



Social Enterprises
Knowledgeable Economies
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South Bay Park Rangers Employment Project for Persons Living with a Disability

A Case Study in Individual Empowerment
and Community Interdependence

Isobel M. Findlay, Julia Bidonde
Maria Basualdo, and Alyssa McMurtry

**A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba,
and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite**

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et communautés durables



SOUTH BAY PARK RANGERS
EMPLOYMENT PROJECT

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AND COMMUNITY INTERDEPENDENCE

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PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

THIS CASE STUDY tells the story of the South Bay Park Rangers employment program for people with disabilities in the Northern Saskatchewan Village of Île-à-la-Crosse. The program allows individuals to achieve on-the-job training, seasonal employment, work skills and experience, and independence without leaving their home community.

This report discusses the situation in Canada for people with disabilities, issues facing Aboriginal people with disabilities, and particular issues in the North. In this way the report aims to help people understand the impacts of the Park Rangers program on the people involved, their families, caregivers, and their community. It also suggests ways to build on program strengths to make it more effective and a model for other communities.

Conditions for People with Disabilities in Northern Saskatchewan

While one out of seven people in Canada have disabilities, disability is as much as twice as common in Aboriginal people, who make up a large portion of Île-à-la-Crosse's population. In addition, people with disabilities and Aboriginal people have lower levels of employment than the general population. Despite these facts, there is little research and few resources to help people in the North deal with obstacles or grasp opportunities. This is a special problem when Aboriginal cultures have different cultural views of disabilities than Euro-Canadians — and in some cases have no word for “disability” — and when we know from research that participation in society, including working, improves the quality of life and emotional well-being of people with disabilities.

Methods

This case study of the South Bay Park Rangers employment program in Île-à-la-Crosse is based on the stories program participants, their parents/guardians, caregivers, community leaders, and program staff shared in one-on-one interviews, focus groups, and a video archive produced by students from Rossignol Community High School. The involvement of researchers from the community, ongoing discussions, and reflection among all team members were key parts of the participatory research practice — and a valuable source of learning for all. From the Park Rangers themselves to the youth and other researchers to the families and broader community, all learned what the Park Rangers can and do contribute. They found important validation for what the Park Rangers and their supporters do and learned they can be role models for other communities.

Lessons learned are presented through an in-depth description and discussed in three main sections: Building on Local Strength, Creating an Inclusive Community, and Recognizing Individual Capacity Building.

The Logic Model

The findings are presented through a logic model, which is a diagram showing causes and effects of the program. It shows connections between program inputs, activities, and processes, outputs, immediate outcomes, and long-term impacts.

Case Study

Started in 2004 as a partnership of the Village of Île-à-la-Crosse and the Gary Tinker Federation for the Disabled Inc., the South Bay Park Rangers program gives people with disabilities an opportunity to have meaningful employment that makes good use of individual abilities and talents. The program aims to help people with disabilities gain work skills, experience, and financial independence, while at the same time improving the community. The Park Rangers are responsible for maintaining the South Bay Park (20 km outside of the village) and helping in the village. They clean, cut lawns, prepare wood, and help with events.

Run since 2007 by the village with funding from Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services, the program operates in the summer season (May until September or October) and involves four or five Park Rangers who have disabilities and one supervisor. The supervisor is one key to the success of the program because it is his responsibility to make sure the work is completed and at the same time allowing each Park Ranger to work at their own pace. He teaches them in an informal way around the fire, for example, providing support in a way that reflects the Northern way of life and culture around which the program is built.

The program is successful in positively impacting life in Île-à-la-Crosse. The community takes great pride in the Park Rangers program. They see what the Park Rangers do as valuable and as empowering the participants. The Park Rangers themselves are also very happy with the program. They enjoy the work, financial independence, the ability to contribute to community, as well as increased self-esteem and confidence, and enhanced quality of life. Visitors to the South Bay Park have commented on how the Park Rangers keep the park very clean and its users safe and comfortable.

As well as making the Park Rangers visible in the community, breaking the isolation experienced when the Rangers are out of work, the program contributes to disability awareness and brings significant financial benefits. Some respondents have said that the alternative to the Park Rangers program is often for the participants to rely on social assistance from the Provincial Government. Through this work they are able to gain financial independence and qualify during the off season for Employment Insurance from the Federal Government. Instead of feeling bored and lonely at home, the Park Rangers like to be outside working with their peers.

Although it was highly praised, respondents offered suggestions to improve the program. The truck that is used to transport the Park Rangers and supervisor to different locations is too small to fit more than three people. This concerns the Park Rangers because it means that they go unsupervised for periods at a time. The Park Rangers also reported that there is some discrimination against them in the labour market and some people in the village point and laugh at them, although this has been improving. The Park Rangers pointed out is that they would like the program to be all year round because they feel isolated and bored in the wintertime.

Lessons Learned

Building on Local Strength — The Park Rangers program shows that, when the opportunities are presented, people with disabilities are an underutilized resource in Northern Saskatchewan, that they are willing and able to work, and that the community can and does rely on them for their comfort and safety. Investment in their employment has social and financial benefits. A study should be conducted to see how the South Bay Park could be better used for tourism, job creation, and other purposes. These findings suggest maintaining the Park Rangers program, creating more disability awareness in the North of Saskatchewan, and developing similar programs in other communities.

Creating an Inclusive Community — There is a clear need to break the negative stereotypes about people with disabilities. Programs such as the Park Rangers contribute to informed and accepting communities where all have the right to make decisions for themselves. It is an important source of learning for participants and community who discover what they can do together. In order to increase these positive effects, it is recommended that ways be found to get more funding for people with disabilities. It is also recommended to educate employers about people with disabilities and provide benefits to those who hire people with disabilities.

Recognizing Individual Capacity Building — Since the disabilities of the Park Rangers are varied, the program is individualized and flexible. However, the fundamental goal is to increase the self-esteem and confidence of the participants as full citizens. Investment in this program and others like it empowers people with disabilities and contributes to enhanced quality of life and well-being.

Conclusions

This program has a significant positive impact on those involved, their supporters, caregivers, and community. It promotes the inclusion and well-being of individuals with disabilities, helps create a healthy and safe environment, and strengthens the community in social, cultural, and economic terms. We suggest replication of this program in communities across the North.

Recommendations

Long Term Strategy — Make the program permanent, securing funding with partners.

Infrastructure Development — Invest in infrastructure such as group home and truck that will enhance the program, improve access, and better the lives of people with disabilities.

Health Benefits — Address concern that when working, people with disabilities often lose the health benefits that come with social assistance.

Follow up and Coordination — Offer winter employment or training opportunities.

Education, Training, and Employment — Increase training for skills, employability, and social activities.

Creating an Inclusive Environment — Welcome and include women.

Reducing Stigma — Help people with disabilities feel proud of who they are and fight prejudice with education.

