isolation, for example, means a very different thing to someone living in Manitouwadge than to someone living in Thunder Bay; however, it is a significant issue for both. For example, women in the City of Thunder Bay have access to numerous programs and services; however, accessing those resources may be residents’ biggest challenge, due to lack of transportation or difficulty in using the transit system with children. Similarly, whereas women in the smaller communities do not have to travel far to access programs within their communities, there are very few programs within the communities to access. As a result, women in smaller communities are expected to travel to the larger urban centers or surrounding communities; however, many do not have the means to get there. In contrast, whereas Thunder Bay residents have access to significantly more programs, services and supports, many do not know about them; hence, they often do not use them. In addition, because available resources and the agencies designated to provide access to those resources are spread throughout the city, many women do not have the means and/or the time, due to child/family care issues, money, or other factors, to go from one to the other.
Part Three

Overall Focus Group Highlights

MAJOR CHALLENGES

Lack of Awareness

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

Focus group participants pointed out that residents must be made more aware of the programs and services that are available, the processes by which to access them, and the ways in which to start.

They added that awareness about employment and self-employment ‘possibilities’ must be promoted.

Distance

Outlying Communities in the Region

Outlying communities are often forgotten in the service provision of many programs, according to focus group participants. The City of Thunder Bay often receives the funding to provide services and programs for the City and the outlying communities; yet, there is a high inconsistency for delivery to the outlying communities.

In addition, it was noted that when money is provided for all of the communities within the District of Thunder Bay, the funding often does not provide sufficient monies for the extra travel expenses required to send providers to each community. Participants recommended that when services are offered to the region, budgets should ensure adequate funding for consistent service. Population disparity is a significant issue.

Travel to the larger centers to access support programs, services and/or training opportunities is often difficult for women in the outlying communities, focus group participants claimed. Cost is a large component, as there may be hotel, gas, and food expenses, and additional fees. Transportation is an issue in one-vehicle households. Transportation in inclement weather is also an issue. Given that shift work is the reality for the majority of residents in the outlying communities and given that women are predominantly the primary care-givers, child and elder care may be a challenge. Given the length of time it takes to travel to and from one’s destination in order to access programs or services, time is another significant issue.
City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities

Participants in the focus group held in Thunder Bay noted that women in Thunder Bay face similar issues, only on a different scale. If a woman wants to apply for the Self Employment Benefit program, for example, she will have to visit agencies in various different locations within the city in order to gain access.

Challenges include:

• Cost: for women with children, it may involve a sitter and transportation.
• Time: women with school-aged children have to arrange appointments during school hours.

Program Criteria

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

Focus group participants pointed out that the application processes of existing programs do not recognize women’s realities. Multiple trips result in long waiting periods and additional expenses.

In addition, they argued that when family income is taken into consideration, women may be ineligible for training subsidies and other supports, despite the fact that these women may not have access to their families’ funds. This is a common challenge for women living in resource-based communities because spouses in these communities may have access to higher wages.

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) provides a number of job creation programs; however, it was stated by focus group participants that only those women who have received Employment Insurance (EI) or parental benefits may access such programs. Since there are fewer jobs available in outlying communities, many unemployed women may not work enough hours to qualify for these benefits. In addition, focus group participants claimed that eligibility for youth support programming is limited to women under the age of 30. As a result, women over the age of 30 and those who have not received sufficient EI benefits are ineligible for many training and employment programs.
Technology

Outlying Communities in the Region

Individuals’ access to technology differs, depending on the community. As a result, according to focus group participants, those individuals who only have access to ‘dial-up’ Internet services face significant challenges when attempting to access on-line training and information technology opportunities.

Soft Skills

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

Focus group participants in both the City of Thunder Bay and outlying communities identified lack of self-confidence and self-esteem and lack of personal development and growth as significant factors for women who wish to become self-sufficient.

Lack of Jobs

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

Most available jobs, especially in outlying communities in the region, are low-paying and offer few opportunities for advancement, according to focus group participants. As a result, after paying for child care, many women are paying to work.

The lack of available jobs discourages women from upgrading their skills.

In addition, participants stressed that any available jobs are classified as ‘part time’ or ‘temporary’, but the women in these jobs often work full-time hours. Such irregular employment also impacts eligibility for loans for mortgages, vehicles, or higher education.

Child Care

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

Since communities in the region rarely have public child care facilities, individuals do not qualify for the government child care subsidies. Focus group participants complained that some home-based care providers would not provide receipts.
Focus group participants in the City of Thunder Bay complained that child care subsidies are difficult to access. The prevalence of shift work in most outlying communities makes it difficult to find suitable child care to cover both working parents.

**Outlying Communities in the Region**

Focus group participants also pointed out that smaller employers in the region are reluctant to train apprentices, since traditionally they have lost many they have trained to larger resource-based industries.

Many women are discouraged from apprenticing because they are unable to relocate to distant communities for extended periods of time in order to fulfill the practical on-the-job component of the apprenticeship program.

**Wage Equality**

**City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region**

Pay equity is a constant issue because women receive substantially lower wages than their male counterparts. Focus group participants complained that the costs of living are higher as delivery distances increase to more remote locations. However, wages may not be higher.

**Self-Employment Benefit Programs**

**Outlying Communities in the Region**

Focus group participants verified that very few people are aware of the existence of the Self-Employment Benefit program and of the benefits they provide.

The application process is frustrating and difficult. No-one seems to know how to access the program. This means it takes a substantial amount of time to get started. Participants also related concerns about the:

- lack of educational support, direction, and guidance within the entire process, once the participant finally begins;
- lack of evaluation or follow-up procedures for the program; and
- lack of support, causing many people to feel that they were set up to fail.
City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities

Similar to focus group participants in the outlying communities, City of Thunder Bay participants verified that very few people are aware of the existence of the Self-Employment Benefit program and of the benefits the program provides.

Other Identified Needs:

Outlying Communities in the Region:

The focus group participants suggested:
- Super host training – tourism-based training for front-line staff
- Training the trainer for super host/hospitality
- Focussing on businesses dealing with tourism and cultural sensitivity
- Convincing employers on the need and value for super host training
- Establishing a Hand-in-Hand festival (a festival to create awareness of all the services available) and encouraging them to join with the festivals/trade shows that are already scheduled in their communities.
- Opening Self-Help Offices in each community
- Supporting Women’s drop-in resource centers in each community
- Bringing “training wheels” services to outlying communities
- Making the procedures for access to programs ‘regional-friendly’
- Partnering with colleges/universities to provide a wider variety of workshops and programs in the region

City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities and Outlying Communities in the Region

The focus group participants suggested:

- Making apprentice programs more ‘women-focused’ and ‘regional-friendly’
- Funding organizations with adequate travel budgets in order to ensure that regional communities receive regular and consistent service delivery
- Providing job training opportunities for women over 30 without restrictions
- Supporting wage and training subsidies
- Developing a women-centred, centrally-located ‘one stop shop’ as a full-service resource centre and self-help office, offering program supports, application forms, networking opportunities, training resources, and self-employment or employment preparation programs.
- Helping women to:
  o learn how to partner and to collaborate with other women;
  o learn to better play the game in a “man’s” world; and
  o learn “why women?”.

Part Four

Recommendations

The following are recommendations that were identified by focus group participants:

**Initiate an Awareness and Training Program on Wheels**

- One of the most persistent questions in all the focus groups was “what is available to us?” Participants recommended that organizations that are funded to provide support services and programs to the region should partner in order to ensure the regional communities receive consistent and comprehensive program delivery.

**Encourage more research into “virtual career and self-employment” opportunities**

- Because the possibilities of the Internet are growing daily, there are thousands of new career options that women in Northwestern Ontario can consider. Because women in the region face high unemployment rates, it was recommended that they consider looking outside the community into the possibilities provided by the ‘virtual world’

**Set up a “one-stop shop” location**

- It was recommended that all the main support organizations should be located in one central place, so that women can access all services in one visit.

**Start a regional mentoring program**

- Thunder Bay Community Mentoring Program, initiated by PARO, is a mentoring program that has been quite successful. Women in the region acknowledge feeling isolated and unsupported in their battles to attain economic independence. A mentoring program would assist in providing support, motivation, encouragement, advice, direction, and potential networking opportunities. A regional mentoring program could help connect women with women and create a whole new world of opportunities and possibilities.
Develop family care programs

- Women consistently identified both child and elder care as a constant challenge. It is obvious that the child care subsidies are not working and that elder care is becoming a growing reality for many women. A Family Care program that is all-encompassing and accessible to all should be developed.

Lobby to create special categories for women who do not meet the present eligibility criteria for job creation, self-employment, and training subsidies

- New programs that focus on women who are over 30 years of age and who are EI ineligible should be created.
- Training subsidies should be made available to women, regardless of their partners’ or parents’ incomes.

Help to create Women’s Resource Centers in outlying communities

- Women in the outlying communities do not have places to go for support, networking, personal development, or information. A Women’s Resource Centre placed strategically in the region would provide a permanent location for support services and programs. This centre could be used as a training centre and/or awareness outreach centre, and it could provide women with support and encouragement to continue their quests for financial independence.

Create partnerships and referral service agreements

- Organizations with similar mandates should partner. Where there is no cooperation among organizations, there is confusion and frustration among clients and the potential duplication of services. It is essential for organizations to partner in order to ensure awareness of programs and services, to provide referrals, and to guarantee cooperative service delivery.

Develop women-centred apprenticeship programs

- Apprenticeship programs will not succeed for women, unless they take into consider women’s care-giving responsibilities. Travelling to other communities for extended durations of time for training is not an option for many women.
- Women want to have a full range of choices in apprenticeship programs.
- It is essential that there be sufficient incentives for employers to take on women apprentices.
- Partnerships with local high schools, in order to provide a training component, should be encouraged.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

Reach women at younger ages

- Young girls in high school should learn the skills required to attain financial independence as early as possible.
- A curriculum or program that introduces them to a wide range of career options should be developed.
- Goal setting, self-esteem building, and personal development should be encouraged at an early age.
- A conference for young girls and women should be organized; speakers from Words on Work (WOW), a Women’s Speakers Bureau, that promotes women role models to provide students with a road map and practical strategies on how to plan and achieve their professional and personal goals, could be utilized.
10. KEY INTERVIEWS

The key interviewees reinforced a number of important themes.

Chief among them is almost universal awareness of the depressed economy.

- Lucy Lehoux and Marilyn Scobie, who work at Job Connect in Marathon, stressed the very poor state of the economy, especially in the communities in outlying regions. The general dependence of resource-based economies on the demands for natural products makes these economies very vulnerable to the slightest economic changes. Recent mine closures are an example of such economic changes. Job creation is therefore important. Job creation programs have very narrow restrictions; these restrictions allow many women to fall through the cracks.

- Emily Scott, a member of the Thunder Bay Multicultural Association and a board member of NSTB/CFNS

- , agreed that there are not enough jobs and that the lack of jobs is a major barrier for women. In addition, youth out-migration, caused by the lack of jobs, is further depressing the economy. Increased American ownership means that all profits are going south. She suggested that individuals, organizations, and government agencies begin to think about employment in new ways.

- Susie Collin, who works at the Manitowadge Resource Centre, pointed out that mine closures mean less office jobs for women. She also stressed the debilitating impact of out-migration. The jobs that are available pay low wages. In contrast, jobs that pay high wages, such as municipal jobs, have a very low turn-over of personnel. Another problem in a depressed economy is lack of opportunities for advancement. In addition, job creation programs offered by HRSDC often impose restrictions. For example, youth training subsidies and internships exclude those over thirty and those who are not on employment insurance.

