

ACTEW

Advocates for Community-Based Training
and Training for Women

THE FORGOTTEN WOMEN

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Phase I & II

Prepared by

**Metro Labour Education Centre &
Coalition of Visible Minority Women**

Funded by

**Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ministry of Labour
through the Multiculturalism and Race Relations Fund
of the Ministry of Citizenship**

PREFACE

March 1994

Dear Friends:

"The Forgotten Women" was a project of the Metro Labour Education Centre and the Coalition of Visible Minority Women. It was funded by the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ministry of Labour through the Multiculturalism and Race Relations Fund of the Ministry of Citizenship.

The two-phased project was initiated in September 1989 and completed in April 1991.

Phase I

The objective was two fold: to look at the impact of existing labour adjustment programs on immigrant and visible minority women from their point of view; and to develop comprehensive adjustment models that would be more accessible and equitable in reflecting the needs of immigrant and visible minority women.

Phase II

Having researched the needs, we then developed pilot adjustment models appropriate to three different situations.

A final report was produced outlining the activities and results of Phase I and II. This report included policy recommendations to existing labour adjustment services/programs so that they might better serve the needs of immigrant and visible minority women.

Since the completion of the project in 1991, there are some major structural changes that have occurred and are continuing to occur in various programs and services provided by the federal and provincial governments.

Federal Government:

- . major changes in unemployment insurance (UI) with the introduction of Bill C-113 which came into effect in 1993, and more drastic changes are expected in the near future;
- . changes in funding structure of joint Industrial Adjustment Services Committees since 1991. The province now plays a major role;
- . many of the functions performed by the former Employment and Immigration Canada are now assumed by Human Resources Development Canada.

Provincial Government

- . major changes and relocation of various government departments now under the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board (OTAB) structure, for example, the Office of Labour Adjustment has moved from the Ministry of Labour to OTAB;

as of October 1993, more than 30 labour adjustment programs were transferred from a variety of provincial ministries to OTAB.

Despite these structural changes, it is critically important to recognize that for immigrant and visible minority women the issue of access to both re-employment and retraining has not changed. In fact, the situation is far worse for displaced immigrant and visible minority women today. Access to comparable jobs and appropriate training is drastically reduced due to the lack of jobs and cutbacks in training programs that have developed since this report was written.

Metro Labour Education Centre and
Coalition for Visible Minority Women

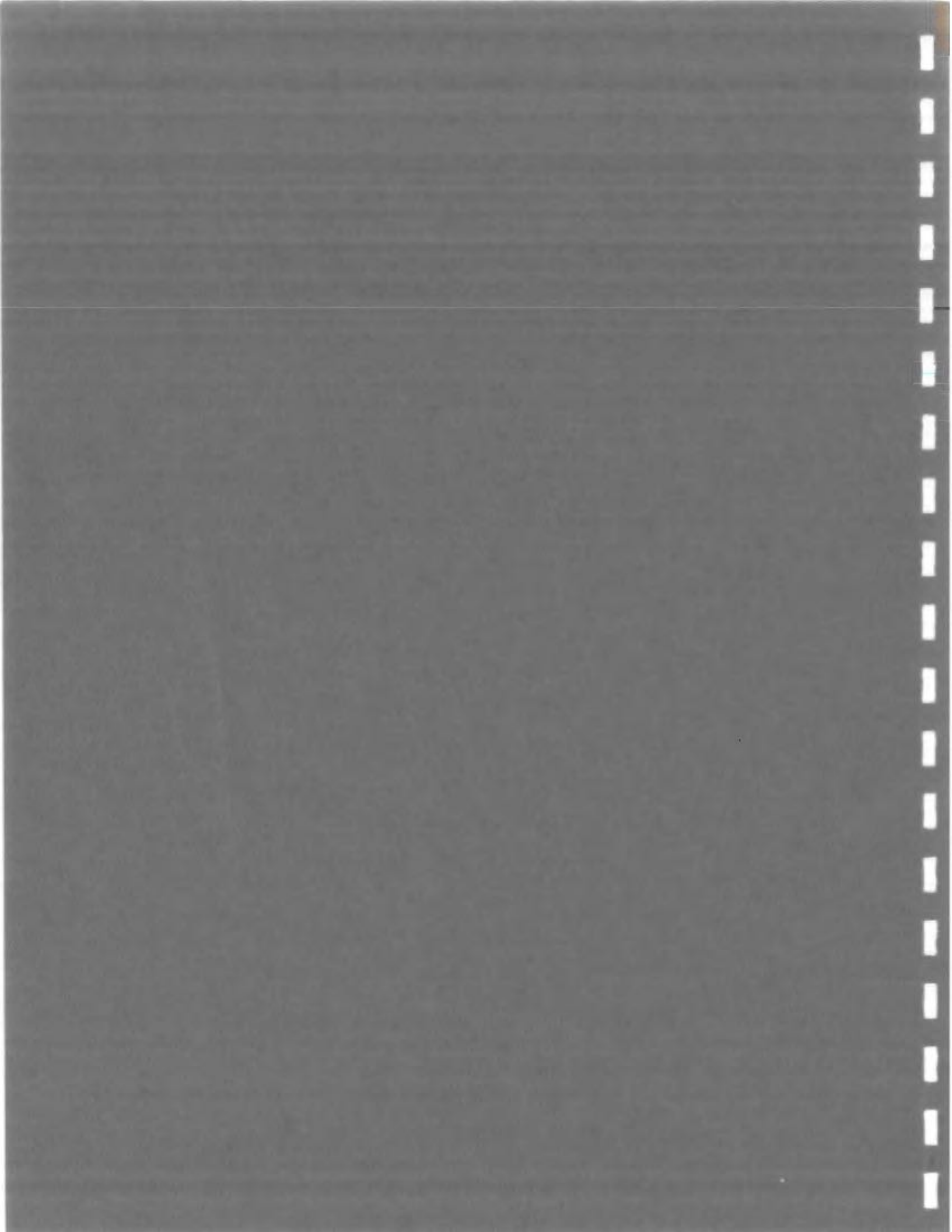
THE FORGOTTEN WOMEN

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Phase I

**Metro Labour Education Centre &
Coalition of Visible Minority Women**

March 1990



"I have given 25 years to Canada and I got nothing back. I guess I am one of the forgotten women!"