ÎLE-À-LA-CROSSE GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, POPULATION

SITUATED ON A PENINSULA in Northern Saskatchewan that extends 18 kilometres out into the lake that bears the same name, Île-à-la-Crosse is a village of seventeen hundred people. It is a village rich in history and resources. Residents are proud to mention that Louis Riel's parents met there; to remember the explorers, voyageurs, and traders who used the lake and Churchill River system to cross Northern Saskatchewan on their way to the Northwest Territories following the Clearwater and Athabasca Rivers; and to celebrate the signing of Treaty 10 and Métis scrip in the village in 1906.

The bush or forest and the lake still serve the people's sustenance and recreation, supporting sustainable livelihoods for some (Keewatin Career Development Corporation

2003). The older generations, for instance, still maintain traditional practices such as curing and tanning hides and even some trapping, while others find employment in health, education, commercial fishing, forest fire fighting, mining, and in local, provincial, and federal government. The second oldest community in the province, Île-à-la-Crosse has all the latest technologies, including cable television, locally controlled education, a school designed by Douglas Cardinal, and an Integrated School and Health Centre. The school area of this facility includes a large gymnasium, regular and art classrooms, and areas designated to post-secondary training. The health areas consist of an -bed hospital, a 17-bed long-term-care wing, a family healing centre, an emergency department, radiology, and labs. Meeting rooms, a day care, public health and mental health services, adult education, community recreation and space for elders and spiritual counselling are some of the highlights of this unique facility (Northern Medical Services 2009). The church established in 1846 and named for St. John the Baptist is a major landmark in Île-à-la-Crosse, site of the first Catholic mission in Saskatchewan. A productive mix of past and present, traditional and modern lifestyles, the village draws on both past and present as it moves towards the future.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN CANADA

STATISTICS CANADA (2006) reports that 4.4 million Canadians (one out of seven) have an activity limitation, yielding a national disability rate of 14.3 percent. This increase of over .75 million since the 2001 census may be due to a number of factors, including an aging population, changing perceptions of disabilities, and an increased willingness to report a disability.

Changing perceptions of disability are associated with a shift from a medical model understanding disability as “deficiency . . . requiring agency-controlled services and/or separation from society” to a social model of disability as something coming not from within the person but from barriers imposed by society. The social model emphasizes that “individuals have a right to self-determination, community inclusion, and full citizenship within society”

(Lynch and Findlay 2007, 1–2). Although there is widespread acceptance of the social model of disability, efforts to relocate choice and control over services from service providers to people with disabilities remain ongoing.

Pain was the most common disability reported by Canadians in the working-age group (15 to 64), followed by mobility and agility limitations. Problems related to mobility, such as walking, climbing stairs, or carrying an object a short distance, are often associated with agility problems or pain. Close to 3 million Canadian adults (approximately 11 percent of the total population aged 15 and over) reported one of these limitations. Not only are these the most prevalent disabilities, but many of these Canadians experience more than one of these problems (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008a).

In 2006 a Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) was for the first time conducted in Canada's three territories: Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. Among Canada's three territories, the Yukon had the highest disability rate at 13.5 percent followed by the Northwest Territories at 8.6 percent and Nunavut at 6.4 percent (Statistics Canada 2006).

In this context, the overall health and well-being of persons with disabilities has gained escalating attention and has emerged as a priority (Santiago and Coyle 2004) to positively impact individuals' independence, quality of life, and wellness. The promotion of active lifestyles (which includes employment, social participation, and integration) is a major goal and one of the most effective means of improving quality of life for people with disabilities. Yet for individuals with disabilities, the lack of social and economic support to access activities and employment remains an important barrier to community participation and integration (Santiago and Coyle 2004, 485).

Participation in society (including employment) has been shown to be an important correlate of emotional well-being in the general population (Lin, Ye, and Ensel 1999, 344) and post disability (Burleigh, Farber, and Gillard 1998, 45). Increased social activity is associated with both lower levels of depression and higher levels of optimism (Brown, Gordon, and Spielman 2003, 266). Those who are socially engaged have shown improvements in

cognitive function, physical well-being, and significant subjective quality of life (Harlow and Cantor 1996, 1235).

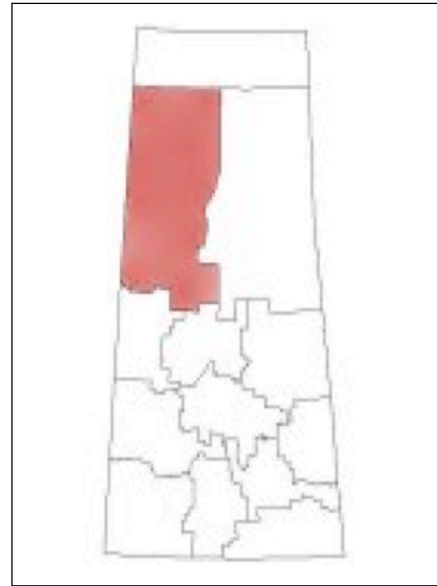
Employment is similarly related to socio-economic status, so that adults expect that they should engage in productive work. Such work provides a window to the world outside the family, an opportunity for increasing social networks, and money to meet personal needs and fulfill social commitments (Togonu-Bickersteth 1996, 1). As a result, “persistent, as opposed to temporary, low income” is a concern of policy analysts. People with disabilities and Aboriginal people are both among the five groups associated with persistent low income (Statistics Canada 2005).

ABORIGINAL PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN has a rich mix of cultures with a high rate of Aboriginal people including Cree, Dené, and Métis (Irvine, Stockdale, and Oliver 2004). Île-à-la-Crosse is included in the Keewatin Yatthé Regional Health Authority (KY) illustrated in red in the accompanying map. According to the 2001 census (Statistic Canada 2002), 84 percent of the Northern Saskatchewan population indicated they were of Aboriginal ancestry, with the KY Region representing 95 percent of those respondents reporting Aboriginal ancestry. Similarly, the 2006 census reports the total population for the region was 10,512 with 9,860 individuals identified as Aboriginal and 645 Non-Aboriginal. In addition, the 2006 census data shows Saskatchewan is the province with the second-highest level of individuals self-identifying as Métis at 5.04 percent of the population (Statistics Canada 2007).

Although the 2006 PALS data suggests that Canadian society is showing increasing social acceptance of the reporting of disabilities, there is still limited quantitative or qualitative data available on Aboriginal people with disabilities. Existing research shows that the rate of people experiencing disabilities is higher among the Aboriginal population than the general

population except in the case of congenital disabilities. The higher rates of disability among Aboriginal peoples are due to environmental factors and a legacy of cultural trauma. The differential rates of disability among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people “corresponds to disparities in rates of injury, accident, violence, self-destructive or suicidal behaviour, and illness (such as diabetes) that can result in permanent impairment” (RCAP 1996, 148; cit. in Durst and Bluehardt 2004, 3). Similarly, Elias and Demas (2001) identify these factors: food insecurity, unemployment, poverty, inadequate housing, social and geographic isolation, and diabetes (source of 32 percent of the cases reported in the survey).