- LaVonne Charette, Needs Assessment Officer at Training Wheels, confirmed that people in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities are also finding it increasingly difficult to find employment. The over 500 layoffs at Bombardier in December 2003 is a prime example. These individuals then flood the employment market and make it even more difficult for others to find employment.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report  
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• Evelina Pan, Thunder Bay District Labour Council member and librarian in a local school, pointed out that the City of Thunder Bay is very adversely affected by globalization. All business decisions are made on the basis of profits; none are based on human needs. Collective agreements are not being honoured.

• Angie Petrie, Economic Development Officer, Lake Helen First Nation, noted the impact of the economy on specific categories of worker. Employed workers, for example, have available to them lots of contract work, but there is no longer any security and there are no opportunities for advancement. Unemployed workers are confronted by a lack of jobs in general, a lack of secure jobs in particular, and low-paying jobs.

• Sherry Hogan, A/District Manager, Apprenticeship Client Services, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, noted that the impact of a depressed economy on access to apprenticeships lies in the demand. Apprenticeship is demand driven and the training takes place on the job; as a result, if there is no demand in this area, there is no way to become qualified in some trade/skilled occupations.

Another common theme is the need to increase awareness among women.

• Evelina Pan stressed that women must be made aware of their options. This means that program and service providers must create awareness among themselves by communicating more often and more effectively. She added that women must be aware of the fact that they deserve to be equal to men.

• Lucy Lehoux and Marilyn Scobie reiterated that awareness is an enormous issue for women. Women lack knowledge regarding their rights in terms of divorce, child care, child support possibilities, and access to employment support programs and employment options in general. Lack of awareness leads to fear. To combat fear, the teaching of soft skills is very important. Women need information services, such as the now defunct Marathon Women’s Information Network (WIN). Lack of awareness regarding what is available is an enormous barrier.

• Susie Collin noted that lack of awareness regarding what is available in terms of employment opportunities erects enormous barriers to accessing training and opportunities.
Sherry Hogan pointed out the need to make girls and women more aware of apprenticeship possibilities in general and of apprenticeship programs in traditionally-male jobs in particular. Lack of awareness creates barriers to training.

LaVonne Charette noted that there are many employment resources available for women in the City of Thunder Bay, but the problem lies in information services. Information about those resources must get out to women more effectively.

Another common theme is funding for and access to training and education.

Evelina Pan stressed the need for continuous access to training because the problems of staying current are magnified by the fact that change occurs so quickly these days.

Angie Petrie noted that, although there has been training in the community, it has not been geared to women. HRSDC offers training programs, but age requirements and the stipulation that clients be EI eligible imposes barriers for women over thirty and for residents not on EI.

Lucy Lehoux and Marilyn Scobie pointed out that funding for training is difficult to access. They added that more training personnel should be brought into outlying communities and that there should be courses on the use of computers and information technologies, book-keeping, marketing, training staff, human relations, customer service, time management, labour law, legalities, and entrepreneurship. In addition, training should be made easier to access for mothers in the outlying region; these women are usually bound to their communities by their young children. Organizations could partner with schools for the purpose of training, and opportunities for electronic learning could be provided. In addition, more employer incentives to take on apprentices could be created.

Susie Collin argued that training options are very limited. Funding is problematic because there are numerous restrictions, including the fact that women whose husbands make too much money, according to stringent criteria, are unable to access sufficient funding.
Laura Lesprance, Economic Development Officer, Rocky Bay First Nation, suggested the establishment of training programs in communication skills, both oral and written, in information technologies, and in business management. She argued that full-time and part-time training counsellors are needed in outlying communities because outside programs are not providing consistent services and the locations of the communities make it difficult to maintain consistent programs. In effect, outlying communities lack training resource people.

LaVonne Charette stated that among the greatest barriers women face in gaining employment are lack of skills, lack of education, and lack of experience. In addition, women need skills in economic areas that are in demand.

Sherry Hogan emphasized the advantages of accessing apprenticeship training; because training takes place on the job, you earn as you learn, and part of the schooling is financed; however, many women are not aware of this advantage. She also emphasized the need to change perceptions about the value of apprenticeship training to girls and women.

**Another common issue is women’s care work**

Laura Lesprance stated that she regrets the fact that there is no reliable child care system.

LaVonne Charette pointed out that all services for women must guarantee that there are safe places for their children. At present, there are no programs in place to care for children while their mothers are in training.

Evelina Pan also noted the importance of integrating child care and family care into all services and programs for women.

Susie Collin noted that she regrets the fact that restrictions are imposed by the limited hours in nursery schools. She noted that there is too much red tape in establishing nursery schools.

**Still another common theme is women’s access to capital.**

Emily Scott stated that women must have access to loans and other financial supports. She also noted that peer lending circles and similar programs are excellent.

Susie Collin stressed the fact that self-employed women have no access to capital; financial supports must be available.
11. CONCLUSIONS

The 24 self-employed women in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities have relatively positive outlooks about the economic realities in the City. In addition, many of them contribute to the economy by employing staff. They do, however, work very long hours, even though two-thirds of them claim that their businesses do not provide them with enough income to make them financially independent. In addition, their circumstances confirm the opinions of those who contend that women are disadvantaged by the ‘digital divide’; for example, although three-quarters of these women have websites for their businesses, two-fifths do not. Their primary reasons for not having a website include the perception they do not need one and the expense of setting up and maintaining it.

Despite the lack of awareness on the part of some self-employed women regarding the benefits of having a website, four-fifths of these respondents do want to expand their businesses. The primary reasons they have not already done so include lack of finances, current personal/family circumstances, and lack of mentoring.

The kinds of business and/or support services these self-employed women claim would aid their businesses include, in order of priority, regional networking, marketing/advertising expertise, a mentoring program, information on e-commerce, business/personal coaching, and access to loan funds.

The kinds of training support services and programs they claim would aid their businesses include, in order of priority, Internet and computer training, peer networking, training subsidies, education about entrepreneurship, assertiveness training, and negotiation training.

In contrast to the self-employed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, the 15 self-employed women respondents in outlying communities perceive economic realities in their communities to be grim. Like women in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities, they contribute to their communities by employing staff, but they also work very long hours, and the majority, two-thirds of the total, do not make enough income from their businesses to be financially independent. Self-employed women in outlying communities are even less aware of the benefits of having a business website than women in the City and its environs. Reasons cited include, in order of priority, the fact that the women perceive they do not need one, lack of time, and lack of computer training.

However, one-half of these women do want to expand their businesses. The barriers to expanding their businesses include, in order of priority, geographic isolation, personal/family circumstances, lack of adequate child/elder care, lack of training/education, and lack of mentoring.
The business and/or support services these women say they need to aid their businesses include, in order of priority, access to loan funds, money management advice, strategic planning advice, and good child/elder care.

The training support services and/or programs these women say they need include conflict resolution training, Internet and computer training, train subsidies, education about entrepreneurship, and management training.

The 107 employed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities have a relatively positive perception of the economic realities of their communities. Most are satisfied with their jobs and value their work because it gives them financial independence, a sense of accomplishment, and personal fulfillment. They say their job satisfaction would improve with higher pay, health benefits, training subsidies, and opportunities for advancement.

They perceive the main barriers for working women to be low-paying jobs, access to adequate child/elder care, lack of self-confidence/self-esteem, and lack of funds for training.

Training resources they find valuable include training on the job, educational assistance programs, skills upgrading, and funding for skills training.

Their choice of other employment services include sponsored training, self-employment support programs, career counselling, job search counselling, and wage subsidy programs. Although these employment services are available in Thunder Bay, many of these women, who live in the City of Thunder Bay and its environs, are not aware that these services exist. This may be because they have not needed these services; it may also be the case that these services are not well advertised.

Approximately one-half of these women have considered self-employment as an employment option. The barriers they listed as reasons they have not pursued this option include no financial backing, lack of self-confidence/fear, the fact that they do not know where to start, and personal/family circumstances.

The 53 employed women respondents in outlying communities in the region perceive the economic realities in their communities to be grim. However, they do express positive job satisfaction; they feel their work enables them to make a contribution, provides them with financial independence and personal fulfillment, and allows for personal development and opportunities to socialize. They consider the main barriers facing working women to be low-paying jobs, lack of access to child/elder care, lack of access to training, and lack of funds for education/training.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
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The training resources they feel would be most useful to them are educational assistance programs, on-the-job training, skills upgrading, and funding for skills training. The employment services from which they feel they would derive the most benefits include sponsored training, self-employment support programs, and career counselling. Very few respondents know whether these services are available to them.

Three-quarters of these women have considered self-employment as an employment option. However, they concede that the main barriers preventing them from pursuing self-employment are no financial backing, the fact that they do not know where to start, the need for specific training, the lack of a business idea, and personal/family circumstances.

**Most of the 43 unemployed women respondents in the City of Thunder Bay and immediately adjacent communities perceive the economic realities in the City as positive.** They also rate their own job search skills and job skills as fair or as better than fair.

They consider the barriers to employment to be low-paying wages, outdated skills, lack of funds for training/education, and not knowing where to start. The employment services they consider useful for their job searches include sponsored training, wage subsidies, job search counselling, and self-employment support programs. Most respondents did not know whether or not these employment services are available in the City.

The training resources they view as most useful for the purpose of upgrading their skills include training on the job (by a large margin), retraining for a new career, subsidized apprenticeship programs, and skills upgrading. The support services they consider the most helpful include information services, employment and/or career counselling, personal coaching, and career counselling.

Eighteen of the forty-three respondents said they had considered self-employment as an employment option. The barriers that prevented them from pursuing this goal include lack of a business plan, no financial backing, the fact that they did not know where to start, and the need for specific training.

More than one-half of these unemployed women asserted that a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund could help them.

**The 30 unemployed women respondents in outlying communities perceive the economic realities in their communities to be poor or very poor.** They recognize the importance of the unfavourable job market as a major factor in their unemployment.
Almost all are eager to return to the paid workforce in a short period of time. They rate their own job search skills and job skills highly. They consider the barriers women face in finding work to be low-paying jobs, lack of affordable child care, lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs, lack of computer skills, lack of self-confidence/fear, welfare or other social assistance, and lack of funding for training/education.

These respondents considered the services that would best aid them in attaining employment to be sponsored training, self-employment support programs, career counselling, wage subsidy programs, and job search counselling.

They considered the best training resources to aid them in attaining employment to be training on the job, retraining for a new career, and, as distant third and fourth choices, subsidized training.

In terms of support programs and/or services to help them attain employment, they chose employment and/or career counselling (by a wide margin), career planning, information services, and personal coaching (a distant third).

Two-thirds of these women had considered self-employment as an employment option. However, they considered the barriers that prevented them from pursuing this option to be no financial backing, the fact that they did not know where to start, no business idea, and the need for specific training.

One-third of respondents believed that a Women’s Community Loan Fund could help them.

The results of the Focus Groups and the Key Interviews reinforced the Survey Results.

With the spectre of worsening employment opportunities and wage inequality for women in the City of Thunder Bay and the outlying communities in the region, the concerns exposed by the women in this report must be acknowledged and acted upon. “When women are more economically independent, it reflects on other areas of their lives. They are less likely to tolerate violence and abuse, more likely to consider their skill levels, and more likely to pursue their dreams”.16

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APPENDIX A

Northern Opportunities for Women
Market Survey
Self-Employed Women in Communities
in the Outlying Region

PARO and North Superior Training Board have partnered in order to conduct a research project entitled Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW): An Innovative Skill Development Program. The information gathered in the research and development stage of NOW will assist in creating programs that offer women services to help them improve their employment situation and become financially independent. This will not be possible without your expertise and feedback.

We would appreciate your suggestions, comments, and input. Thank you in advance for your time, honesty, and feedback.

* Response totals to each question are indicated in brackets.