A former garment worker from Holiday Knitwear, which closed its door in December, 1989.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- * *counsellors of Immigrant Women Job Placement Centre, Working Women Community Centre and Downtown Employment Services for the referral of unorganized immigrant women*
- * *members of the Project Steering Committee*
- * *representatives from unions and central labour bodies*
- * *Academics, employers, Policy level staff from the Federal and Provincial government agencies*
- * *members of Canada Employment and Immigration Union and Public Services Alliance of Canada, and Ontario Public Service Employees Union*
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- * *Fawn Currey, our project Data Consultant*
- * *Olga Reis for curriculum development assistance*
- * *Project Advisory Team: Akua Benjamin, Janet Dassinger, Carmencita Hernandez, Winnie Ng, Trish Stovel and Brenda Wall*

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT STEERING COMMITTEE:

*Lisa Avedon,
Co-ordinator, Employment Adjustment Branch
Ministry of Labour*

*Betty Butterworth,
Senior Manager, Community Literacy Program Unit
Ministry of Skills Development*

*Alexandra Dagg,
International Ladies Garment Workers Union*

*Terry Dance,
Dean, Access and Development Programs
George Brown College*

*Anne Masson,
Co-ordinator
Canada Employment & Immigration Commission*

*Anne Richmond,
Policy Analyst
Ontario Women's Directorate*

*Laurell Ritchie,
Vice President,
Canadian Textile & Chemical Union*

*Margot Trevelyan,
Senior Policy Advisor, Economics
Ontario Women's Directorate*

*Bonita Swarbrick,
Policy Advisor
Ministry of Labour*

*Armine Yalnizyan,
Program Director
Social Planning Council of Metro Toronto*

PREFACE

In Ontario today, working people and the unemployed are experiencing another economic crisis which is severely affecting their lives. In the midst of massive deindustrialization, plant closures, and high levels of unemployment, the issue of **labour adjustment** has come to the fore. This project is in part a response to the growing concern around this issue. However, more specifically its primary aim is to draw attention to the impact of layoffs and plant closures on one of the most exploited groups in society, immigrant women, and to examine their specific adjustment needs as distinct from other groups similarly affected. The unemployment experiences of immigrant women and their adjustment needs must be understood within the context of racism and sexism. As part of a pool of cheap labour in the Canadian economy, immigrant women are marginalized and remain victims of systemic racism, sexism and ageism.

This creates a significant problem within current adjustment models which fail to take into account the potential for gender or racial bias. Current programs subtly underscore the fact that what is considered "typical" for purposes of a working model is white maleness, which denies the reality of immigrant womens' experience. Immigrant women thus become marginalized in the institutions and processes of labour adjustment.

Historically, the success of adjustment programs has been based on the assumption that there were other, similar forms of employment for displaced workers to shift to. Thus, even when we allow for systemic barriers, immigrant workers were able to find alternate industrial employment. This is no longer the case. The economic transformation of North America from an industrial to a service based economy has meant that marginalized groups who have not had access to training, cannot adapt. Existing adjustment programs do not seem to account for this new reality. Labour market and technological developments are changing the ways of working and there is an immediate need to rethink how people can adapt to these changes. Clearly, this project is not alone in identifying how critical such a discussion is. The recent report from the Premier's Council ("People and Skills in the New Global Economy," 1990) is concerned with the issues of training and adjustment. Here again, the recognition that there will be differential impacts on certain groups is asserted:

"Immigrant workers and visible minority workers encounter different problems in the process of adjustment. These problems may be in the form of racism or other social barriers which prevent their realizing the full benefits of the education system and access to training and jobs."

The Metro Labour Education Centre and the Coalition of Visible Minority Women hope that this report will make an important contribution in discovering ways to remove these barriers and ensure equal access to adjustment and retraining for immigrant women in Ontario.

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OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

This document is the Interim Phase I report of the Labour Adjustment Study and Pilot Project which addresses the needs of Immigrant Women. The mandate of the project has called for a two-phase approach involving the following objectives and activities:

Phase 1: A thorough assessment of existing labour adjustment program from the point of view of their impact on immigrant women.

Based on this assessment, the development of a comprehensive adjustment model that is more accessible and equitable in reflecting the needs of immigrant women.

Phase 2: Having completed the research and devised an appropriate adjustment model, the testing of this program in establishments which are down-sizing or closing down, making modifications as required.

A final report outlining the activities and results of Phase 1 and 2, including documentation of the contents and learning process of a model adjustment program and detailed policy recommendations on improvements to existing labour adjustment programs so that they might better serve the needs of immigrant women.

ORGANIZATION OF PHASE I REPORT

In order to accomplish the objectives set out during Phase 1, a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques has been used to describe the limitations of current adjustment programs for immigrant women. These techniques are fully outlined in the methodology section of this report, but briefly they include: a review of secondary resource materials; focus group workshops; interviews with government, union and employer representatives; community consultations; and survey design.

The relationship between labour adjustment programs and the needs of immigrant women has been organized under four focus areas which provide the framework for this report: Types of Training Needed; Adjustment Programs; Income Support; and Federal - Provincial Relations in Adjustment. Each of these areas is critically assessed from the standpoint of immigrant women and undertaken with a view to identifying means of improving existing programs and devising innovative methods of training and adjustment.