Keewatin Yatthe Health Region Map
Retrieved from <http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/keewatin-yatthe-health-region>

It is clear that the rates of disability — particularly associated with various health conditions such as diabetes and brain injury — are alarmingly high among Aboriginal people. Depending on the disability and the region under consideration, estimates range from 20 percent to 50 percent higher than those found in the non-Aboriginal population. (Waldram, Herring, and Young 2006). Irvine et al. (2004) show that 24 percent of Northern Saskatchewan people age 12 and over living off reserve reported moderate or severe functional health problems compared to 12 percent of the province.

Furthermore, disabilities in Aboriginal people can compound other disadvantages they may experience (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008a). In 1981, the Special Committee on the Disabled and the Handicapped found:

While all disabled Canadians have obstacles to overcome, Native Canadians who are disabled often have more. If they live in the north or on reserves, they are isolated from services for the handicapped that are usually located in cities. And if they go to the cities to take advantage of these services, they must abandon a familiar lifestyle and community. As well, they often have to cope with the obstacles of prejudice (cit. in Ng 1996).

Indeed, according to Durst and Bluehardt (2004), Aboriginal people with disabilities represent “a hidden population” that is “caught in a public policy vacuum with little hope for amelioration” (1). The situation is exacerbated as much by jurisdictional and bureaucratic issues as by the service sector’s failures to connect with Aboriginal people with disabilities and its tendency to identify disabilities as a health rather than a socio-economic or cultural issue, losing sight of the “cultural context” in their “attention to the concreteness of the physical disability.” Such inattention to culture is especially damaging to those facing “overt and covert racism” (2).

In 2005, the First Nations Centre published the results of the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey conducted in 2002–2003 and funded by Health Canada (Human Resources and Skills Development in Canada 2008a). The survey shows that the rate of disability among First Nations adults is 28.5 percent (25.7 percent among men and 31.5 percent among women). The research also shows that First Nations adults with disabilities are less likely to be employed than their counterparts without disabilities (37.3 percent compared to 52.2 percent). This low level of employment is also reflected in lower income. Some 58.7 percent of First Nations people with disabilities had personal incomes of less than \$15,000 in 2001.

If Aboriginal peoples have distinct experiences with disabilities related to a legacy of cultural trauma, they also understand and respond to disabilities in ways that distinguish them from Euro-Canadians. Joe and Miller (1987), for example, highlight differences between Euro-Canadian notions of disability shaped by notions of ability (including ability to work and support self) and Aboriginal notions that may, for instance, focus on causes rather than symptoms. Similarly, Gething (1995) underlines differences between perceptions of Aboriginal people and those of “the trained professional” whereby Aboriginal people are inclined not to see disabilities as discrete but as “part of problems which are widespread and accepted as part of the lifecycle” (81; cit. in Durst 2006, 13). Living in close quarters in small communities where someone is there to assist, Aboriginal peoples with disabilities may not see or report barriers that others find challenging. Whereas mainstream Canadians value independence, Aboriginal cultures value interdependence and the different contributions people make to community (Durst and Bluehardt 2004).

Thus, “the definition, interpretation and designation of a disability” vary across cultures, especially when many Aboriginal languages have no word for “disability.” While some people would not be classified as “disabled” because of the sacred source of human beings, others who abuse alcohol and are “unproductive” can be labelled “disabled” (Durst and Bluehardt 2001). Yet the traditional view of a person with disabilities as a gift from Creator (Durst 2006) has often been lost to Euro-Canadian notions of deficiency.

SASKATCHEWAN LABOUR MARKET

ACCORDING TO THE BUREAU OF STATISTICS (Saskatchewan Ministry of Finance 2009), the Saskatchewan population in January 2009 was 1,023,811 with an unemployment rate in April 2009 of 5.4 percent. Of those, 13.85 percent (141,890) self-identified as Aboriginal people. The largest component in this group remains members of the First Nations of the province.

The Saskatchewan Labour Force Survey (Saskatchewan Ministry of Finance 2009), shows that for the total population, the unemployment rate between January and March 2009 was 5.1 percent. For non-Aboriginal people the rate was 4.5 percent, for Aboriginal people it was 4.7 percent, and for the Métis population the rate was 10.3 percent. However, caution should be used when reading the data because small sample sizes can result in large standard errors. In Northern Saskatchewan the employment rate is 41 percent compared to 64 percent for the entire province (Irvine et al. 2004). According to Irvine et al. (2004), the long-term unemployment rate in the health regions of Keewatin Yatthé and Athabasca areas is significantly greater than in many other northern regions in Canada.

Although the Canadian economy has been flourishing for many years, benefits have not reached Canadian workers with disabilities who remain under-represented in the Canadian labour market, even though policy and programming are present to increase participation (Shier, Graham, and Jones 2009).

In Saskatchewan, the presence of health conditions lowers the employment rate from 84 percent to 76 percent; an activity limitation lowers it from 84 percent to 78 percent. Thus, the potential exists to increase employment among people with health conditions and activity limitations. If the province were to have equal employment rates between these groups and the general population, it would add ten thousand people to the labour supply (Elliot 2009).

EMPLOYMENT AND DISABILITY IN NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

ACCORDING TO HEALTH CANADA (2003), “Employment has a significant effect on a person’s physical, mental and social health. Paid work provides not only money, but also a sense of identity and purpose, social contacts and opportunities for personal growth.”

Like anyone with disabilities, Aboriginal people with disabilities may face significant financial disincentives to access training or employment. Some of these disincentives are a lack of information about training opportunities, negative public attitudes and stigma, low self-esteem, and lack of supports to participate in education, training or employment. Education is linked not only to health, but also to labour market opportunities, higher income, and better living conditions. Aboriginal students are less likely to stay enrolled and to complete education than non-Aboriginal students. Completion rates are even lower for those with disabilities (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008b), which increases the likelihood of unemployment and poor living conditions.

Although Saskatchewan was the province with the highest overall employment rate for persons aged 25 to 54, Aboriginal people did not benefit as much from the strong labour market conditions in 2007. This province had the widest gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment rates (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2008a).

In the Keewatin Yatthé Region the median income is much lower than in Saskatchewan as a whole. The 2006 Census showed that the median income for people 15 years and over is \$13,739 in the KY Region, compared to \$21,679 in all of Saskatchewan (Statistics Canada 2007). People with disabilities face obstacles to active participation in the labour market. If barriers are numerous, opportunities abound to engage Aboriginal people with disabilities in the fuller life of community. Addressing the obstacles will create an inclusive community where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with disabilities could be active and valued members of community and labour force.