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<tr>
<td>(2) Red Rock</td>
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<td>Geraldton</td>
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<td>Hurkett</td>
<td>(2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Longlac</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Manitouwadge</td>
<td>(6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marathon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort William First Nation</td>
<td>(1) Pic Mober First Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Helen First Nation</td>
<td>Pic River First Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schreiber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrace Bay</td>
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<td>Thunder Bay</td>
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<td>White River</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

2. In your opinion, how would you describe your community’s economic reality in terms of “self-employment” opportunities for women? Please circle one number only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Reality</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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<td>Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How long have you been self-employed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment Duration</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 6 months to 1 year</td>
<td>(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) 1-2 years</td>
<td>(1) 9-10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) 3-4 years</td>
<td>(2) 11-15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) 5-6 years</td>
<td>(2) 16-20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1)morer than 20 years</td>
<td>(1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

4. What type of business do you operate?

(1) Retail sales
(3) Beauty (hairdresser, masseuse, manicurist)
(1) Personal care (child/elder)
(3) Food and/or beverages
(3) Events planning (wedding planner, festival planner)
(3) Arts and crafts (painter, potter, sewer, jeweller, sculptor)
(1) Accommodation
(1) Literary (writer, poet, editor, proofreader, publisher, researcher)
(1) Education field
(1) Computer-based (website design, computer graphics)
(1) Health care field
(1) Pet business (grooming, supplies)
(1) Management/Business
(1) Tourism/Recreation/Amusement
(1) Financial/Accounting
(1) Trades (construction, carpentry, welding, millwright)
(1) Market/Advertising
(1) Housekeeping/Home Maintenance
(1) Blank
(3) Other: Consulting

Accounting & Retail Sales
Food/beverages & Housekeeping\home maintenance

5. Is your business registered as a sole proprietorship?

(10) Yes
(5) No

6. Is your business a partnership?

(2) Yes
(13) No

7. If it is a partnership, what is your percentage of ownership?

1%-25%  
(1) 51-75%  
(1) 26%-50%  
76%-99%

8. Is your business incorporated?

(3) Yes
(12) No

9. If it is incorporated, what is your percentage of ownership?

1%-25%  
(2) 26%-50%  
51%-75%  
(1) 75%-99%

10. Is your business home-based?

(8) Yes
(6) No
(1) Other: 1 person has 2 businesses; 1 is home-based, but one is not

11. How many hours a week do you devote to your business?

(2) 1-20  
(3) 45-60
(2) 21-34  
(5) more than 60
(3) 35-44
12. Do you have anyone working for you?

   (7) Yes
   (8) No

13. If you have others working for you, how many?

   (2) 1-2
   (1) 3-4
   (4) 5-6
   7-8
   9-10
   more than 10

14. If you have others working for you, are they

   (1) Unpaid family labour
   Full time
   (4) Part time
   Contract
   (2) A combination of full time, part time, and/or contract

15. Do you have a website?

   (1) Yes – 1
   (13) No - 13
   (1) Other: 1 person has a website for one business, but not the other

16. If not, what is the main reason you do not have a website? FIRST CHOICE

   (2) No access to high-speed Internet
   (1) Expense of setting it up
   (2) Lack of computer training
   Expense of maintaining it
   (4) Fear of the new technology
   (5) Don’t need it
   (3) No time
   (2) Other: being designed
   (1) No answer

17. If there is a second important reason, listed above, why you don’t have a website, what is it? SECOND CHOICE

   No access to high-speed Internet
   (1) Expense of setting it up
   (1) Lack of computer training
   (1) Expense of maintaining it
   Fear of the new technology
   Don’t need it
   No time
   (12) Other: 12 had no second choice

18. If there is a third important reason, listed above, why you don’t have a website, what is it? THIRD CHOICE

   No access to high-speed Internet
   (2) Expense of setting it up
   Lack of computer training
   Expense of maintaining it
   Fear of the new technology
   Don’t need it
   No time
   (12) Other: 12 had no third choices
19. Does your business currently provide you with enough income to allow you to be financially independent?

- (5) Yes
- (9) No
- (1) Other: no answer

20. Are you interested in expanding your business?

- (9) Yes
- (5) No
- (1) Other: 1 person wants to expand 1 business, but not the other

21. What is the **one main** barrier preventing you from expanding your business? **FIRST CHOICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal/family challenges</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adequate child/elder care</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of training/education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to computer/Internet technology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Internet service</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperience in financial management</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Also working elsewhere</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of finances</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No access to computer/Internet technology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate Internet service</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexperience in financial management</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic isolation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (1) Big enough</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Not enough business</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Lack of available building space</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. If there are other barriers that prevent you from expanding your business, what is the **second** most important barrier? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. **SECOND CHOICE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal/family challenges</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Geographic isolation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to loan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (8) No answer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Population</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Living in only one population</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
23. If there are other barriers that prevent you from expanding your business, what is the third most important barrier? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. THIRD CHOICE

(1) Personal/family challenges
   Also working elsewhere
   Lack of adequate child/elder care
   Lack of training/education
   No access to computer/Internet technology
   Inadequate Internet service
   Inexperience in financial management
   Geographic isolation
   (12) Other: No answer

24. What is the one main business support service and/or program that would be the most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business? FIRST CHOICE

(3) Good child/elder care
   Mentoring program
   (1) Human resources (staffing) information
   Marketing/advertising expertise
   Information about commerce over the Internet
   (1) Importing/exporting advice
   (2) Benefit packages (eg. Health)
   (1) Employment insurance benefits
   (2) Other: (1) Money for more training
   (1) No answer

25. What is the second most useful business support service and/or program that would help you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 24. SECOND CHOICE

   Good child/elder care
   (1) Legal expertise
   (1) Mentoring program
   Human resources (staffing) information
   Regional networking
   Access to loan funds
   (2) Marketing/advertising expertise
   Strategic planning advice
   Information about commerce over the Internet
   Information about taxes
   Importing/exporting advice
   Money management advice
   Benefit packages (eg. Health)
   (1) Business/personal coaching
   Employment insurance benefits
   (10)
   Other: (1) Maternity leave opportunities to 25
   (9) No answer
26. What is the third most useful business support service and/or program that would help you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 24. THIRD CHOICE

- Good child/elder care
- Mentoring program
- Human resources (staffing) information
- Marketing/advertising expertise
- Information about commerce over the Internet
- Importing/exporting advice
- Benefit packages (eg. Health)
- Employment insurance benefits
- Access to loan funds
- Strategic planning advice
- Information about taxes
- Money management advice
- Business/personal coaching

27. What is the one main training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business? FIRST CHOICE

- Education about entrepreneurship
- Assertiveness training
- Conflict resolution training
- Legal issues training
- Peer networking
- Other: whole sales

28. What is the second most useful training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 27. SECOND CHOICE

- Education about entrepreneurship
- Assertiveness training
- Conflict resolution training
- Legal issues training
- Peer networking
- Other: whole sales

29. What is the third most useful training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 27. THIRD CHOICE

- Education about entrepreneurship
- Assertiveness training
- Conflict resolution training
- Legal issues training
- Peer networking
- Other: whole sales

30. What best describes your age category?

- 15-19
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- No answer
31. What is your current marital status?

- Single
- Separated
- Partnered
- Married
- Divorced
- No answer

32. How many children do you have?

- None
- 1-2
- 3-4
- More than 6
- 5-6
- No answer

33. What are the ages of your children? _____  ____  ____  ____  ____  ____

34. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances?

- Single income
- Pension
- Double income
- Social assistance
- No answer

35. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Grade school
- High school
- College
- University
- Professional training or apprenticeship
- No answer

36. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?

- Aboriginal
- Metis
- Latin American
- African
- Middle Eastern
- East Asian
- Mixed Heritage
- South Asian
- No answer

37. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?

- Newspapers
- Flyers
- Phone
- E-mail
- Website
- Notices in public places
- No answer
38. Comments:
- Was already part of PARO women’s circle
- Computer and Internet training would certainly be beneficial
- I came up here with the promise of a challenge which suited my skills. I was let down. Now it is hard to go back to
- Ottawa after such a big move, but I don’t know what to do.
- During summer months, July and August, is the only time I have free time for any training

39. Would having access to a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund help you?

   (4) Yes  (3) No  (1) Maybe

40. How?
- I don’t know much about it
- It would allow me to expand my education in my field and allow me to use local students to train and for support
- Staff
- Be able to purchase and expand our new products
- Hard to find funding
- I need to bring in more inventory as our supplies take three to five weeks

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Funding provided by the Government of Ontario

Ontario

The views expressed in these materials do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Women’s Directorate.
APPENDIX B

Northern Opportunities for Women
Market Survey
Self-Employed Women in the City of Thunder Bay
and Immediately Adjacent Communities

PARO and North Superior Training Board have partnered in order to conduct a research project entitled *Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW): An Innovative Skill Development Program*. The information gathered in the research and development stage of NOW will assist in creating programs that offer women services to help them improve their employment situation and become financially independent. This will not be possible without your expertise and feedback.

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<td>(24) Thunder Bay</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other: ____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2. In your opinion, how would you describe your community’s economic reality in terms of “self-employment” opportunities for women? Please circle one number only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
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</table>

3. How long have you been self-employed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(2) Less</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>months to</td>
<td>(1) 7-8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) 1-2</td>
<td>(5) 11-15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years</td>
<td>(2) 3-4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) 5-6</td>
<td>(3) 16-20 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</table>
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Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

4. What type of business do you operate?

(5) Retail sales
(1) Beauty (hairdresser, masseuse, manicurist)
  Personal care (child/elder)
(1) Food and/or beverages
(1) Arts and crafts (painter, potter, sewer, jeweller, sculptor)
(1) Accommodation
(1) Educational field
(1) Health care field/products
  Management/Business
(1) Financial/Accounting
(1) Market/Advertising
(9) Other:  (2) retail sales & arts and crafts
  (1) tourism/recreation/amusement/health & wellness (home based)
  (1) health care field & Immunotec
    - (1) computer based and fitness professional
    - (1) network marketing & retail sales
    - (1) computer based and home decorating
    - (1) management/business & events planning
    - (1) retail sales and health care field

(2) No answer

5. Is your business registered as a sole proprietorship?

(13) Yes
(11) No

6. Is your business a partnership?

(4) Yes
(20) No

7. If it is a partnership, what is your percentage of ownership?

(4) 1%-25%
(4) 26%-50%
   51%-75%
   76%-99%

8. Is your business incorporated?

(4) Yes
(20) No

9. If it is incorporated, what is your percentage of ownership?

   1%-25%
   (1) 26%-50%
   51%-75%
   (3) 75%-99%

10. Is your business home-based?

(16) Yes
(7) No

(1) Other: computer-based (home-based) and fitness professional (not home-based)
11. How many hours a week do you devote to your business?