This critique will be supplemented with case studies in an effort to give specific examples of the limitations of existing adjustment programs.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Immigrant Women

The term "Immigrant Women" used throughout the report is applicable to women who are first or second generation immigrants by virtue of their immigrant status in Canada. It is however important to note that this term goes beyond immigration status and is generally accorded to those of non-Anglo and non-Francophone background. These women are also socially defined as immigrant because of their race, colour, language proficiency and other social factors. The common sense usage of "immigrant women" generally refers to women of colour, women from Third World countries, women who do not have English language proficiency, who have the lowest paid jobs within the working class.

Labour Adjustment

In this document, adjustment has been broadly defined as a series of outcomes based on criteria immigrant women have defined such as a new job, same or better pay, same level of skill or opportunities to learn new skills, unionization, full time work, and no greater than average physical and mental stress. To achieve such outcomes, the Labour Adjustment process must include a thorough assessment, provision of ongoing information and advocacy counselling, training readiness or new occupation training programs and ultimately, job placement.

In the Labour Adjustment section of this document, we are attempting to deal with adjustment more narrowly, by defining adjustment as those **series of programs, services and other interventions which help ease the shock of plant closings and facilitate the transition to new employment and/or training.** As well, this definition is limited to those rather well established adjustment mechanisms in Ontario which are triggered by the announcement of a closure and take place before, during and immediately afterward. While training and other services which follow adjustment programs are certainly part of the overall process, they are dealt with under the training section.

Skill

The term Skill in the mainstream discourse has been used very loosely and is gendered in that it is tempered by the sex of the doer and not necessarily the nature of work itself. A number of feminist studies have demonstrated that if the work is done by a man it is more likely to be seen as skilled and if it is performed by a woman it is seen as unskilled. This classification of work women do as unskilled has its roots in women's role in society as primarily that of a care giver, a role which comes "naturally" to them by virtue of their sex. They are expected to learn the skills informally to carry out their prescribed role informally from their mothers, grandmothers, neighbours and friends.

Once they are in the world of waged work, their work is seen as an extension of their primary responsibility in the domestic sphere. They are perceived as temporary, content with what they receive in wages, and easily replaceable (because the employer has not incurred any expense in training them and there is no shortage of women who have already acquired the skills from their work in the house (seamstress, health care worker, cleaner, daycare worker, to name a few). Their work in the home also makes them ideal assembly line workers as both spheres of work have much in common, i.e.; monotony, accuracy and speed. Thus training on the job is usually ad hoc and the responsibility is left to co-workers with longer experience. As they are able to do the work without any training time or expense, the employer can conveniently assume that the job requires very few skills and therefore he can classify the work of the women unskilled and accordingly pay them low wages.

Given this social reality of women's position in society, it is not surprising that we have internalised the hegemonic view of ourselves as unskilled. We perceive the work we do as "easy", something any one can do, in short unskilled. We too see work men do as requiring more skills and thus rationalize wage differential between men and women.

The same ideology has also been responsible for the lack of accessible and quality training programs for women. The few training programs which are out there are narrow in scope, are usually of short duration, have very inadequate training allowance, do not provide child care or transportation allowance, and essentially prepare women for "so called" women's jobs.

We believe that it is not only critical to challenge and counteract the perceived notions of skill which effectively demeans women's paid and unpaid work, but also to enable women to get out of job ghettos through training programs, training programs which are designed to meet their aspirations, which recognize their formal credentials, "informally" acquired skills and experience.

METHODOLOGY

QUALITATIVE

It is important to clarify the guiding principles which have shaped the methodological approach we have adopted in this study. A variety of research techniques have been employed to gather information, yet they all share a common basis. The chosen approach reflects the project team's dependence on the words and feelings of the women being discussed. Indeed, one of the strongest aspects of this study is its attempt to go to the women themselves and structure the focus around their understanding of the issues involved in lay-offs, plant closures and adjustment, rather than trying to fit their concerns into an analytical framework.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The preliminary stages of the project focused on a review of the existing literature related to plant closures and adjustment, particularly as it related to immigrant women workers. This survey included both Metro specific publications, as well as provincial and federal documents. The purpose of the literature review was to:

- produce a bibliography able to be used widely;
- assist in the development of the adjustment model.

Both Provincial and Federal governments call for crisis intervention in the area of unemployment and labour adjustment has begun to generate numerous works on a variety of levels. Within this relatively new area of concern, two broad areas of enquiry can be identified.

First, there is that tradition which is dominated by aggregate economic inquiry of Canada's labour market crisis. Government reports are illustrative of this type of research. Primarily these analyses seek to identify general labour market trends and map out areas of employment decline and growth with a view to understanding Canada's training needs. Within this tradition there is no substantial discussion of how displaced immigrant women are being affected by economic changes, and more importantly, how and why immigrant women have historically occupied the lower income segment of the labour market. The nature of the segmentation is rarely discussed in macro-economic analyses.

Alongside this tradition is work produced by community-based agencies interested in describing the ways in which immigrant women are oppressed in the labour market and society generally. This work tends to be richly descriptive and important for its attempt to describe the economic situation of immigrant women at the level of everyday experiences, yet within the context of aggregate data.

To date however, community-based agencies have yet to take on the nature of the relationship between retraining and adjustment and the needs of their constituencies in this regard. Thus, we firmly believe that this project is filling a gap in the available research, not only by focusing specifically on the labour adjustment needs of immigrant women, but also by examining systemic barriers which structure immigrant women's disadvantaged position in the adjustment process.

INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS

The purpose of these consultations was to seek input into the development of the project as well as to develop contacts in the various organizations and levels of government, among union representatives, Women's Organizations, employer representatives, academics and representatives from community-based training programs. (See Appendix B.)

Union representatives and community-based organizations were particularly distressed at the lack of a clear government policy, involvement and initiatives towards the labour adjustment of immigrant women. It was argued that concerted and well-planned action needs to be taken if workers are to be able to adjust to the changing economy. In their view, the project is very timely and careful attention should be paid to the barriers to retraining and how they might be overcome.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The decision to encourage community-based participation stems from our belief that it is only through this type of joint consultative interaction that we can arrive at the best possible model for a comprehensive labour adjustment program throughout the Province of Ontario.