According to Crichton and Jongbloed (1998), some obstacles could be lifted by:

- using sensitive means of communicating information about services and job opportunities, including accessing disability-related supports
- working with communities to break the negative public perception and stigma surrounding disabilities
- finding ways to build self-esteem
- increasing supports to participate in education, training, or employment
- helping to overcome the fear of potentially losing certain health benefits upon entering the labour force
- offering more funding to make workplaces more accommodating
- coordinating efforts among social services, education, training, and income support systems
- accessing income support to meet their disability-related costs

In Saskatchewan, Social Services (formerly Community Resources) is the department responsible for welfare and programs such as Saskatchewan Assistance Program (SAP) or Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA). People living independently with severe, long-term disabilities represent a large portion of the people who receive Saskatchewan social assistance (an estimated 23 percent to 26 percent of all SAP cases). These people report that the benefits that come with SAP do not sufficiently address their needs related to their disability and do not give a standard of living more than subsistence level (Government of Saskatchewan). The new disability income support program is an important step towards a “person-

centred” approach that recognizes the limitations of a welfare approach failing to take account of the particular disadvantages experienced by individuals with disabilities denied the choices and opportunities most citizens take for granted (Government of Saskatchewan 2009).

It is against this background that the Gary Tinker Federation, a not-for-profit organization that identifies and advocates for people with disabilities in Northern Saskatchewan, makes its contributions. Its fundamental goal is “to make long term improvements in the lives of disabled persons that reside in Northern Saskatchewan” (Gary Tinker Federation 2009). In this effort it is motivated by the inspiring example of Gary Tinker himself who in 79 days in 1989 made the 650-kilometre trek on crutches from La Ronge to Regina to raise awareness — and funds — that supported the establishment of the federation. Gary Tinker was in turn motivated by his own experience of a system inhospitable to people with disabilities and his ambition to ensure that people in the North have opportunities for meaningful participation in their own home communities.

CASE STUDY METHODS

A CASE STUDY is the study or exploration of a case over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Creswell 1998). Case studies feature complex descriptions, are context sensitive, and use data gathered in different ways. Writing style is informal, perhaps narrative, and often includes quotation.

Case studies are useful in the study of human affairs, especially when designed “to optimize understanding of the case rather than to generalize beyond it.” Credibility is enhanced “by triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just in a single step but continuously throughout the period of study” (Stake 2005, 443–44). In Stake’s view, a tension always exists between particularizing the case and developing generalizations, though gener-

alization cannot be avoided. Indeed, even a case study interested in better understanding the specific case “can be seen as a small step toward grand generalization” (448). Thus, the case study can usefully provoke thought and exemplify possibilities.

Data was collected by the research team (Isobel M. Findlay, principal investigator; Julia Bidonde, PhD student intern; Maria Basualdo, community-university research liaison; and Martin Durocher, community researcher) via one-on-one interviews, focus groups, key informant interviews, field notes, and a video archive produced by Colleen Joan Daigneault and Danielle Corrigan, Aboriginal students from Rossignol Community High School with the support of their principal and teachers. The involvement of researchers from the community and ongoing discussions and reflection among all team members, including Alyssa McMurtry in the final stages, was a key part of the participatory research practice.

The networks of connections and community knowledge shared by the community researchers proved invaluable in securing active participation and enriching the data collection. The research process itself became an important source of engaging, educating, and motivating, meeting some of the awareness and capacity building goals of the research. From the Park Rangers themselves to the youth and other researchers to the families and broader community, all learned what the Park Rangers can and do contribute. They found important validation for what they do and incentive to share their experience so that other communities might benefit.

The one-on-one interviews and focus groups included program participants, their parents/guardians, caregivers, community leaders, and program staff. Participants were asked their opinions about the program, gaps, best practices, and possible improvements. The key informant interviews involved representatives from community groups, social services, Aboriginal peoples’ groups, business representatives, members of the town administration, and employment councillors. Specific demographic information on the group from which the study participants were drawn was not collected. Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services (Can-Sask), the funder of this program for the past two years, did not accept an invitation to participate in the study (see Appendix A for a chronology of the program).

Recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and these conversations formed the main data source for the study. The conversations were “open” and did not use a set of structured questions; rather the researchers used them as a conversation guide.

The challenge of qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data (Patton 2002). This involves reducing the volume of raw information, identifying significant patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of the data. In this process the collaborative and iterative research practices proved key to the effective co-production of the case study and the goals of community awareness and capacity building.

Respondents identified several positive aspects of the program as well as lessons learned about what prevents full participation of people with disabilities in the Île-à-la-Crosse labour market. Based on the process of data analysis described below (logic model), our findings are presented through an in-depth description and discussed in three main sections. Respondent quotations are presented throughout to complement and support findings presented.

For a case study, analysis consists of making a detailed description of the case and its setting. A rich description provides the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting and takes the reader into the setting being described (Patton 2002). The case study is an important means of telling a story that in this case was too long buried in files, although alive and well in the memories of participants and providers.

PARK RANGERS — LOGIC MODEL

THE RESULT OF A THOROUGH ANALYSIS, the Park Rangers program logic model is presented in Appendix B. A logic model depicts, in graphic form, the connections between program inputs, activities, and processes, outputs, immediate outcomes, and long-term impacts. The logic model shows a complex chain of events over time. The events are staged in repeated cause-effect-cause-effect patterns, but multiple stages

may exist over an extended period of time (Yin 2003). Logic models are descriptive and nearly all models are read in a linear sequence (e.g., reading from left to right or from top to bottom). However in real life, events can be more dynamic, not necessarily progressing in a linear manner.

CASE STUDY: SOUTH BAY PARK RANGERS

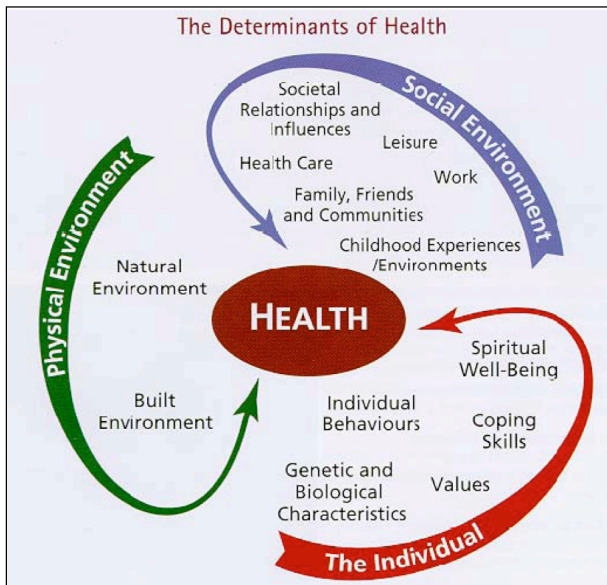
Introduction

SOUTH BAY PARK is located in Northern Saskatchewan 33 kilometres southeast of the Village of Île-à-la-Crosse and off Highway 155. The 20-acre publicly owned park intended for community and tourist use includes camp sites, wash-rooms, and a large covered open air building. Formerly the South Bay Provincial Park, South Bay Park was transferred from the provincial government to the municipal government through a Land Transfer Agreement in the Fall of 2003 (Youth Outdoor Wellness Conference 2009).