(5) 1-20
(4) 21-34
(3) 35-44
(6) 45-60
(6) more than 60

12. Do you have anyone working for you?

(13) Yes
(11) No

13. If you have others working for you, how many?

(6) 1-2
(1) 3-4
(2) 5-6
(2) more than 10
(2) No answer

14. If you have others working for you, are the

(1) Unpaid family labour
(1) Full time
(3) Part time
 Contract
(1) A combination of full time, part time, and/or contract
(6) Other: (3) Volunteers
 (1) Unpaid family workers and part time and contract
 (1) Unpaid family labour and part time
 (1) Team-instructors in training
 (1) No answer

15. Do you have a website?

(15) Yes
(9) No

16. If not, what is the main reason you do not have a website? FIRST CHOICE

No access to high-speed Internet
Lack of computer training
Fear of the new technology
No time

(4) Expense of setting it up
(3) Expense of maintaining it
(6) Don’t need it

17. If there is a second important reason, listed above, why you don’t have a website, what is it? SECOND CHOICE

No access to high-speed Internet
Lack of computer training
Fear of the new technology

Expenses of setting it up
(1) Expense of maintaining it
Don’t need it
18. If there is a third important reason, listed above, why you don’t have a website, what is it? THIRD CHOICE

No access to high-speed Internet
Lack of computer training
Fear of the new technology
No time
(1) Other: hadn’t really thought about it
(8) No answer

19. Does your business currently provide you with enough income to allow you to be financially independent?

(8) Yes
(16) No

20. Are you interested in expanding your business?

(19) Yes
(5) No

21. What is the one main barrier preventing you from expanding your business? FIRST CHOICE

(4) Personal/family challenges
   Lack of adequate child/elder care
   Lack of training/education
   No access to computer/Internet technology
   Inadequate Internet service
   Inexperience in financial management
(1) Also working elsewhere
   Lack of mentoring
   Lack of finances
   Legal barriers
   Geographic isolation
   Access to loan
(1) Fear
(7) Other:
   (2) Lack of access to broad customer base
   (1) Get the present set up profitable first
   (1) New to the area
   (1) I don’t have the time
   (1) It’s Thunder Bay
   (1) I don’t want to
   (3) No answer

22. If there are other barriers that prevent you from expanding your business, what is the second most important barrier? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. SECOND CHOICE

(3) Personal/family challenges
   (1) Lack of adequate child/elder care
   Lack of training/education
   No access to computer/Internet technology
   (1) Inadequate Internet service
   Inexperience in financial management
(2) Also working elsewhere
   Lack of mentoring
   Lack of finances
   Legal barriers
   Geographic isolation
   Access to loan
(3) Fear
(2) Other: (1) Staffing problems
  (1) Need contact with people
  (10) No answer

23. If there are other barriers that prevent you from expanding your business, what is the third most important barrier? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. THIRD CHOICE

  Personal/family challenges  (1) Also working elsewhere
  Lack of adequate child/elder care  (1) Lack of mentoring
  Lack of training/education  (1) Lack of finances
  No access to computer/Internet technology  Legal barriers
  Inadequate Internet service  Geographic isolation
  Inexperience in financial management  (1) Access to loan
  Fear
  (1) Other: (1) Lack of confidence
       (18) No answer

24. What is the one main business support service and/or program that would be the most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business? FIRST CHOICE

  Good child/elder care  Legal expertise
  (3) Mentoring program  (5) Regional networking
  (2) Human resources (staffing) information  (2) Access to loan funds
  (4) Marketing/advertising expertise  (2) Strategic planning advice
  (3) Information about commerce over the Internet  (1) Information about taxes
  (1) Importing/exporting advice  (1) Money management advice
  (2) Benefit packages (eg. Health)  (3) Business/personal coaching
  Employment insurance benefits
  (4) No answer

25. What is the second most useful business support service and/or program that would help you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 24 SECOND CHOICE

  Good child/elder care  Legal expertise
  (1) Mentoring program  (2) Regional networking
  (2) Human resources (staffing) information  (3) Access to loan funds
  (1) Marketing/advertising expertise  (1) Strategic planning advice
  Information about commerce over the Internet  (1) Information about taxes
  Importing/exporting advice  Money management advice
  (2) Benefit packages (eg. Health)  Business/personal coaching
  Employment insurance benefits
  (11) Other: (1) Training subsidies without strings
       (10) No answer
26. What is the **third** most useful business support service and/or program that would help you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 24. **THIRD CHOICE**

Good child/elder care
(2) Mentoring program
(2) Human resources (staffing) information
Marketing/advertising expertise
Information about commerce over the Internet
Importing/exporting advice
Benefit packages (eg. Health)
Employment insurance benefits
(16) Other: No answer

27. What is the **one main** training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business? **FIRST CHOICE**

(3) Education about entrepreneurship
(3) Assertiveness training
(2) Conflict resolution training
(1) Legal issues training
(4) Peer networking
(8) Other: (1) Grants ($$$)
(1) We do our own training
(6) No answer

27. What is the **second** most useful training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 27. **SECOND CHOICE**

Education about entrepreneurship
Assertiveness training
Conflict resolution training
Legal issues training
(2) Peer networking
Other: No answer

28. What is the **third** most useful training support service and/or program that would be most helpful to you in operating or expanding your business. Choose one from the list above, in Question 27. **THIRD CHOICE**

Education about entrepreneurship
Assertiveness training
Conflict resolution training
Legal issues training
(1) Peer networking
(2) Other: (1) Proposal writing
(1) Economy and politicians
(17) No answer
30. What best describes your age category?

15-19 (3) 20-29 (6) 30-39 (4) 40-49
(8) 50-59 (3) 60-65 Over 65

31. What is your current marital status?

(7) Single (1) Separated (2) Partnered
(11) Married (3) Divorced

32. How many children do you have?

(9) None (6) 3-4 More than 6
(9) 1-2 5-6

33. What are the ages of your children? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

34. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances?

(16) Single income (2) Pension
(4) Double income (1) Social assistance
(1) No answer

35. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Grade school (6) High school
(3) College (9) University
(3) Professional training or apprenticeship
(3) Other: (2) College and university
(1) College and training in image

36. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?

Aboriginal (14) European
(2) Metis Latin American
African Middle Eastern
East Asian (1) Mixed Heritage
South Asian (7) Other: (2) Canadian
(5) No answer

37. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?

(7) Newspapers (13) E-mail
(3) Flyers (4) Website
(2) Phone (1) Notices in public places
(1) Other: (1) Fax
(2) No answer (2) No answer
38. Comments: No comments

39. Would having access to a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund help you?

(7) Yes  (13) No  (1) Maybe
(3) Other: (1) What is it, how would I benefit?
        (2) No answer

40. How?

- (1) said no but added, I know that it would be helpful to others though 😊
- (1) explore exporting
- (1) Thunder Bay women need $(grants)$
- (1) more ability to expand business
- (1) to provide networking opportunities, training on computers, marketing training
- (1) I’m not sure?? I don’t understand what would be involved
- (1) what’s involved?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME
Funding provided by the Government of Ontario

The views expressed in these materials do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Women’s Directorate.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

APPENDIX C

PARO and North Superior Training Board have partnered in order to conduct a research project entitled *Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW): An Innovative Skills Development Program*. The information gathered in the research and development stage of NOW will assist in creating programs that offer women services to help them improve their employment situation and become financially independent. This will not be possible without your expertise and feedback.

We would appreciate your suggestions, comments, and input. Thank you in advance for your time, honesty and feedback.

1. What community do you live in?

   - Beardmore (4) Nipigon
   - Dorion (7) Red Rock
   - Geraldton (1) Schreiber
   - Hurkett (3) Terrace Bay
   - Longlac (2) Schreiber
   - Manitouwadge (7) Manitouwadge
   - Marathon (14) White River
   - Other: (1) Nakina

2. In your opinion, how would you describe your community’s economic reality in terms of “employment” opportunities for women? Please circle one number only.

   1 (12)------(1)--------2 (19)-----------3 (14)-----------4 (3)---------5 (4)----------6
   Very Poor                  Poor                Fair           Good      Very Good   Excellent
   (1) No answer

3. In your opinion, what is the main barrier faced by working women in your community? FIRST CHOICE

   (11) Access to adequate child/elder care
   (25) Low-paying jobs
   (1) Equal pay with men for equal work
   (1) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs
   (5) Lack of funds for education/training
   (1) Other: (1) Lack of meaningful jobs for skilled women
   (5) Access to on-the-job training
   (1) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
   (6) Access to education/training
   (1) Access to internet/computer training
4. What is the **second** most significant barrier faced by working women in your community? Choose one from the list above, in Question 3. **SECOND CHOICE**

- (4) Access to adequate child/elder care
- (10) Low-paying jobs
- (2) Equal pay with men for equal work
- (4) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs training
- (9) Lack of funds for education/training
- (8) Other: (1) No answer
  - (1) Lack of opportunities – traditional jobs
  - (1) Not enough jobs
  - (1) Unskilled computer training
  - (1) No jobs other than restaurant/store positions. Most have little or no job skills, no variety of jobs
  - (1) No full-time work = not EI eligible = don’t qualify for government-funded training
  - (1) Not enough jobs for over 25

5. What is the **third** most significant barrier faced by working women in your community? Choose one from the list above, in Question 3. **THIRD CHOICE**

- (8) Access to adequate child/elder care
- (5) Access to on-the-job training
- (5) Low-paying jobs
- (3) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
- (1) Equal pay with men for equal work
- (5) Access to education/training
- (8) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs training
- (8) Lack of funds for education/training
- (8) Other: (1) No answer
  - (1) Lack of jobs – need more job creation
  - (1) Shift work and young kids

6. What is the **minimum** hourly wage you require in order to make working outside of the home worthwhile?

- (1) $7.15 (minimum wage)
- (6) $7.16-10
- (18) $11-12
- (4) Other: (3) $20.
  - (1) $25
  - (1) No answer
7. What type of work do you do at your job?

(1) Academic
(3) Professional
(3) Management and Business
(1) Traditionally-male resource-based job (forestry, mining)
(1) Marketing/Advertising
(3) Financial/Accounting
(2) Government service
(2) Retail sales
(3) Food and/or beverages
(7) Other:
   (1) Office clerk
   (1) Secretary/Receptionist
   (1) Employment advisor
   (1) Community development
   (1) Support worker
   (1) Child care
   (1) “?”

8. Are you working…:.

(26) Full-time
(14) Part-time
(2) More than one job
(2) Other:
   (1) Part-time and more than one job
   (1) Full-time, part-time, and more than one job

9. How satisfied are you with your job? Please circle one number only.

1 (1)------------2 (7)----------3 (12)----------4 (14)----------5 (16)----------6 (3)
Not at all  Somewhat  Moderately  Fairly  Very  Extremely

10. What main aspect about your current job do you enjoy the most? FIRST CHOICE

(14) Making a contribution
(2) Personal empowerment
(7) Accomplishment
(8) Personal fulfillment
(2) Don’t enjoy my job
(10) Financial independence
(4) Personal development
(8) Socializing
(3) Continued learning
11. What aspect of your current job would you list second in importance as an aspect you enjoy? Choose one from the list above, in Question 10. SECOND CHOICE

(7) Making a contribution
(5) Personal empowerment
(6) Accomplishment
(5) Personal fulfillment
Don't enjoy my job

(6) Financial independence
(12) Personal development
(5) Socializing
(3) Continued learning
(2) No answer

(1) Challenge
(1) Gratification: feeling you helped someone

12. What aspect of your current job would you list third in importance as an aspect you enjoy? Choose one from the list above, in Question 10. THIRD CHOICE

(4) Making a contribution
(3) Personal empowerment
(8) Accomplishment
(5) Personal fulfillment
Don't enjoy my job

(10) Financial independence
(9) Personal development
(3) Socializing
(8) Continued learning
(3) Other: (3) No answer

13. What one **main aspect** would improve your satisfaction with your current job the most? FIRST CHOICE

(5) Training subsidies
(24) Higher pay
Different position
(2) Peer networking
(9) Other: (2) No answer

(12) Advancement opportunities
Equal pay with men for equal work
Career planning
Employment insurance benefits
(4) More hours
Permanency
(1) Full-time employment/part-time (she is supply now)
(1) Longer work times/not just short-term contract

14. What **aspect** of your current job would you list second as an aspect that would improve your satisfaction? Choose one from the list above, in Question 13. SECOND CHOICE

(9) Training subsidies
(12) Higher pay
(2) Different position
(2) Peer networking
(11) Health benefits