Community-based agencies were involved in our research from the outset, given that we had much to learn from their experience and expertise in the area of servicing immigrant women especially in the field of counselling, delivering training programs and job placement. We also wanted to tap into their experience regarding lobbying efforts and strategies with the different levels of government for the rights of immigrant women.

To this end, we organized the first community consultation meeting on October 11, 1989. We briefed them on the project and discussed their participation in the same. We were looking for some commitment on their part to direct us to displace immigrant women who may go to their program for assistance, especially those from the unorganized sector to which MLEC does not have direct access. We also learned about each of the programs they represented. After this group meeting, we met with a few of the members on an individual basis to get better insight into the delivery of their programs.

A follow-up meeting was arranged with those agencies who took part in the earlier stages. The express purpose of this meeting was to elicit community-based input on the model labour adjustment program we had developed in the interim.

We began by providing a brief overview of our research findings on the limitations of existing adjustment programs in relation to women. The essential components of our adjustment model were then presented in order to generate discussion and comment. Much valuable information was exchanged during the process and the final model should be seen as reflective of the concerns and suggestions of the community groups involved. The general consensus was that the governments are not responding to the needs of immigrant women displaced due to permanent lay-off or plant closures.

The groups involved reinforced our own findings regarding the limitations of existing adjustment and training programs. Hence, discussion concentrated on concrete suggestions about how to implement the model and also on the barriers to be overcome in this process. The following is a list of the highlights of this discussion.

Suggestions for Piloting the Project:

- Childcare on the training site
- Special transportation support
- Right materials/tools be provided
- Provision of ongoing counselling in different languages
- Flexibility in program content and delivery
- Good assessment process
- More meaningful involvement of participants in the full process
- Small group sessions for women from different workplaces (10-12)
- A more integrated approach to worker training programs
- Assistance with writing proficiency to complete academic assignments
- Provision of remedial support

Barriers to be Overcome:

- Lack of program seats that are available for immigrant women
- Immigrant women cannot meet existing inflexible entry requirements for college programs
- There is no follow-up of workers after training (where they get jobs, what type of jobs, etc.)
- After the plant closure, what type of immigrant women are going to access the programs outlined in the ACCESS and OPTION model
- Fifty women could conceivably go into fifty different retraining programs.
- Racism and sexism

FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS

Process

The purpose and structure of the focus group sessions reflect the guiding principle of the project, i.e. that the subjective experience of the immigrant women consulted should be the most significant source of information and analysis. The workshops were designed to draw out this subjective information. This acceptance of the relevance of immigrant women's subjective experience helped us to understand how these experiences fit within theoretical and political approaches to labour market analysis.

Time, transportation, language and support needs of the women involved were taken into consideration by organizing the meetings at convenient times, in locations that were accessible, in their first language, and by providing a supportive environment which would encourage the women to share their experiences with us and other women in similar circumstances.

Although 12 focus group sessions were proposed, only 8 actually took place. Lack of participation in the remaining 4 sessions was largely due to feelings of fear and futility, especially of women in unorganized workplaces. Nevertheless, the process must be viewed as a success given that total of 104 women across 6 language groups participated and that the quality of the information and experience gained cannot be replicated by recourse to secondary resources.

Findings

Contrary to common opinion, most of the women participating in the focus groups displayed a clear understanding of why they are in the situation they are in. In their minds there are direct links between the reason given for closures/lay-offs, such as moving locations, down-sizing, and contracting out, and the recent Free Trade deal between the Canadian and U.S. governments. Moreover, the women are quite aware of the fact that their personal experiences are related to their status as immigrant women: "I have given 25 years to Canada and I got nothing back. I guess I am one of the forgotten women." The general consensus is that the government does not value immigrant workers regardless of the public rhetoric. One of the most cited criticisms is that government retraining programs are not a viable option for immigrant women. As one woman properly summarized: "These programs are propaganda for the government and they are just false promises for the workers."

These women are hurt, angry and feel helpless to do anything about their situation. As we are dealing with a cross-section of women within the group of 104, and not just one or two, we are forced to view their situation as a public issue and not private troubles, and to examine the processes through which these women have arrived at their common disadvantaged position.

What follows is a summary of the most common reasons given by the women themselves as to why they are unable to access training which could lead to meaningful employment:

i) Negative Experiences with Canada Employment Officers

EC counsellors are criticized for their "rude and unsympathetic" attitude and for discouraging these women from entering training programs. They are often told that the programs would be too difficult for them or are threatened with the prospect of having UI benefits cut off if they decide to enter training. They also believe that CEC's priority is to place them in any job rather than in helping them access training: "CEC forces us to take any job even if it is at a lot lower wages."

ii) Inadequate Income Support

This criticism is by far the most common among the participants and the biggest deterrent to women wanting to enter training programs. Current UI benefits and training allowances make training and family survival an impossible combination "It will be difficult to take upgrading or a retraining program because I cannot find affordable childcare and because I might have to go work if something comes along."

iii) Language Difficulties

English upgrading does not go beyond the elementary level. Many have to give up UI benefits to attend ESL courses which discourages the women. The women also pointed to their initial discouragement by CEC from taking ESL upon entering Canada. They firmly believe that language problems create under-employment, under-payment and lack of confidence.

iv) Lack of Affordable and Accessible Childcare

At present only one out of every nine applicants qualifies for Childcare subsidy, and receives a subsidized childcare space. More subsidized Daycare centres close to the workplace or home are urgently needed. One single parent had to quit the training program when she could not find special childcare arrangements during her placement period.

v) Ageism

Age is a big obstacle since employers want younger workers - "Employers are hiring younger workers over older ones; the saying is they can get more years of work out of younger workers and pay them less."

vi) Direct Discrimination

General ignorance toward immigrant women by government agencies and employers - application of gender and race stereotypes hinder these women from achieving desired training and employment.