In 2004, in a joint initiative, the Gary Tinker Federation and the Village of Île-à-la-Crosse started the South Bay Park Rangers Employment program, which provides meaningful employment to individuals living with a disability. The program allows participants to achieve on-the-job training, seasonal employment, and independence without leaving their community. It aims to give an opportunity to people with disabilities to gain work skills, work experience, and supported employment. Initially, the Park Rangers worked only at the old Veterans Park (today Municipal South Bay Park) but they have expanded their work into the village. They help with the beautification of the town, maintaining public areas, and helping with city events (see Appendix A).

The main goal of the South Bay Park Rangers program is to assist adults with disabilities to actively participate in the community and to have some of the same social and cultural opportunities as their peers. The program also tries to create awareness in the community about disability issues and give participants the opportunity to be active members of

the community. The Park Rangers employment program has benefited the participants by enhancing their societal relationships, connections with family, friends and communities; affecting individual behaviours through social relationships; and by enhancing their well-being, coping skills, and quality of life. There is increasing evidence to show that these factors are influential in the health of individuals and communities. The determinants of health figure below shows how these factors are interrelated.



Adapted from "Health Impact Assessment Guidelines," B.C. Ministry of Health; Saskatchewan Provincial Health Council (1996).

Traditions and culture are also embedded in the program to contribute to the spiritual well-being of the participants. The Park Rangers program incorporates practices that link the community past and present, applying Aboriginal notions of interdependence and valuing the different contributions that all people can make to their community (Durst and Bluehardt 2004).

Originally the program was administered by the Gary Tinker Federation in partnership with the municipality. After 2004–2007, the municipality

took the leadership to annually organize and seek the necessary funding to support the program. For 2008 and 2009 the sustainability of the program has depended on Can-Sask (see Appendix A). The municipality is in charge of the recruiting and hiring process and direct contact with the supervisor. They provide the truck that transports the participants to South Bay as well as the radio system and overall administration of the program. Can-Sask provides the funding for the participants' salaries. Participants are not involved in the planning or distribution of tasks; they get trained on the job by the supervisor according to their unique abilities.

The initial funding agency (Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities — EAPD — accessed by the Gary Tinker Federation) required participants to have a qualifying

assessment for which they travelled to Prince Albert. As a consequence, participants became members of the Gary Tinker Federation and were eligible to receive follow-up support after seasonal employment or access other sources of support through the Federation. Since the provincial government now funds the program, participants are no longer required to have such an assessment. Even though they haven't thought of what would happen if Can-Sask stopped funding the program, they are thinking of a long-term strategy where the Park Rangers program would play an important role.

I don't think we have seriously sat down and discussed options for the Park Rangers program, as long as Can-Sask is willing to support it ... What we really would love is a long-term program.... For two years I've been dialoguing with social services ... We have been lobbying to get a group home built here. We want to get this group home built and if we get it built, maybe the transformation of the Park Rangers becomes different. What is some of the programming that they need? We could build a SARCAN here; they are kind of geared around group homes ... So would we try to implement that? Or would Park Rangers somehow become a large part of this? You wouldn't need to live in the group home but you can be part of the work force.

The group home that the community is considering would be for people with cognitive disabilities in Île-à-la-Crosse and surrounding communities (La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, Patuanak, Beauval, and Green Lake, etc). Since nothing like this currently exists north of Meadow Lake, there has been discussion about creating a six- to ten-unit group home for males in the community. A benefit of this care home in Île-à-la-Crosse is that the village has one of the two hospitals in the entire Keewatin Yatthé Health Region (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health 2007).

The need is there ... there is a regional need. This situational problem is not for us alone, because this goes in all the surrounding communities.... It is a work in progress and we are trying to nail this down. The concept is great.

The older people take care of these kids with cognitive disabilities, and what happens if they pass away? We just had that incident here. The options are a close family member takes them or ships them to North Battleford, Saskatoon, etc.

The Program

Park Rangers employment program runs during the summer season (starting in May and running until the middle of September or October). Four or five individuals plus a supervisor work at the program. They work in the village as well as at South Bay Park. The park is owned by the Village of Île-à-la-Crosse. Respondents for this case study perceived the advantages of public ownership of the municipal park and its strategic location. Île-à-la-Crosse residents enjoy a free of charge, accessible, and attractive facility that employs Park Rangers during summer season to serve the park. Another benefit mentioned was the proximity to town and the independence from federal and provincial governments. Respondents commented:

One of the areas that has to be worked on to make this program a success is the park. Most of the parks are provincially run and unionized ... The Park Rangers in Île-à-la-Crosse is a perfect example because it is community owned — not unionized.

Lots of families go and stay in the park for a week or two in summertime; others for a month or more and they come back and forth ... Families use it a lot. Different organizations of the community use it for retreats, conferences, the berry picking season ... It's busy all summer and it has an easy access on the road.

People with disabilities, both male and female, who want to work for the Park Rangers program are invited to apply every year. To date, no woman has worked at the Park Rangers program. The interviews did not provide conclusive evidence on whether a woman has applied. The participants are predominantly Aboriginal, between the ages of 20 and 55, with physical and/or mental disabilities.

The program has had two different supervisors, both of them Aboriginal. The former supervisor had work experience with people with disabilities, which was one key to the success of the program. The supervisor acts as the liaison between the village office and the work crew. His main task is to understand the unique strengths and abilities of the participants and distribute tasks accordingly. He provides constant support for and understanding of the participants' individual needs and encourages them to keep themselves active and

working at their own pace. He works with participants to explain the needs of the job, supports, supervises, and ensures work completion. He drives the truck to pick up and transport the workers each day to and from work sites. He keeps a record of the work and the hours for each person to provide this information to the village administrator. A respondent said, “I guess the supervisor that they have [had] all these years has been excellent with them”:

The supervisor is not disabled — he has really good skills, carpentry skills, he is kind of a jack of all trades.... We have had him for quite a few years ... He is really good with the Rangers ... He needs to know how far to push them or what skills they bring to the position ... He does a very good job ... It is important that the supervisor has a good rapport with the Rangers and the community.

Learning and training reflect Aboriginal cultural traditions and the supervisor understands his task to be holistic. Throughout the season the supervisor informally teaches the Park Rangers about their work. At times the Rangers and supervisor sit together around a fire or for a meal to discuss different problems and the supervisor offers advice and knowledge about the job:

My expectation for this job was to try to teach these guys things like how to handle a saw properly, how to clean washrooms, help them out in the best way I can ... They have a lighter workload, we don't want to push them hard, we want them to feel better that they are out here working and to understand that life is about living, working, and having fun.

The Park Rangers program consists of other traditional practices that link it to the rich past and traditions of the community. At the end of the season the Park Rangers cut wood to give to the Elders in the community, demonstrating respect and admiration.

The community uses a concept of disability that might differ from mainstream Canadian views. One respondent said, “a disabled person, it's actually probably a wrong word in some ways. It makes you sound disabled because it sounds as if you are not able to do anything.” This program is helping to change past practices by valuing abilities and not overprotecting people with disabilities:

They didn't allow them to do things on their own because they could hurt themselves. It's best if they just be there and not try to do anything this way ... [Now] I feel a sense of pride when I see them all riding in their trucks, doing whatever they're doing. They are contributing to the community.