(9) Advancement opportunities
Equal pay with men for equal work
(2) Career planning
(1) Employment insurance benefits
(5) Other: (4) No answer
More hours
15. What aspect of your current job would you list third as an aspect that would improve your satisfaction? Choose one from the list above in Question 13. THIRD CHOICE

(2) Training subsidies
(8) Higher pay
(3) Different position
(5) Peer networking
(3) Health benefits
(13) Other: (9) No answer

(1) Experience
(1) More training
(1) Educational opportunities
(1) Not being told to do four different things in a short amount of time

16. How would you rate your skills in terms of getting alternate employment? Please circle one number only.

1-------------2 (3)-------------3 (17)-------------4 (17)--------------5 (11)--------------6 (4)

Very Poor    Poor                   Fair                Good             Very Good            Excellent

17. What is the main training resource that would assist you in your current employment and/or future employment? FIRST CHOICE

(11) Training on the job
(8) Re-training for new career
(12) Educational assistance programs
(9) Skills upgrading
(1) Conference

(3) Regular tele-class workshops
(2) Employer-sponsored training
(2) Career planning
(6) Funding for skills training
(3) Other: (3) No answer

18. What is the second most important training resource that would be beneficial to your current employment and/or future employment? Choose one from the list above, in Question 17. SECOND CHOICE

(7) Training on the job
(5) Re-training for new career
(10) Educational assistance programs
(5) Skills upgrading

Conference

(3) Regular tele-class workshops
(8) Employer-sponsored training
(2) Career planning
(7) Funding for skills training
(6) Other: (4) No answer

(1) Training about the job
(1) Funding for retraining

19. What is the third most important training resource that would be beneficial to your current employment and/or future employment? Choose one from the list above, in Question 17. THIRD CHOICE

(4) Training on the job
(4) Re-training for new career
(2) Educational assistance programs
(11) Skills upgrading

Conference

(2) Regular tele-class workshops
Employer-sponsored training
(5) Career planning
(8) Funding for skills training
(2) Other: (9) No answer

(1) Career funding
20. Have you considered self-employment as an income opportunity and/or career?

(31) Yes  (21) No  (1) No answer

21. What is the **main** factor holding you back from starting your own business? **FIRST CHOICE**

(11) Don’t know where to start  (4) No business idea
(5) Need specific training  (16) No financial backing
(1) No peer networking  (1) Lack of support
(2) Lack of confidence/Fear  (7) Current personal/family circumstances
(2) No employment insurance  (4) No benefits
  Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
(4) Distance from resources in major urban centre
(7) Other:  (1) No answer
  (3) No interest
  (1) Location (small community)
  (1) Risk factor
  (1) In the middle of another program

22. What is the **second** most important **factor** holding you back from starting your own business? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. **SECOND CHOICE**

(5) Don’t know where to start  (8) No business idea
(3) Need specific training  (13) No financial backing
  No peer networking  Lack of support
(6) Lack of confidence/Fear  (5) Current personal/family circumstances
(2) No employment insurance  (2) No benefits
  Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
(4) Distance from resources in major urban centre
(5) Other:  (4) No answer
  (1) No support and guidance organization locally

23. What is the **third** most important **factor** holding you back from starting your own business? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. **THIRD CHOICE**

(5) Don’t know where to start  (2) No business idea
(4) Need specific training  (6) No financial backing
(2) No peer networking  (8) Lack of support
(5) Lack of confidence/Fear  (2) Current personal/family circumstances
(1) No employment insurance  (5) No benefits
  Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
(2) Distance from resources in major urban centre
(12) Other:  (9) No answer
  (1) No need
  (1) Not being able to take time off
  (1) Lack of previous experience
24. Would you benefit from one of the following services? If so, from which one would you benefit the **most**?

**FIRST CHOICE**

- (7) Career counselling
- (13) Self employment support program
- (21) Sponsored training and/or education
- (3) Job search counselling
- (3) Wage subsidy
- (6) No answer

25. Would a **second** service from the list above, in Question 24, help you? If so, which one? **SECOND CHOICE**

- (12) Career counselling
- (5) Self employment support program
- (12) Sponsored training and/or education
- (7) Job search counselling
- (5) Wage subsidy
- (11) No answer

26. Would a **third** service from the list above, in Question 24, help you? If so, which one? **THIRD CHOICE**

- (10) Career counselling
- (2) Self employment support program
- (7) Sponsored training and/or education
- (4) Job search counselling
- (12) Wage subsidy
- (18) No answer

27. Which services are available in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Is it available?</th>
<th>Do you have easy access to these services?</th>
<th>Have you used them?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>(14) Yes</td>
<td>(15) Yes</td>
<td>(4)Yes</td>
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<td>(18) No</td>
<td>(9) No</td>
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</table>
28. What best describes your age category?

(2) 15-19  (13) 20-29  (15) 30-39  (14) 40-49
(9) 50-59  (60-65)  Over 65

29. What is your current marital status?

(13) Single  (5) Separated  (9) Partnered
(24) Married  (2) Divorced

30. How many children do you have?

(12) None  (10) 3-4  More than 6
(30) 1-2  (1) 5-6

31. What are the ages of your children? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____

32. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances?

(20) Single income  (2) Pension
(26) Double income  (2) Social assistance
(3) Other:  (3) No answer
(1) Single income and social assistance

33. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

(1) Grade school
(20) High school
(20) College
(6) University
(2) Professional training or apprenticeship
(3) Other:  (1) University and variety of courses
(1) College (some courses)
(1) Grade school and “certificate courses”

34. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?

(10) Aboriginal  (22) European
(5) Metis  (2) Latin American
African  Middle Eastern
East Asian  Mixed Heritage
South Asian  (12) Other:  (7) No answer
(5) Canadian
35. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?

   (8) Newspapers
   (20) Flyers
   (10) Phone
   (5) Other: (2) No answer
   (9) E-mail
   (4) Website
   (14) Notices in public places
   (1) Letter
   (1) Ad-Bag
   (1) Mail

36. Comments:

   - It is all about making more money.

   - Have to travel a total of 40 miles per day to stay employed in my field.

   - We need a ladies’ group.

   - Main problem to working is a flexible job schedule – my spouse works out of town and is gone 5 days a week – 12-hour shift work isn’t an option for me.

   - Very few job opportunities in White River.

   - I am CEO of the public library. Many of the services mentioned here are available to the library staff that are not accessible to the general public. ie. training, workshops, networking, conferencing.

   - If I could afford to go to school for an education I would do that in a heartbeat. But social assistance only pays for part-time education. So, that creates a lot of barriers.

   - Great to see this survey.

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Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

APPENDIX D

Northern Opportunities for Women Market Survey
Employed Women in the City of Thunder Bay and Immediately Adjacent Communities

PARO and North Superior Training Board have partnered in order to conduct a research project entitled Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW): An Innovative Skills Development Program. The information gathered in the research and development stage of NOW will assist in creating programs that offer women services to help them improve their employment situation and become financially independent. This will not be possible without your expertise and feedback.

We would appreciate your suggestions, comments, and input. Thank you in advance for your time, honesty and feedback.

1. What community do you live in?

   Beardmore  Nipigon  Fort William First Nation
   Dorion     Red Rock  Lake Helen First Nation
   Geraldton  Schreiber Pays Plat First Nation
   Hurkett    Terrace Bay Pic Mober First Nation
   Longlac    Thunder Bay Pic River First Nation
   Manitouwadge White River
   Marathon

2. In your opinion, how would you describe your community’s economic reality in terms of “employment” opportunities for women? Please circle one number only.

   1 (4)--------2 (19)-----------3 (46)----------4 (24)---------5 (8)-----------6 (3)
   Very Poor  Poor  Fair  Good  Very Good  Excellent
   (3) No answer

3. In your opinion, what is the **main** barrier faced by working women in your community?

   FIRST CHOICE

   (32) Access to adequate child/elder care  (1) Access to on-the-job training
   (42) Low-paying jobs  (9) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
   (8) Equal pay with men for equal work  (3) Access to education/training
   (5) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs  (1) Access to internet/computer training
   (6) Lack of funds for education/training
   (9) Other: (2) No answer
   (2) No financial security
   (1) Lack of jobs
   (1) No jobs in Canada
   (1) Age: over 50
   (1) City by-law, zoning issues
   (1) Barriers are all within the self and I do not have barriers
4. What is the second most significant barrier faced by working women in your community? Choose one from the list above, in Question 3. SECOND CHOICE

(18) Access to adequate child/elder care
(15) Low-paying jobs
(6) Equal pay with men for equal work
(10) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs
(13) Lack of funds for education/training
(31) Other: (20) No answer
(2) Available work
(1) Too much nepotism
(1) Family issues – single parent
(1) Energy to commit to new venture
(1) Lack of regional chapters of professional development organizations
(1) A lot of trades, military, etc. are still predominantly a male domain
(1) Level of education/skills
(1) Viable employment opportunities
(1) Lack of respect for “some” male colleagues
(1) Distance to jobs outside the community

5. What is the third most significant barrier faced by working women in your community? Choose one from the list above, in Question 3. THIRD CHOICE

(12) Access to adequate child/elder care
(10) Low-paying jobs
(4) Equal pay with men for equal work
(8) Unskilled for traditionally male jobs training
(10) Lack of funds for education/training
(40) Other: (36) No answer
(1) Unskilled
(1) No extra money
(1) Willingness to look for work
(1) Child care costs don’t get covered by wages

6. What is the minimum hourly wage you require in order to make working outside of the home worthwhile?

$7.15 (minimum wage)
(14) $13-14
(11) $7.16-10
(7) $15-16
(13) $11-12
(16) $17-18
(43) Other: (39) No answer
(2) $20.
(1) Over $20
(1) $20-25
7. What type of work do you do at your job?

(3) Academic
(6) Professional
(6) Management and Business
(3) Traditionally-male resource-based job (forestry, mining)
(3) Marketing/Advertising
(1) Beauty industry (hairdresser, masseuse, manicurist)
(15) Financial/Accounting
(1) Education field
(1) Postal service
(6) Professional
(26) Retail sales
(2) Government service
(4) Tourism/Recreation/Amusement
(1) Trades (construction, carpentry, welding, millwright)
(6) Food and/or beverages
(1) Agriculture
(1) Housekeeping/Home Maintenance
(1) Accommodation
(1) Customer Service
(1) Real estate sales
(36) Other
(4) Transportation and equipment
(2) Cashier
(1) Food service

8. Are you working….: 

(61) Full-time
(27) Part-time
(5) More than one job
(5) Other:
(1) Temporary/casual
(5) Contract
(1) Part-time, more than one job, and temporary/casual
(1) Part-time and more than one job
(1) Two part-time jobs and contract
(1) Seasonal

9. How satisfied are you with your job? Please circle one number only.

1 (4)----------2 (10)----------3 (8)----------4 (28)----------5 (39)----------6 (15)
Not at all         Somewhat         Moderately         Fairly         Very         Extremely
(3) No answer

10. What main aspect about your current job do you enjoy the most? FIRST CHOICE

(10) Making a contribution
(9) Personal empowerment
(23) Accomplishment
(18) Personal fulfillment
(4) Don't enjoy my job
(8) Other:
(1) Pay cheque
(1) Working in my own language
(1) Financially staying above water – wages pay gas
(1) It's not waitressing
(1) Socializing and no stress
(1) Love business/retail
(1) Enjoy my job
(1) Financial stability
11. What aspect of your current job would you list **second** in importance as an aspect you enjoy? Choose one from the list above, in Question 10. **SECOND CHOICE**

(5) Making a contribution  
(6) Personal empowerment  
(11) Accomplishment  
(11) Personal fulfillment  
(3) Don’t enjoy my job  
(28) Other:  
(1) Networking/Contribution to Society/Self-reliance  
(1) Variety of responsibilities  
(1) Professional corporate culture match to personal values  
(1) Limited hours  
(2) Part time  
(1) Working with the public  
(2) Helping others  
(1) Professional autonomy  
(1) It allows me to travel  
(1) Sense of self  
(1) Helping aboriginal people to succeed  

12. What aspect of your current job would you list **third** in importance as an aspect you enjoy? Choose one from the list above, in Question 10. **THIRD CHOICE**

(9) Making a contribution  
(3) Personal empowerment  
(11) Accomplishment  
(9) Personal fulfillment  
(1) Don’t enjoy my job  
(30) Other:  
(1) Flexible work hours  
(1) Personal development and accomplishment  
(1) Travel – new scenery  
(1) No benefits  

13. What one **main aspect** would improve your satisfaction with your current job the most? **FIRST CHOICE**

(7) Training subsidies  
(59) Higher pay  
(6) Different position  
(3) Peer networking  
(12) Health benefits  
(11) Other:  
(1) Increased hours (currently pf. time)  
(1) A pension  
(1) Other opportunities for university affiliation  
(1) Better experience for the same pay level  
(1) More say in decision-making about the job  
(1) I had access to all of these
14. What aspect of your current job would you list second as an aspect that would improve your satisfaction? Choose one from the list above, in Question 13.