Summary of Recommendations

The following list is a compilation of the most frequent suggestions, offered by the participants, as to how their own situation could be improved:

- UI and Training Allowances must be increased
- UI should cover the entire duration of retraining
- More information on training programs available
- Better subsidization of childcare/improved accessibility
- Improve legislation on plant closures
- Hiring quotas for older workers
- More multilingual training programs
- Set up ESL training in Community Centres
- ESL courses should go further than level 6
- Inform and encourage immigrants to take ESL courses available upon entering Canada
- Priority placed on getting women trained for good paying secure jobs
- Low income housing for unemployed workers
- Shorter waiting periods for training programs
- Legal rights for workers, as shareholders, to take ownership of company and keep the jobs
- Accessible - financial and geographical - child care
- Low income housing for displaced workers

QUANTITATIVE

SURVEY DESIGN AND ADMINISTRATION

At the level of the individual, a survey was designed and circulated to a self-selected sample of over 100 immigrant women who had been or are currently involved in a permanent lay-off of plant closure. Our sample groups includes 105 women from the following ethno-linguistic communities: Chinese; Vietnamese; Portuguese; Italian; Black; Punjabi; Greek; Spanish; Filipino; Dutch; Korean; and Laotian. These women ranged in age from 20 - 63 years.

Initially, the staff of MLEC conducted a pre-test with 10 women involved in programs at the Centre. This was done to help us familiarize ourselves with the issue area and to formulate the questionnaire to be used for wider circulation. The outcome of the pre-test was important for us in that it helped to identify areas of focus, ensuring the questions were directed towards the concerns of the women and the project, and stressing the need to conduct the interviews in a supportive and culturally sensitive manner. With lessons learned from the pre-test, the project staff and the Coalition arranged for the hiring and training of interpreters to administer the questionnaires on a personal interview basis. The final product, entitled Labour Adjustment for Immigrant Women Project, was comprised of 51 questions grouped under 6 sections including:

General Background Information; Education, Training and Work Experience in Home Country; Experience with Current or Recent Plant Closure; Information regarding Current Situation; Post-Closure Experience with Training; and Post-Closure Job Search Experience. A copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix A of this report.

RATIONALE FOR SELF-SELECTION

Because there is no instrument in place for accurately measuring and tracking immigrant women affected by lay-offs/plant closures, self-selection was the most feasible means of locating enough participants to make any quantitative analysis statistically significant. Given that the target group is concentrated in small and/or unorganized workplaces - which are not legally required to report closures to the Ministry of Labour - it has not been possible to select a random sample. Instead our sample was selected from records of immigrant women who have been connected with programs offered by MLEC, as well as records made available through the steering Committee and the Coalition. Several community based training agencies in Metro Toronto were especially helpful in referring us to unorganized immigrant women.