Respecting Aboriginal cultural values of interdependence, the community is trying to keep people with disabilities within the village. Many participants live with family members who take care of them and for whom they provide care. The alternative, as some pointed out, is often to move people to different cities or towns. Sending people away decreases the interdependence with the community and families, cuts them off from their roots, undermines a sense of belonging, and diminishes community quality of life.

The Impacts

The community showed a great deal of pride in the accomplishments of the program because it makes participants visible in the community and valued contributors to it.

We found the self-esteem and the ability to have these people in the community working and making money and being self-sufficient was extremely successful in terms of the community and the participants themselves.... They contribute and provide a very valuable service for the community.

There are some things I think are important to mention: number one, it shows a community in Northern Saskatchewan that people with disabilities can be a meaningful part of their community. Number two, it gets them to work.

The first thing that I see is a form of empowerment ... because they [the Park Rangers] never really had a chance in any kind of employment.... It gives them that sense of great pride and responsibility to be able to do that.

The interviews captured the pride the participants took in their work. The Park Rangers challenged the assumption that people with disabilities are not able to work and contribute to society: "We are showing people that we can work, sometimes we can do better jobs ... other times we can't ... we have a limited ability but we want to work." Their sense of ownership of the program was clearly evident. That the participants felt the program

was their own (and designed to meet their needs) impacted their desire to work and remain involved in and contributing to the community.

In fact, the Park Rangers see themselves as performing the important role of being ambassadors for the community, and tourists have commented on the welcome they received and the carefully attended park. One Park Ranger even explained how the community has become dependent on their work. The Park Rangers take care of the entertainment centre and beach, preparing them for summer events. One participant noted how important their work is to ensure the health and safety of all visitors who come to enjoy the park: “There was broken glass on the beach and we picked it up. I don’t think people could go swimming if there was broken glass all over.”

The Park Rangers feel motivated and have a sense of ownership while working in the municipally owned park and the village. This creates opportunities for them to interact with campers, village residents, and enjoy nature. One respondent remarked that for visitors there is now the bonus of a welcoming smile and a helping hand: “They [Park Rangers] are definitely a positive thing ... It is nice to see them out and they’re very happy, their smiles are big, and they’re ready to help wherever they can.”

As stated, the program provides multiple benefits for the participants, community, and visitors, giving a remarkable return on the financial investment. As one respondent said, “It [the program] benefits the community and residents ... it also benefits the park ... The benefits are social and financial and their [the participants’] quality of life improves, gives them a purpose in life.”

In addition, the program creates disability awareness in Île-à-la-Crosse and the surrounding communities, contributing to social understanding and cohesion while demonstrating community interdependence:

They [Park Rangers] take pride in what they do at the same time that they’re receiving a cheque ... they are really happy working ... seeing people and interacting ... I think the contact with tourists is good for them because they have a chance to socialize.

The work in the park has been recognized by visitors. Interviewees recalled the existence of a letter sent by a visitor to the park. A Park Ranger proudly described the experience:

The letter said, “It’s a very beautiful park, very nice job you guys did keeping it clean.” We do keep the park very very nice with the tourism in mind, not only locally too, but all from the whole area. This person happened to be from Alberta and toured around all the way up north and actually stayed at the park one night and found it so clean that they went to move to the next park, two or three hours up the road, stayed there for half a night, picked up and came all the way back ... to the park to stay there. That was just because it was nice and clean they felt more comfortable in that environment — they probably saw us up there.

The financial benefits are not limited to an improved quality of life, but the program creates real employment for people with disabilities, giving them the opportunity to gain financial independence. Some respondents said that in many cases the alternative for the participants of the Park Rangers program is to go on social assistance. At the moment, the Park Rangers work sufficient hours so that during the off-season they are able to collect Employment Insurance from the federal government, lifting the provincial government’s burden. Employment Insurance varies according to regions and can be claimed during shortages of work, seasonal and mass lay offs. The Park Rangers also appreciated the financial independence that working offered:

We are looking forward to coming back to work. We show we can work ... Some people will categorize us as lazy. It is not that we don’t want to work; within our own limitations we can work as hard as anybody else. We need the opportunities and the flexibility.

Well I like to buy clothes and stuff and when I am on welfare I can’t. [Now] I say, “I want to buy these boots,” and by the time I get with this job, if I can afford it I will buy them.

The program also creates the opportunity to break the isolation, creating the opportunity to work and be among people with similar life experiences in a group environment.

Living with a disability, the Park Rangers recognized that they could become isolated within their own homes. When asked what, if anything, they were taking away from their participation in the program, their answers included social, financial, and psychological benefits. Family and community members observed the positive impacts, including health outcomes, on the Park Rangers:

Their day is full of activity and they really appreciate that. It gives them a purpose, not only a paycheck. Being productive gives them purpose and direction.

When I first met him he was a very agitated person, always had to go, couldn't stay in one spot. But since he's started working he's seemed calmed down a little, stable, he likes to be with his family, and takes more responsibility.

Possibilities for Enhancement

Although the Park Rangers program was highly praised by the participants, they had some suggestions about how it could be improved. They raised concerns about issues of transportation and safety. Their attendance was tied to car access. The supervisor drove them either to South Bay or to the townsite, where they would work for the day. The current truck has seating for three, room only for the supervisor and two Park Rangers, so the others are left to work without supervision. If the municipal truck were unavailable, it could mean missed work sessions. Another concern was the number of hours alone in South Bay when the supervisor needed to return to the village to check on the other participants. A participant pointed out the need for a bigger truck so they can stay together:

There are only three of us going out to the park and the others sometimes are at the arena or another person would be at the beach ... and our foreman would not be in charge of all of us ... We can get separated and lose communication.

The participants anticipated having work-related issues (e.g., accident) and not having the support available. Nor were their concerns limited to their own well-being. One Park Ranger said, "In case something happens to us, we can fall or whatever, we could cut

ourselves ... and what are we going to do if something ever happens to us or supervisor over there?"

While many spoke of inclusion and belonging, respondents also testified to ongoing stigmatisation and discrimination against people with disabilities within the labour market:

The employer was accommodating for the first month.... So the employer thought that after that month training, I would be able to work harder and harder so what happens is, I just ended up leaving, because I tried to reason with them, [I said] "You hired me on this, you hire me on these pretences," and they said "Yes we did," and [I asked] how come the work load is getting more and more demanding, a person with a bad shoulder, a person who has a permanent injury how you do it?... They thought it was going to go away in three weeks or a month.

Respondents reported labelling and naming as main barriers in the community. Public attitude and prejudice still require attention, although one respondent said, "I think that's changing in the last few years. We're not pointing that much, we're more accepting." Another respondent said, "Society is accepting more and more, and realizing that it's wrong to point out."