SECOND CHOICE

(4) Training subsidies
(12) Higher pay
(6) Different position
(2) Peer networking
(17) Health benefits
(38) Other:  (27) No answer

15. What aspect of your current job would you list third as an aspect that would improve your satisfaction? Choose one from the list above in Question 13. THIRD CHOICE

(6) Training subsidies
(2) Higher pay
(4) Different position
(6) Peer networking
(9) Health benefits
(52) Other:  (45) No answer

16. How would you rate your skills in terms of getting alternate employment? Please circle one number only.

1-------(1)------2 (2)-------------3 (19)-------------4 (20)-------------5 (40)--------------6 (22)

Very Poor        Poor                    Fair                Good             Very Good        Excellent

(4) No answer
17. What is the main training resource that would assist you in your current employment and/or future employment? FIRST CHOICE

(24) Training on the job (3) Regular tele-class workshops
(14) Re-training for new career (14) Employer-sponsored training
(18) Educational assistance programs (8) Career planning
(16) Skills upgrading (6) Funding for skills training
(4) Conference
(12) Other: (7) No answer
   (1) MBA
   (1) Computer
   (1) University training
   (1) Other graduate degree program
   (1) Post-secondary education

18. What is the second most important training resource that would be beneficial to your current employment and/or future employment? Choose one from the list above, in Question 17. SECOND CHOICE

(11) Training on the job Regular tele-class workshops
(3) Re-training for new career (7) Employer-sponsored training
(13) Educational assistance programs (10) Career planning
(11) Skills upgrading (6) Funding for skills training
(2) Conference
(44) Other: (35) No answer
   (1) Women with women’s issues in the workforce
   (1) A list of agencies to help
   (1) University/college upgrades
   (1) College training
   (1) A regular chapter of CPRS
   (1) Computer
   (1) Funding to finish masters
   (1) Current business trends
   (1) Current training trends are excellent

19. What is the third most important training resource that would be beneficial to your current employment and/or future employment? Choose one from the list above, in Question 17. THIRD CHOICE

(2) Training on the job Regular tele-class workshops
(2) Re-training for new career (6) Employer-sponsored training
(6) Educational assistance programs (8) Career planning
(12) Skills upgrading (18) Funding for skills training
(5) Conference
(54) Other: (51) No answer
   (1) Childcare
   (1) Time available
   (1) Comfort level increase regarding technology

20. Have you considered self-employment as an income opportunity and/or career?

(55) Yes (52) No
21. What is the **main** factor holding you back from starting your own business? **FIRST CHOICE**

- (11) Don’t know where to start
- (2) Need specific training
- (1) No peer networking
- (17) Lack of confidence/Fear
- (17) Current personal/family circumstances
- No employment insurance
- Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
- Distance from resources in major urban centre
- (34) Other: (8) No answer
  - (5) Community economic base
  - (10) Don’t want to
  - (3) Lack of community resource
  - (1) Health (if fails)
  - (1) Access to technology
  - (1) Like working in public versus private health care sector
  - (1) Government regulation makes it not worth your while
  - (1) Too young
  - (1) Career planning
  - (1) Just started at my job four months ago
  - (1) Difficult to generate new business and outrageous time commitment

22. What is the **second** most important **factor** holding you back from starting your own business? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. **SECOND CHOICE**

- (9) Don’t know where to start
- (5) Need specific training
- (1) No peer networking
- (12) Lack of confidence/Fear
- (3) No employment insurance
- Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
- Distance from resources in major urban centre
- (47) Other: (37) No answer
  - (3) Limited access to technology
  - (1) Poorly organized
  - (1) Community economic base
  - (1) Comfort in a constant pay cheque and benefits
  - (1) Understanding the money part
  - (1) Husband has a business, financial security more in my employment
  - (1) Too much of a risk
  - (1) Commitment
23. What is the **third** most important **factor** holding you back from starting your own business? Choose one from the list above, in Question 21. **THIRD CHOICE**

(8) Don’t know where to start
(9) Need specific training
(1) No peer networking
(5) Lack of confidence/Fear
(1) No employment insurance

Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
(2) Distance from resources in major urban centre
(5) Other: (52) No answer

(1) Too many people in the industry (she checked Financial/Accounting)
(1) Small children
(1) Stability
(1) Don’t want to

24. Would you benefit from one of the following services? If so, from which **one** would you benefit the **most**? **FIRST CHOICE**

(14) Career counselling
(23) Self employment support program
(3) Sponsored training and/or education
(3) Other: (1) No interest in being self-employed in my primary career path

(1) Aboriginal employment program
(1) Free education programs to upgrade career skills or gain new ones

25. Would a **second** service from the list above, in Question 24, help you? If so, which one? **SECOND CHOICE**

(17) Career counselling
(4) Self employment support program
(8) Sponsored training and/or education
(1) Other: (1) Business plan development

26. Would a **third** service from the list above, in Question 24, help you? If so, which one? **THIRD CHOICE**

(7) Career counselling
(7) Self employment support program
(7) Sponsored training and/or education
### 27. Which services are available in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Is it available?</th>
<th>Do you have easy access to these services?</th>
<th>Have you used them?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Blank</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Self employment support</td>
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<tr>
<td>programs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>Blank</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 28. What best describes your age category?

- 15-19: 8
- 20-29: 35
- 30-39: 21
- 40-49: 28
- 50-59: 12
- 60-65: 6
- Over 65: 5
- No answer: 2

### 29. What is your current marital status?

- Single: 36
- Separated: 9
- Partnered: 19
- Married: 36
- Divorced: 5
- No answer: 2

### 30. How many children do you have?

- None: 48
- 1-2: 47
- 3-4: 10
- 5-6: 5
- More than 6: More than 6
- No answer: 2

### 31. What are the ages of your children? _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
32. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances?

(48) Single income  (1) Pension
(46) Double income  Social assistance
(12) Other: (7) No answer
   (1) Single income and child support
   (1) Single income and pension
   (1) Student income
   (1) Live at home with parents while working - they’re retired
   (1) Employment insurance and part-time

33. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

   Grade school
   (25) High school
   (21) College
   (14) University
   (1) Professional training or apprenticeship
   (3) Other: (36) No answer
   (3) University and professional training and apprenticeship
   (1) College and professional training and apprenticeship
   (2) University and college
   (1) High school and some university
   (1) High school and “degrees through work”
   (1) High school and financial planner
   (1) High school and GED

34. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?

   (3) Aboriginal   (36) European
   Metis   Latin American
   African   Middle Eastern
   (1) East Asian   (12) Mixed Heritage
   South Asian   (55) Other: (47) No answer
   (7) Canadian
   (1) Aboriginal and mixed heritage
35. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?

(29) Newspapers
(17) Flyers
(6) Phone
(5) Other: (39) No answer
   (1) Radio
   (1) T.V.
   (1) Conference
   (1) The Source
(23) E-mail
(8) Website
(15) Notices in public places

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME
Funding provided by the Government of Ontario

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We would appreciate your suggestions, comments and input. Thank you in advance for your time, honesty, and feedback.

1. What community do you live in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beardmore</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorion</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldton</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harkett</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hurkett</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longlac</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nipigon</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Rock</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schreiber</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrace Bay</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thunder Bay</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pays Plat First Nation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pic Mobert First Nation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pic River First Nation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitouwadge</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White River</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:_____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In your opinion, what best describes your community’s economic reality in terms of employment opportunities for women?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. How long have you been unemployed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 months or less</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 months-1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3-4 years</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-6 years</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>7-8 years</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>more than 10 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no answer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Why are you unemployed? Number of times cited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just finished education/training</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between contracts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laid off</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to find a job</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chose to stay at home</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of jobs in the community</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare/Eldercare</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other: (1) retired</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) still going to school</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) summer jobs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) quit due to stress</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 23 women cited 1 reason
3 women cited 2 reasons
4 women cited 3 reasons

5. Are you currently seeking employment?
   (20) Yes   (9) No   (1) “just found one”

6. If you are staying home with your children, do you plan to return to the workforce?
   (5) Yes   (4) No
   Note: 5 of the women who are not seeking employment have young children;
   Still, all 5 said they planned to return to the workforce.

7. If yes, when are you planning to return to the workforce?
   Within the next 6 months   (2) 6 months-1 year   (2) 1-2 years
   3-4 years   (1) 5 years   after 5 years
   Note: 1 of the 2 women planning to return within 6 months to has children aged 2 & 7;
   the other woman planning to return within 6 months to 1 year has a child aged 5.
   1 of the 2 women planning to return within 1-2 years has children aged 6, 9, & 11;
   the other woman planning to return within 1-2 years has children aged 2 & 4.
   The woman planning to return within 5 years has children aged 7 mo. & 3 mo. (expecting).

8. What minimum hourly wage do you need in order to make working outside the home worthwhile?
   (2) $7.15 (minimum wage)   $7.16-10   (12) $11-12
   (4) $13-14   (5) $15-16   (3) $17-18
   (4) Other: (1) $19
            (1) $20
            (1) Contract
            (1) No answer

9. How would you describe your job search? Please circle one number only.

   Very Poor     Poor     Fair     Good     Very Good     Excellent
   1 (1)----------2 (3)--------3 (12)--------4 (11)----------5----------6
   (2) Other: (1) No answer
            (1) “Not looking right now”

10. How would you rate your job skills? Please circle one number only.

    Very Poor     Poor     Fair     Good     Very Good     Excellent
    1----------2----------3 (5)--------4 (10)--------5 (13)----------6 (2)
11. What type of job are you looking for?

(8) Any available job
(1) Health care field
Academic
(1) Education field
(1) Professional
(1) Food and/or beverages
(1) Management/Business
Accommodation
Marketing/Advertising
Tourism/Recreation/Amusement
Financial/Accounting
Agriculture
(1) Traditionally-male resource-based job (forestry, mining)
Trades (construction, carpentry, welding, millwright)
Government service
Transportation and equipment
(1) Retail sales
Beauty (hairdresser, masseuse, manicurist)
Literary (editor, proof reader, publisher)
(1) Housekeeping/Home Maintenance

(14) Other: (2) No answer
(10) Other combinations of jobs:
(2) Seeking jobs in 2 categories
(4) Seeking jobs in 3 categories
(1) Seeking jobs in 4 categories
(2) Seeking jobs in 5 categories
(1) Seeking jobs in 6 categories

Note: Only 8 women are seeking jobs in only in job category.
8 women will accept any job.
10 women are looking in more than 1 job category.