DATA ANALYSIS

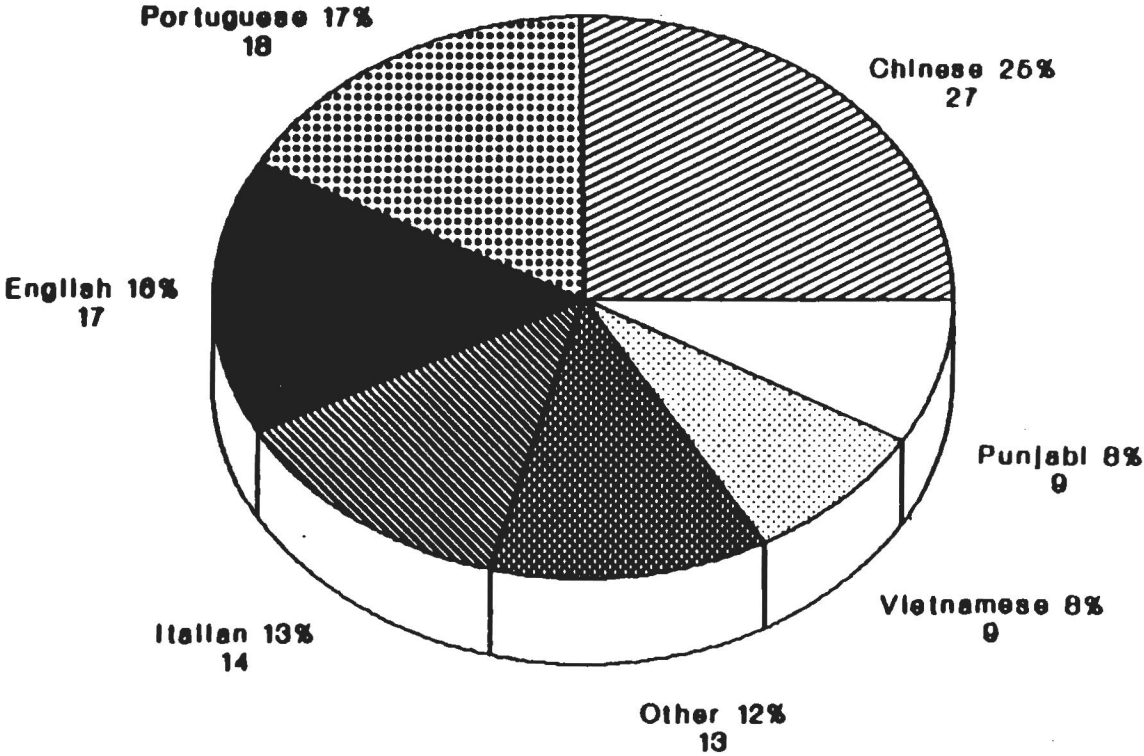
HIGHLIGHTS OF DATA FINDINGS

- One hundred and five (105) women were surveyed from the following language groups:
 - 17% Portuguese, 25% Chinese, 8% Punjabi, 8% Vietnamese, 13% Italian, 16% English, and 12% Other.
- Only thirty-two (32) of the one hundred and five (105) women had found jobs at the time of the survey.
- The average pre-closure wage for 46% of the women was between \$10.00 - \$13.00 per hour.
- The range of pre-closure wages between \$5.00 - \$17.00 per hour.
- The thirty-two (32) women who became reemployed, experienced a decline of 8.7% in their wages. However, what is significant is that the range of subsequent wages in this group is from \$5.00 to \$13.00 per hour, representing a loss of jobs in the higher end of the pre-closure range.
- 63% of the women who became re-employed describe their wages as "worse" than those in their previous jobs.
- 53% of the women re-employed, indicated that their working conditions are "worse".
- 44% of the women re-employed describe their benefits as "worse." The lower rate here is likely explained by the active role of legislation in areas such as OHIP.
- Eight (8) of the thirty-two (32) women who were re-employed found work in the service sector, including a Cleaner, Waitress, Health Care Aide and a Salesclerk. Eight (8) women are re-employed as Sewing Machine Operators. The remainder found assembly work in the manufacturing sector.

- Unionized workers were more likely to receive longer notice periods and severance pay than non-union workers.
- Workers in the youngest age group (less than 31) are less likely to be unionized, while the group between 41 - 50 + are more likely to be unionized.
- There was a significant relationship between access to information in the workplace and access regarding UI, severance and access to training.
- Only 57% of the women received severance pay.
- The level of unionization among re-employed women dropped from 78% to 42%.
- Forty-three (43) women were able to enter retraining programs, however, 70% of these programs were English as a Second Language.
- 49% of the women indicated negative treatment by CEC officials was a difficulty faced in training.
- 47% indicated insufficient income support and language proficiency as difficulties in training.
- 80% of the women surveyed were interested in training
- Of the 19% who did not want training, only three (3) indicated "no interest" as a reason. The remainder cited a variety of "other" reasons, including negative treatment/discrimination by CEC; age; spousal pressure; sickness; waiting lists, etc.
- Eighteen (18) women reported they did not chose to retrain due to "lack of information" about retraining.
- 45% of the women said they were given no information about training before their workplace closed.
- 63% of the women rated CEC not helpful.
- Over 90% of those women who did receive information from MLEC found it "very helpful."
- 60% of the women identified their own reasons for the closure affecting them including: Free Trade (20%), Contracting Out (10%), Lack of Work (39%), Downsizing (21%) and Other (10%).

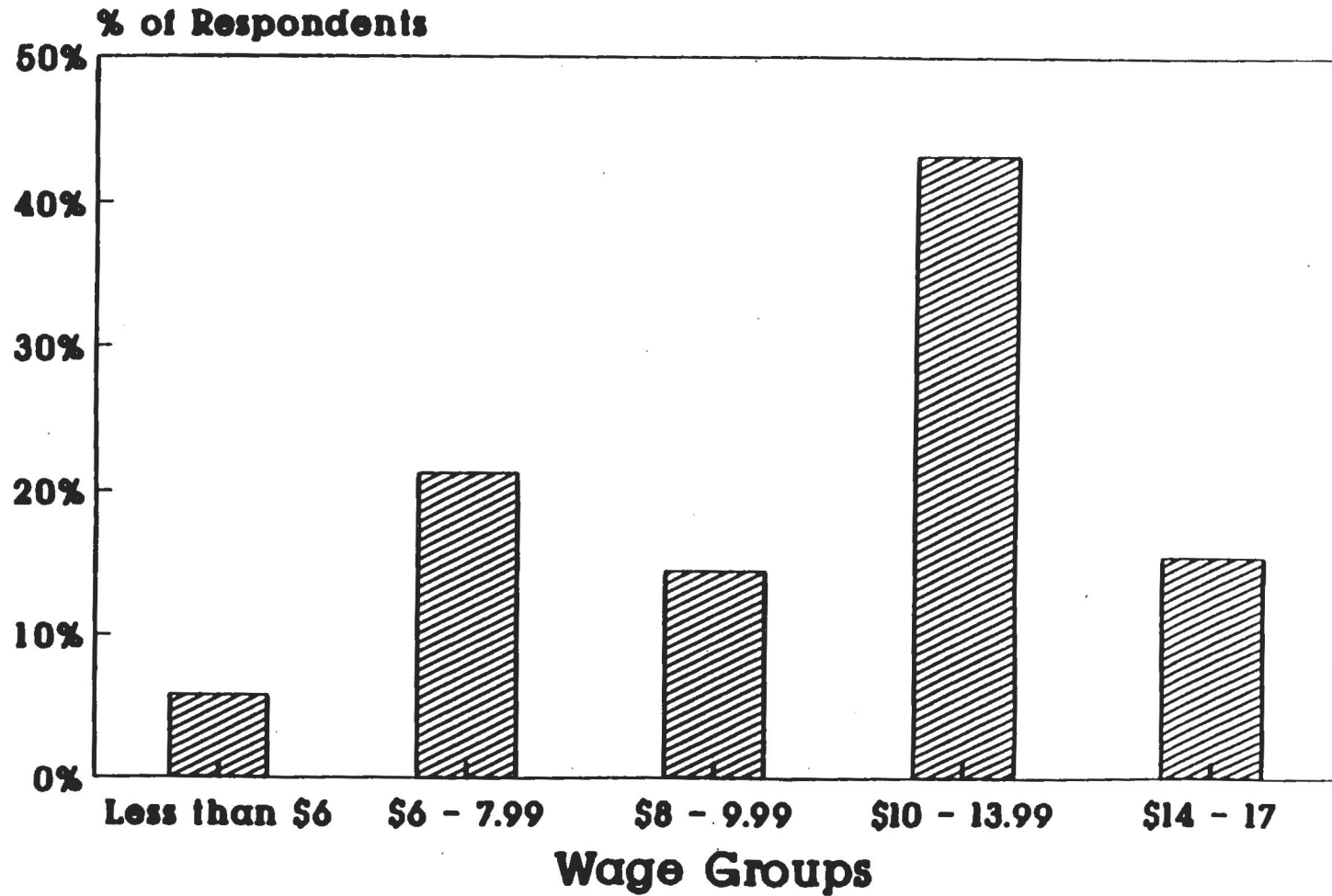
**GRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF
UNIVARIATES**