Striving to stay physically strong, working, and remaining part of the community enhanced the participants' resilience and highlighted the importance of supported employment.

Once you get involved in the program people laugh at you ... we're not afraid to say we're on this program, we're working, we're benefiting, we're looking forward to doing it again, but still we drive down the street to pick people up and notice people pointing to us and laughing.... That happens all over the world, not only in our town.

To respondents, the extension of the program would be an important addition: "the ideal, of course, would be to have a year-long program." Île-à-la-Crosse has cold winter temperatures, snow, and icy sidewalks and road conditions that challenge outdoor activities for several months a year. Winter confines participants to longer hours of inactivity and isola-

tion. Respondents recognized the need to extend the program and the effort and planning it would take to remain involved in the Park Rangers program. One respondent said, “If the work is inside and little bit outside that could work. You can’t put them outside steady in the cold.” One respondent suggested:

In the winter, that’s the thing, they don’t have nothing in this town to do for these kids. Maybe do something to create jobs like open an ice skating rink so the kids can go there and skate all day. Somebody needs to stay there and take care of the rink.

Participants spoke about winter weather conditions that could leave them feeling sorry for themselves, withdrawn, and bored. “I enjoy this little job that I’ve got, I don’t know how the rest of the boys, how they feel ... I can’t stand to watch TV, I can’t just sit there and watch TV,” said one participant.

[The program] gives them a boost and lift in life. In the past they were not doing that much, and were bored. So a program such as this gives them something to look forward to ... they feel good about it.

Lessons Learned

The experiences of these individuals should be of interest to Île-à-la-Crosse health professionals, community members, employers, and policy makers who work with people with disabilities. Important lessons include the following.

Building on Local Strength

Through this program, people with disabilities have demonstrated to themselves and the community that they are able to work in a meaningful way. Indeed, they have proved that far from their being dependent on the community, the community depends on them for their comfort and safety. They have the capacity to be reliable, committed, and responsible workers when they receive the necessary support. Yet, the lack of job offers, training, and educational opportunities remains an obstacle to successful full-time employment and health

for Aboriginal people with disabilities in Northern Saskatchewan. Investment in this program has shown that, when opportunities are presented, the workers with disabilities are able and willing to work and contribute to community.

Investment in employment for people with disabilities is beneficial not only socially, but also economically. This investment coincides with and contributes to the destigmatization of people with disabilities, showing employers that they are an underutilized resource capable of working.

Furthermore, programs such as the Park Rangers are economically beneficial in a very direct way. For many of the Park Rangers, the only means of income was through social assistance from the Provincial government which carries no requirement of work. During the program they are able to support themselves for the season through work that gives back to the community. In the off-season many participants receive Employment Insurance from the federal government, lightening demands on the provincial budget.

While the program already contributes to a healthy and safe environment, the strategic location and unique characteristics of the park need to be further explored. A feasibility study is recommended to further explore the potential of the South Bay Park in areas such as tourism, recreation and culture, and job creation.

These findings should help support the South Park Ranger employment program, create awareness of disability in the area, and lead to similar initiatives in surrounding communities. They also lead to the conclusion that other partnerships are warranted. The Municipal government should continue to develop a long-term strategy for people with disabilities.

Creating an Inclusive Community

There is a clear need to break negative stereotypes and barriers for people with disabilities in terms of employment. People with disabilities have been marginalized throughout the hiring process even though it was observed that people are increasingly accepting of people with disabilities. Programs such as the Park Rangers contribute to an informed, understanding, and accepting community. It is an important source of learning for participants and com-

munity who discover what they can do together. The Park Rangers program has seen people move from the program into careers that require similar skills. This may have been due to employers seeing that people with disabilities can work and to the program's giving participants the confidence to move on and grasp other opportunities.

In order to increase these positive effects, it is recommended that this seasonal employment be extended by investing in a comprehensive strategy to enhance the resources directed at funding employment for Île-à-la-Crosse individuals with disabilities. In addition to exploring other government programs and skill building opportunities to enhance work readiness, the community could provide incentives to employers who hire people with disabilities, ensure low cost access to job candidates, including applicants who are screened, and follow-up support. Further education for employers about hiring practices and attitudes is required to enhance awareness and understanding in the workplace.

Recognizing Individual Capacity Building

Since disabilities range in scope and severity, tailor-made activities are needed to fit the individual. However, pride, self-esteem, and confidence are always at the centre of the program. The investment provides Park Rangers with a sense of purpose and direction, especially because the alternative to working is often sitting alone at home. This investment is fundamentally empowering to the people as it gives them experience, skills, professionalism, pride, and increased financial independence. This new awareness and individual empowerment could lead to higher levels of advocacy for people with disabilities and an increased capacity of the individuals to care for themselves within a supportive community. Options such as a care home could increase this empowerment.

CONCLUSION

CANADA IS RICH IN SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENTS, but policy regarding people with disabilities in Northern Saskatchewan remains a work in progress. People with disabilities in Île-à-la-Crosse continue to face stigmatization and discrimination within the labour market. This study offers important validation for what the Park Rangers and their supporters do and finds that they can be role models for other communities. It should be of interest to policy-makers and employers with the ability to promote the inclusion and well-being of people with disabilities in their communities. This study found a need for employer education about disability issues to better promote the inclusion of this population in the labour market. This should be accompanied by government investment in education. With such measures people with disabilities in Île-à-la-Crosse have an enormous potential to become included, active, and productive members of society.

The Park Rangers program offers individual, social, and financial benefits while helping create a healthy and safe environment. The program continues to increase awareness in the community about people with disabilities, beginning the process of overcoming a major stigma. The program creates space to develop a strategy for people with disabilities. It engages leadership to promote programming not only for the disabled people, but for the South Bay Park and community as a whole. This program can also help build programming and infrastructure, such as the group home, to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, their caregivers, and others. It also has a positive impact on the future employment of the Park Rangers in other positions in the community.

We suggest replication of this model in communities across the North. It is an opportunity to engage Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people with disabilities as productive, valued members of their community and to showcase their achievements to the world.

RECOMMENDATIONS

WHILE THIS PROGRAM IS GENERALLY VERY POSITIVE for those involved, the following recommendations can enhance it in Île-à-la-Crosse and other communities that might wish to replicate it.

Long-Term Strategy — Since funding for the program is not guaranteed but has proved beneficial, it is recommended that the program be made permanent. Consider commitments from First Nations and Métis organizations and other partners, and expansion of infrastructure and resources for people with disabilities.

Infrastructure Development — In particular, invest in assessment of people with different types of disabilities as well as group home, transition group homes, truck to enhance the program, improve access, and better the lives of people with disabilities.

Health Benefits — A concern of the participants about accepting employment is that they lose many health benefits they receive when they are on social assistance or EI. This is a particular obstacle for them to overcome because many of the medications that people with disabilities need can be expensive and travel to the cities for specific treatments is covered only for those on social assistance.