12. What is the one main barrier preventing you from attaining employment? FIRST CHOICE

Lack of reliable child care
(2) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
(3) Lack of affordable childcare
(1) Don’t know where to start
(1) Lack of funds for training/education
Outdated skills
(6) Low-paying jobs
Lack of access to training/education
On disability pension
(2) On welfare or other social assistance
(2) Lack of computer skills
(3) Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
Need to care for another family member (parent)

(10) Other: (3) No answer
(4) Lack of jobs
(1) Lack of experience
(1) Student
(1) Children are the first priority now
13. What is the second most important barrier preventing you from attaining employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 12. SECOND CHOICE

(1) Lack of reliable child care        Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
(2) Lack of affordable childcare      Don’t know where to start
(2) Need to care for another family member (parent)
(3) Lack of funds for training/education
(3) Low-paying jobs                   Lack of access to training/education
(2) Outdated skills                   On disability pension
Lack of computer skills               On welfare or other social assistance
(1) Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
(6) Other:  (2) No answer
          (1) Lack of job
          (1) Interview skills
          (2) Age

14. What is the third most important barrier preventing you from attaining employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 12. THIRD CHOICE

Lack of reliable child care        Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
(1) Lack of affordable childcare      Don’t know where to start
Need to care for another family member (parent)
(2) Lack of funds for training/education
(5) Low-paying jobs                   Lack of access to training/education
Outdated skills                     On disability pension
(1) Lack of computer skills               (3) On welfare or other social assistance
(1) Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
(13) Other:  (7) no answer
          (2) Lack of jobs
          (2) No transportation
          (1) Need to travel out of community
          (1) Not enough training

15. Would you benefit from any of the following services? If so, from which one would you benefit the most? FIRST CHOICE

(4) Career counselling               (1) Job search counselling
(6) Self-employment support program   (4) Wage subsidy program
(10) Sponsored training

16. Which service, in question 15, would you rate second in importance in benefiting you in your job search? SECOND CHOICE

(8) Career counselling               (7) Job search counselling
(2) Self-employment support program   (3) Wage subsidy program
(3) Sponsored training

17. Which service, in question 15, would you rate third in importance in benefiting you in your job search? THIRD CHOICE

(7) Career counselling               (13) Job search counselling
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(2) Self-employment support program
(4) Sponsored training
(5) Wage subsidy program

18. Which services are available in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Is it available?</th>
<th>Do you have easy access to these services?</th>
<th>Have you used them?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career counselling</td>
<td>(6) Yes</td>
<td>(6) Yes</td>
<td>(4) Yes</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>(7) No</td>
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<td>(14) Yes</td>
<td>(15) Yes</td>
<td>(10) Yes</td>
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<td>(5) No</td>
<td>(4) No</td>
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<td>(11) Blank</td>
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<td>(3) Yes</td>
<td>(1) Yes</td>
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<td>(8) No</td>
<td>(8) No</td>
<td>(10) No</td>
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<td>(17) Don’t know</td>
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<td>(2) Blank</td>
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<td>(19) Blank</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
<td>(5) Yes</td>
<td>(1) Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(7) No</td>
<td>(12) No</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsored training</td>
<td>(5) Yes</td>
<td>(3) Yes</td>
<td>(2) Yes</td>
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<td>(8) No</td>
<td>(10) No</td>
<td>(2) Yes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

19. What is the **one main** training resource that would assist you to upgrade your skills in order to find employment? FIRST CHOICE

(10) Training on the job
(3) Educational assistance program
(9) Re-training for new career
(2) Skills upgrading
(1) Subsidized apprenticeship programs

Regular tele-class workshops
Employer-sponsored training
Subsidized retraining
Employment insurance benefits
(4) Other: (2) No answer

(1) Computer skills
(1) Job creation

20. What is the **second** most valuable training resource that would assist you in finding employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 19. SECOND CHOICE

(6) Training on the job
(5) Educational assistance program
(4) Re-training for new career
(2) Skills upgrading
(1) Subsidized apprenticeship programs

Regular tele-class workshops
Employer-sponsored training
Subsidized retraining
Employment insurance benefits
Other: (4) No answer
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21. What is the **third** most valuable training resource that would assist you in finding employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 19. **THIRD CHOICE**

   (2) Training on the job          (1) Regular tele-class workshops
   (2) Educational assistance program (3) Employer-sponsored training
   (1) Re-training for new career   (5) Subsidized retraining
   (6) Skills upgrading            (1) Employment insurance benefits
   (3) Subsidized apprenticeship programs
   (6) Other: (5) No answer
   (1) Seminar for career choice guidance

22. What **one main** support program and/or service would be most helpful in assisting you to obtain employment? **FIRST CHOICE**

   Mentoring program               (11) Employment and/or career counselling
   (2) Personal coaching            (5) Career planning
   Community daycare programs       (5) Information services
   (1) Subsidized daycare programs   (6) Other: (3) No answer
   (6) Subsidized daycare programs
   (1) Employment insurance benefits
   (1) Job options
   (1) Lucy!

23. What support program and/or service would you rate **second** in importance in aiding you to obtain employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 22. **SECOND CHOICE**

   (1) Mentoring program           (4) Employment and/or career counselling
   Personal coaching               (9) Career planning
   Community daycare programs      (4) Information services
   (2) Subsidized daycare programs (6) Other: (6) No answer

24. What support program and/or service would you rate **third** in importance in aiding you to attain employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 22. **THIRD CHOICE**

   Mentoring program               (5) Employment and/or career counselling
   (2) Personal coaching            (3) Career planning
   Community daycare programs      (6) Information services
   (3) Subsidized daycare programs (9) Other: (7) No answer
   (1) Education grants
   (1) Help with travel expenses

25. Have you considered self-employment as an income opportunity and/or career?

   (20) Yes
   (9) No
   (1) No answer
26. What is the **one main** barrier holding you back from starting your own business? **FIRST CHOICE**

(8) Don’t know where to start  
(2) Need specific training  
(2) No employment insurance  
(1) Lack of confidence/Fear  
(1) No benefits  
(1) Distance from resources in major urban centre  
(1) Lack of child/elder care  
(9) No financial backing  
(4) No business idea  
(3) Need specific training  
(1) Current personal/family circumstances  
(1) Lack of support  
(2) No peer networking  
(2) No employment insurance  
(1) No benefits  
(1) Lack of confidence/Fear  
(1) No benefits  
(1) Current personal/family circumstances  
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31. How many children do you have?
   (8) None  
   (19) 1-2  
   (3) 3-4  
   More than 6  
   (5) 5-6

32. What are the ages of your children?  ____  ____  ____  ____  ____  ____

33. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances.
   (19) Single income  
   (2) Double income  
   (2) Other: (1) None  
       (1) Single income and employment insurance
   (6) Social assistance

34. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
   Grade school (completed grade: ____)
   (8) High school (1 grade 9; 3 grade 11; 4 grade 12)
   (7) College (2 first year; 3 second year; 2 third year)
   (7) University (1 third year; 5 fourth year; 1 fifth year)
       Professional training or apprenticeship (number of years completed: ____)
   (7) Other: (1) High school & financial courses & license
       (1) Grade 12 & OAC coarses
       (1) High school & some college credits
       (1) High school (OAC) & 2 diplomas from Academy of Learning
       (1) 1 year college & 1 year university
       (1) Graduated college & 3 years university

35. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?
   (5) Aboriginal  
   (1) Metis  
   (1) African  
   (1) East Asian  
   (1) South Asian  
   (10) European  
   (1) Latin American  
   (1) Middle Eastern  
   (6) Mixed Heritage
   (7) Other: (6) No answer
       (1) Canadian

36. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?
   (8) Newspapers  
   (7) Flyers  
   (9) Phone  
   (3) Other: (2) No answer
       (1) Word of mouth – partner with other programs
   (6) E-mail  
   (1) Website
   (11) Notices in public places
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37. Comments:
If there were some type of financial backing available I would be able to start my business. I’ve done all the work to develop a program on my own, and have proposed ideas.

One, conduct more trainings and seminars for “free”, to enhance their skills. Two, no, to discrimination of races and nepotism in employment.

Jobs/career planning should be included with employment insurance program. Not only 18-25 year olds or out of work for 1-2 years.

I am very interested in getting the training I need & to start working.

My age and skills are non transferable to Nipigon. Grants for re-education in a new career would be necessary.

38. Would having access to a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund help you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(12) Yes</th>
<th>(6) No</th>
<th>(3) Other: (1) no answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) not sure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

39. How?
- help access needed resources
- start own business
- really don’t know how
- would maybe help me start own business
- limited income
- For a second career with a new degree in education
- Get the training I need for more employment opportunities
- It might be able to help me start a business and get off assistance and provide for my children.
- The opportunity for information/ Training and support groups. I think it would be very helpful.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME
Funding provided by the Government of Ontario

The views expressed in these materials do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Women’s Directorate.
Northern Opportunities for Women: A Research Report
Research conducted on behalf of PARO Centre for Women’s Enterprise and the North Superior Training Board/Comité de formation du Nord Supérieur

APPENDIX F

Northern Opportunities for Women
Market Survey
Unemployed & Women in Transition
In the City of Thunder Bay
and Immediately Outlying Regions

PARO and North Superior Training Board have partnered in order to conduct a research project entitled *Northern Opportunities for Women (NOW): An Innovative Skill Development Program*. The information gathered in the research and development stage of NOW will assist in creating programs that offer women services to help them improve their employment situation and become financially independent. This will not be possible without your expertise and feedback.

We would appreciate your suggestions, comments and input. Thank you in advance for your time, honesty, and feedback.

1. What community do you live in?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beardmore</th>
<th>Nipigon</th>
<th>Fort William First Nation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dorion</td>
<td>Red Rock</td>
<td>Lake Helen First Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geraldton</td>
<td>Schreiber</td>
<td>Pays Plat First Nation</td>
</tr>
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<td>Hurkett</td>
<td>Terrace Bay</td>
<td>Pic Mober First Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longlac</td>
<td>(43) Thunder Bay</td>
<td>Pic River First Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitouwadge</td>
<td>White River</td>
<td>Other: ____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. In your opinion, what best describes your community’s economic reality in terms of employment opportunities for women?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 (2)</th>
<th>2 (11)</th>
<th>3 (22)</th>
<th>4 (6)</th>
<th>5 (1)</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Other: (1) “depends on training”

3. How long have you been unemployed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(21) 6 months or less</th>
<th>(6) 7 months-1 year</th>
<th>(4) 1-2 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) 3-4 years</td>
<td>(2) 5-6 years</td>
<td>7-8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) 9-10 years</td>
<td>(1) more than 10 years</td>
<td>(3) Other: (3) no answer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

answer
4. Why are you unemployed?

(5) Just finished education/training  (1) Between contracts
(8) Laid off  (8) Unable to find a job
(2) Chose to stay at home  (5) Lack of jobs in the community
(1) Childcare/Eldercare
(19) Other: (9) no answer
(1) looking for career change
(1) attending upgrading
(1) too much moving
(1) moved from Manitoba
(1) fired
(2) quit
(1) illness
(1) medical problems
(1) out of work too long

5. Are you currently seeking employment?

(29) Yes  (9) No  (5) No answer

6. If you are staying home with your children, do you plan to return to the workforce?

(12) Yes  (8) No  (23) No answer

7. If yes, when are you planning to return to the workforce?

(9) Within the next 6 months  (1) 6 months-1 year  (1) 1-2 years
3-4 years  (1) 5 years  (1) after 5 years
(30) No answer

8. What minimum hourly wage do you need in order to make working outside the home worthwhile?

(1) $7.15 (minimum wage)  (5) $7.16-10  (9) $11-12
(8) $13-14  (8) $15-16  (6) $17-18
(6) Other: (5) No answer
(1) $20 and up

9. How would you describe your job search? Please circle one number only.

1 (2)---------2 (8)--------3 (11)--------4 (8)--------5 (6)---------6 (1)
Very Poor  Poor  Fair  Good  Very Good  Excellent
(5) No answer

10. How would you rate your job skills? Please circle one number only.

1 (1)---------2----------------3 (10)---------4 (12)---------5 (13)---(1)---6 (5)
Very Poor  Poor  Fair  Good  Very Good  Excellent
(1) No answer
11. What type of job are you looking for?