Language Groups



No. & % of Respondents In each Group

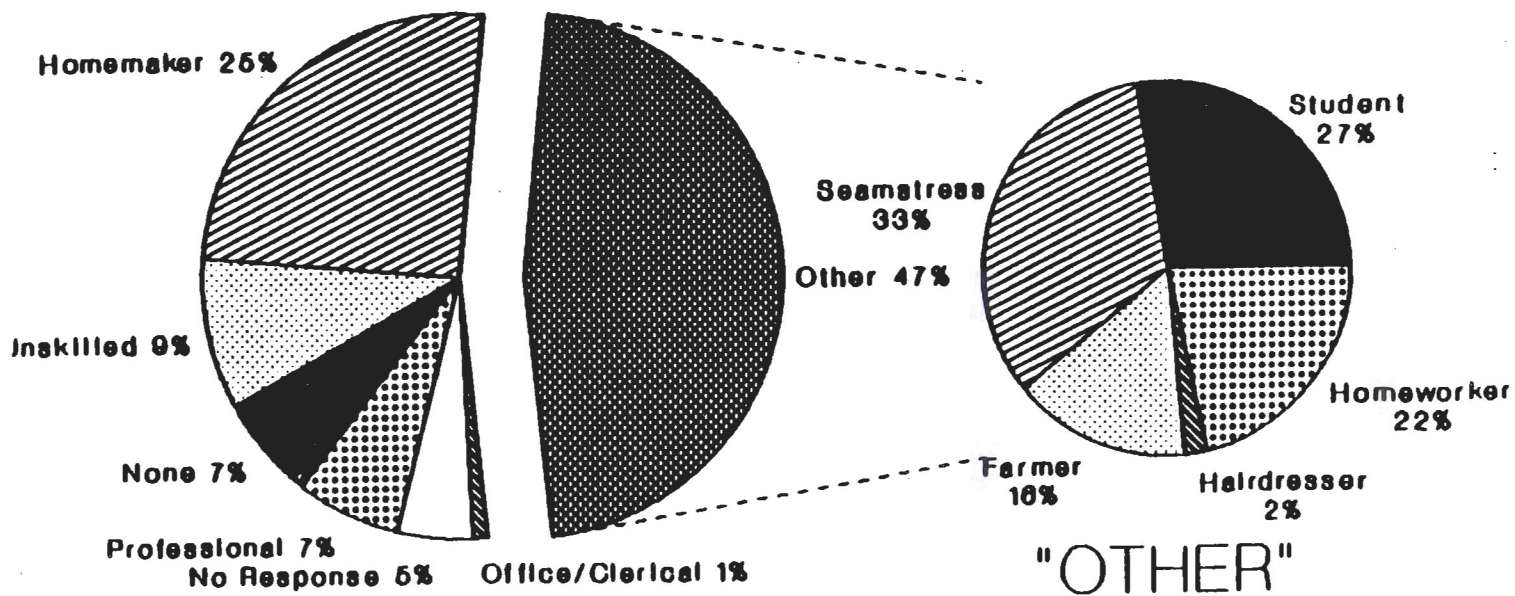
Former Hourly Wages Pre-plant Closure



N = 104

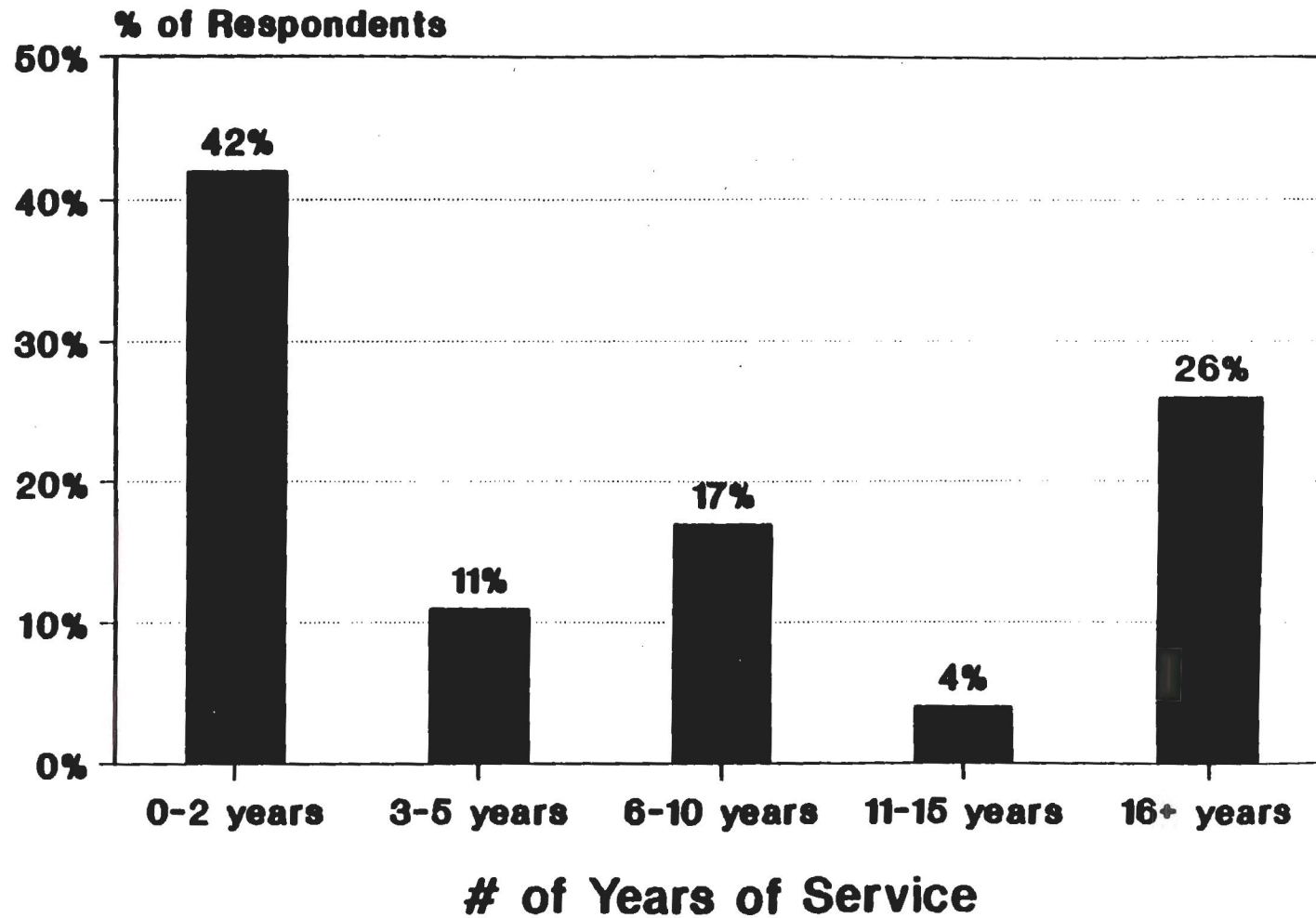