Follow Up and Coordination — A system of follow-up with the Park Rangers after employment and during the off season is also recommended to help the participants find other employment or training opportunities and to keep contact with the community. Also, some of the participants have stated that they would like to work year round, so this or an alternative program extended to the winter would be beneficial. The Gary Tinker Federation is well placed by mandate and strategic planning to fulfil this support role.

Education, Training, and Employment — To increase empowerment and independence, more supports such as training and education could be incorporated so that those who are able could perform more complex tasks that may require safety training, for instance. These skills could also increase the likelihood of finding other employment and increase confidence and well-being.

Creating an Inclusive Environment — One component missing from the Park Rangers program is the inclusion of women. While they are not excluded, more effort could be made to target women participants who are similarly in need of employment opportunities.

Reducing Stigma — Efforts to increase sensitivity and awareness in the community could importantly bring to the program new applicants who need to self declare as having a disability. Using sensitive means of communicating information about services and job opportunities, including accessing disability-related supports, would support such an initiative.

APPENDIX A

Park Rangers Employment Program for People with Disabilities, Île-à-la-Crosse, SK, Chronology*Key to Acronyms in Table*

EAPD: Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities. A program that provides funding to assist adults with disabilities to prepare for, secure and maintain employment (from website).

Can-Sask: Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services, Government of Saskatchewan

GTF: Gary Tinker Federation

Opportunities Fund: A program offered through Human Resources and Skill Development Canada designed to help people with disabilities prepare for and obtain employment or self-employment. It also assists people to develop the skills they need to keep a new job (from web site).

VIC: Village of Île-à-la-Crosse

Year	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Name	Park Rangers	Park Rangers	Park Rangers	Park Rangers	Park Rangers	Park Rangers	Maintenance Workers
Funding Source	Can-Sask (EAPD) (accessed by VIC) VIC – in kind 20%	Can-Sask (EAPD) (accessed by VIC) & VIC	EAPD 40% (accessed by GTF) VIC –10% Can-Sask 50%	EAPD 50% (accessed by GTF) VIC – 10% Métis Employment and Training 40%	EAPD 50% (accessed by GTF) VIC – 50%	EAPD 50% (accessed by GTF) VIC – 50%	EAPD 50% (accessed by GTF) Opportunities Fund – 50% (accessed by GTF)
	5 clients	4 clients	4 clients	4 clients	4 clients	4 clients	3 clients
Duration	15 weeks		May 14 to Nov 30	22 weeks May 16 to Sept 8	May 16 to Oct 15	May 17 to Oct 31, 2004	July 7 to Dec 31, 2003
Total Cost	\$49,022	\$40,000	\$30,000	\$29,146.80	\$32,010.40	\$32,268	\$23,648

Information for this chronology has been provided by the Gary Tinker Federation in collaboration with the Village of Île-à-la-Crosse.

APPENDIX B

Logic Model

(facing page)

Ile-a-la-Crosse social and economic conditions for people with disabilities

- Low employment rate
- High need for (social and employment) programming
- Limited trained human resources
- Needed transition/liaison to community employment
- Low advocacy in community
- Stigma (past and present)
- Strong community bonds



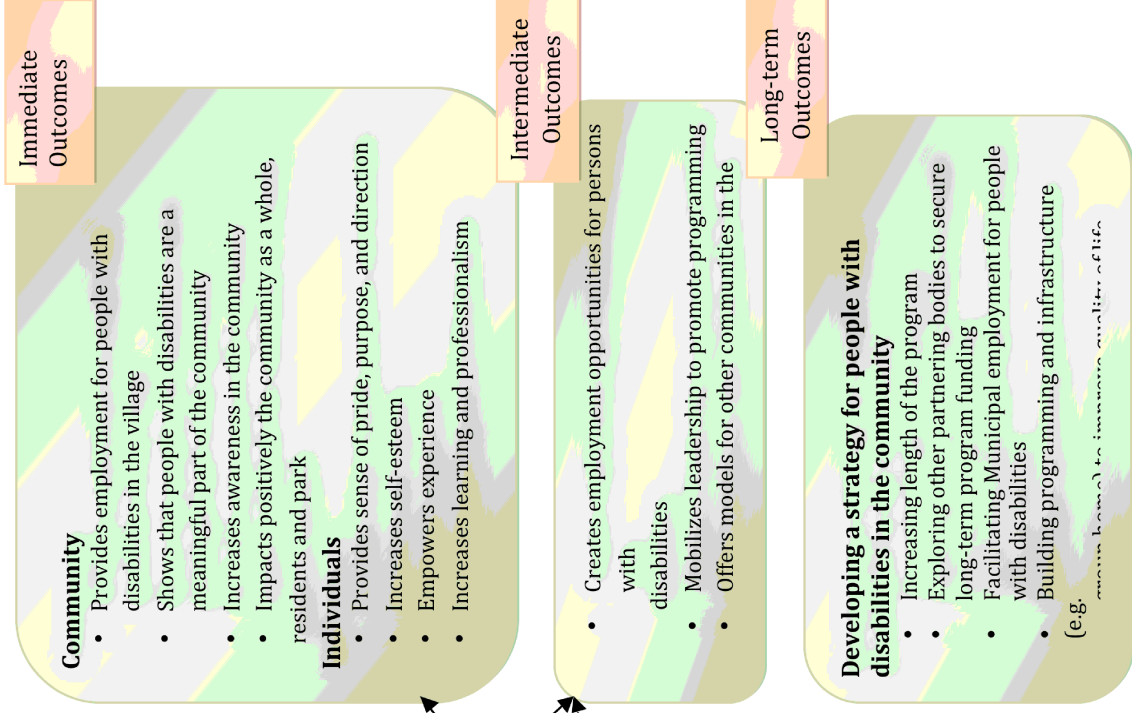
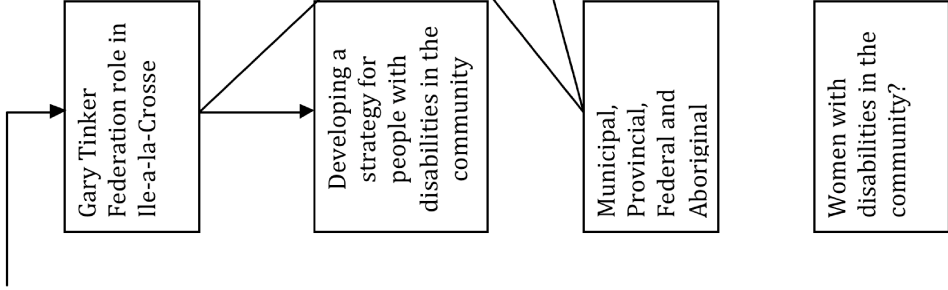
Park Rangers

1 Supervisor and 4 to 5 male clients with a variety of abilities

Initial involvement of the Gary Tinker Federation. Current provincial and municipal financial support

Seasonal supported employment and on the job training for participants. No follow-up provided

Tasks vary from janitorial to city beautification and South Bay Park maintenance



(e.g. community based) to improve quality of life.

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