(14) Any available job
(6) Health care field
(2) Education field
(3) Professional
(2) Academics
(1) Management/business
(2) Food and/or beverages
(1) Marketing/Advertising
(2) Tourism/recreation/amusement
(4) Financial/accounting
(1) Agriculture
(1) Traditionally-male resource-based job (forestry, mining)
Trades (construction, carpentry, welding, millwright)
(3) Government service
(2) Transport and equipment
(1) Postal
(2) Retail sales
(2) Beauty (hairdresser, masseuse, manicurist)
Literary (editor, proof reader, publisher)
(2) Housekeeping/home maintenance
(9) Others: (7) No answer
(1) Administration
(1) Self-employment

12. What is the **one main** barrier preventing you from attaining employment? FIRST CHOICE

(1) Lack of reliable child care
(1) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
(1) Lack of affordable childcare
(5) Don’t know where to start
Need to care for another family member (parent)
(6) Lack of funds for training/education
(7) Low-paying jobs
(1) Lack of access to training/education
(7) Outdated skills
(1) On disability pension
(2) Lack of computer skills
(3) On welfare or other social assistance
Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
(11) Other: (2) No answer
(2) New to the area
(2) Lack of jobs
(2) Age: (1 was 55)
(1) Many work-related injuries
(1) Criminal record
(1) No barriers
13. What is the second most important barrier preventing you from attaining employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 12. SECOND CHOICE

- (2) Lack of reliable child care
- (1) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
- Lack of affordable childcare
- (1) Don’t know where to start
- Need to care for another family member (parent)
- (1) Lack of funds for training/education
- (11) Low-paying jobs
- (4) Lack of access to training/education
- (4) Outdated skills
- On disability pension
- (4) Lack of computer skills
- On welfare or other social assistance
- Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
- (14) Other: (7) No answer
  - (1) Lack of experience
  - (2) No jobs
  - (1) No money to start
  - (1) Non-posted jobs
  - (1) Stiff competition
  - (1) Medical problems

14. What is the third most important barrier preventing you from attaining employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 12. THIRD CHOICE

- Lack of reliable child care
- (3) Lack of self-confidence/self-esteem
- (4) Lack of affordable childcare
- (4) Don’t know where to start
- Need to care for another family member (parent)
- (4) Lack of funds for training/education
- (4) Low-paying jobs
- (2) Lack of access to training/education
- (2) Outdated skills
- On disability pension
- (3) Lack of computer skills
- On welfare or other social assistance
- Lack of skills in traditionally-male jobs (mining)
- (16) Other: (13) No answer
  - (2) Transportation
  - (1) expense of job searching

15. Would you benefit from any of the following services? If so, from which one would you benefit the most? FIRST CHOICE

- (5) Career counselling
- (7) Job search counselling
- (7) Self-employment support program
- (12) Wage subsidy program
- (13) Sponsored training
- (2) No answer

16. Which service, in question 15, would you rate second in importance in benefiting you in your job search? SECOND CHOICE

- (12) Career counselling
- (4) Job search counselling
- (3) Self-employment support program
- (7) Wage subsidy program
- (8) Sponsored training
- (9) No answer
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17. Which service, in question 15, would you rate third in importance in benefiting you in your job search? THIRD CHOICE

(3) Career counselling  
(4) Self-employment support program  
(5) Wage subsidy program  
(9) Job search counselling  
(12) Sponsored training  
(10) No answer

18. Which services are available in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Is it available?</th>
<th>Do you have easy access to these services?</th>
<th>Have you used them?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<td>(26) Yes</td>
<td>(24) Yes</td>
<td>(11) Yes</td>
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<td>(1) No</td>
<td>(4) No</td>
<td>(19) No</td>
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<td>Job search counselling</td>
<td>(29) Yes</td>
<td>(28) Yes</td>
<td>(17) Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(1) No</td>
<td>(4) No</td>
<td>(14) No</td>
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<td>Self-employment support program</td>
<td>(15) Yes</td>
<td>(14) Yes</td>
<td>(2) Yes</td>
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<td>(3) No</td>
<td>(7) No</td>
<td>(22) No</td>
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<td>Wage subsidy program</td>
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<td>(18) Yes</td>
<td>(6) Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) No</td>
<td>(8) No</td>
<td>(19) No</td>
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<td>(17) Don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sponsored training</td>
<td>(14) Yes</td>
<td>(5) Yes</td>
<td>(1) Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(3) No</td>
<td>(15) No</td>
<td>(21) No</td>
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</table>

19. What is the one main training resource that would assist you to upgrade your skills in order to find employment? FIRST CHOICE

(15) Training on the job  
(6) Educational assistance program  
(7) Re-training for new career  
(1) Skills upgrading  
(5) Subsidized apprenticeship programs  
(1) Employment insurance benefits  
(4) Employer-sponsored training  
(2) Subsidized retraining  
(3) No answer  
(1) Career planning

20. What is the second most valuable training resource that would assist you in finding employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 19. SECOND CHOICE

(4) Training on the job  
(5) Re-training for new career  
(13) Skills upgrading  
(4) Employer-sponsored training  
(5) Subsidized retraining  
(3) Employment insurance benefits
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(3) Subsidized apprenticeship programs  (10) Other:  (9) No answer
(1) Employer-subsidized wages

21. What is the third most valuable training resource that would assist you in finding employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 19. THIRD CHOICE

(4) Training on the job  Regular tele-class workshops
(5) Educational assistance program  (3) Employer-sponsored training
(7) Re-training for new career  (1) Subsidized retraining
(6) Skills upgrading  (1) Employment insurance benefits
Subsidized apprenticeship programs  (16) Other:  (16) No answer

22. What one main support program and/or service would be most helpful in assisting you to obtain employment? FIRST CHOICE

(3) Mentoring program  (8) Employment and/or career counselling
(6) Personal coaching  (4) Career planning
(1) Community daycare programs  (10) Information services
(3) Subsidized daycare programs  (9) Other:  (7) No answer
  (1) Children in school full-time
  (1) Finish upgrading

23. What support program and/or service would you rate second in importance in aiding you to obtain employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 22. SECOND CHOICE

(2) Mentoring program  (7) Employment and/or career counselling
(2) Personal coaching  (11) Career planning
Community daycare programs  (7) Information services
(1) Subsidized daycare programs  (13) Other:  (11) no answer
  (1) Transportation
  (1) Free schools

24. What support program and/or service would you rate third in importance in aiding you to attain employment? Choose one from the list above, in question 22. THIRD CHOICE

(4) Mentoring program  (4) Employment and/or career counselling
(1) Personal coaching  (11) Career planning
(1) Community daycare programs  (7) Information services
Subsidized daycare programs  (15) Other:  (15) No answer

25. Have you considered self-employment as an income opportunity and/or career?

(18) Yes
(24) No
(1) Maybe
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26. What is the one main barrier holding you back from starting your own business? FIRST CHOICE

(7) Don’t know where to start (9) No business idea
(3) Need specific training (8) No financial backing
No peer networking (1) Lack of support
(3) Lack of confidence/Fear (3) Current personal/family circumstances
No employment insurance (3) No benefits
Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
Distance from resources in major urban centre
Lack of child/elder care (9) Other: (4) No answer
(3) Not interested
(2) In the process

27. If other barriers holding you back from starting your own business, what barrier is second in importance? Choose one from the list above, in question 26. SECOND CHOICE

(2) Don’t know where to start (3) No business idea
(4) Need specific training (10) No financial backing
No peer networking (2) Lack of support
(1) Lack of confidence/Fear Current personal/family circumstances
(4) No employment insurance (2) No benefits
(3) Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
Distance from resources in major urban centre
(1) Lack of child/elder care (11) Other: (11) No answer

28. If other barriers holding you back from starting your own business, what barrier is third in importance? Choose one from the list above, in question 26. THIRD CHOICE

(5) Don’t know where to start (2) No business idea
(2) Need specific training (9) No financial backing
No peer networking (4) Lack of support
(4) Lack of confidence/Fear (1) Current personal/family circumstances
No employment insurance (1) No benefits
(1) Limited access to technology (computers, fax machines, photocopiers)
Distance from resources in major urban centre
Lack of child/elder care (14) Other: (14) No answer

29. What best describes your age category?

(1) 15-19 (6) 20-29 (15) 30-39 (10) 40-49
(10) 50-59 60-65 Over 65 (1) No answer

30. What is your current marital status?

(18) Single income (5) Separated (4) Partnered
(6) Married (8) Divorced (2) No answer

31. How many children do you have?

(15) None (9) 3-4 More than 6
32. What are the ages of your children? ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

33. What best describes your family’s economic circumstances?

   (19) Single income
   (1) Pension
   (12) Social assistance
   (11) Other: (3) No answer
   (3) None
   (3) Single income and social assistance
   (1) Single income – child support
   (1) Long-term disability

34. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

   (2) Grade school (1 grade 7; 1 grade 8)
   (17) High school (2 grade 9; 7 grade 10; 2 grade 11; 6 grade 12)
   (9) College (2 year 1; 4 year 2; 2 year 3; 1 year 4)
   (3) University (2 year 3; 1 year 5)
   (5) Professional training or apprenticeship
   (7) Other: (5) No answer
   (1) College (2 years) & University (2 years)
   (1) High School (grade 11) & computer school

35. What is the origin of your cultural heritage?

   (5) Aboriginal
   (10) European
   (3) Metis
   (1) African
   (12) Mixed Heritage
   East Asian
   South Asian
   (12) Other: (9) No answer
   (2) Canadian
   (1) Non-status

36. What would be the best way to inform you about new services and/or programs?

   (16) Newspapers
   (7) E-mail
   (9) Flyers
   (7) Website
   (7) Phone
   (8) Notices in public places
   (8) Other: (5) No answer
   (2) Mail
   (1) Word of mouth

37. Comments:

38. Would having access to a Women’s Community Training Loan Fund help you?

   (23) Yes
   (13) No
   (7) No answer
39. How?

Comments of 3 “No” respondents:

- don’t want to go in debt
- I need help in obtaining criminal pardons
- Having to pay it back

Comments of 19 “Yes” respondents:

- You can never have enough education or learn too much!
- because it will keep my spirits high
- allow me to update my educational skills
- enhance my employment skills
- start up funding/guidance
- help get back to the workforce
- it be a light in the right direction
- Just a chance
- I could go back to school
- would love to have a better education so I could be self-employed
- It would be funding needed to start over in new career
- would help me get started
- help me to take steps towards self-employment
- to know where to start and have monies to set up a business
- re-training
- It would help by allowing me to upgrade my qualifications
- any help at my age would be appreciated (she is in the age 50-59 category)
- It would give me a chance to go to college to get my ECE
- Information about starting a business, resources and available funding would be worth looking into

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Funding provided by the Government of Ontario

The views expressed in these materials do not necessarily reflect those of the Ontario Women’s Directorate.
WORKS CITED


North Superior Training Board: Local Projects. [http://www.nstb.on.ca/localprojects.htm](http://www.nstb.on.ca/localprojects.htm)


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