Occupation in Home Country

18



Length of Service Prior to Closure

(Showing % for Each Group)



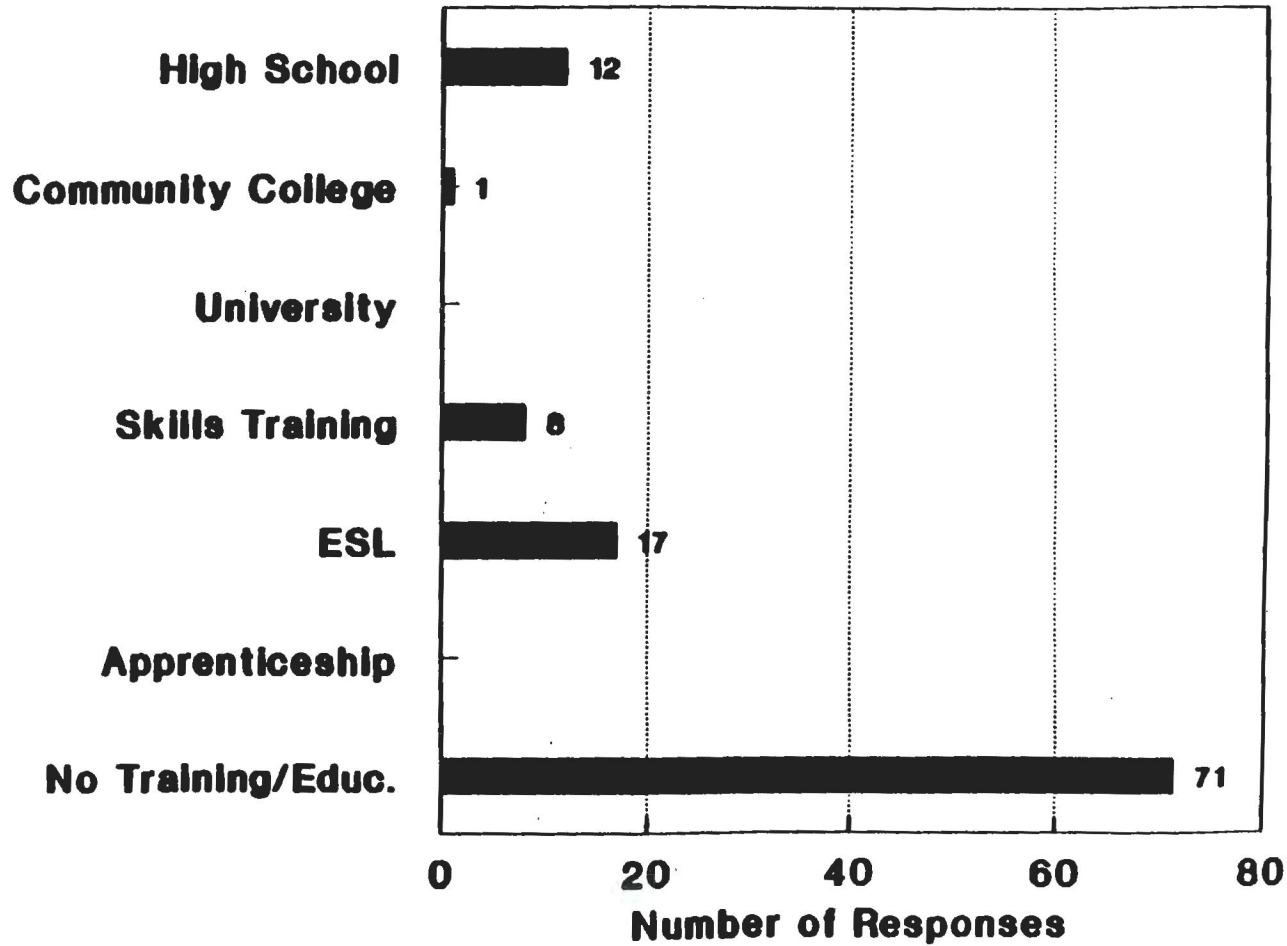
20

(N-90)

Education/Training in Canada

(Prior to Plant Closure)

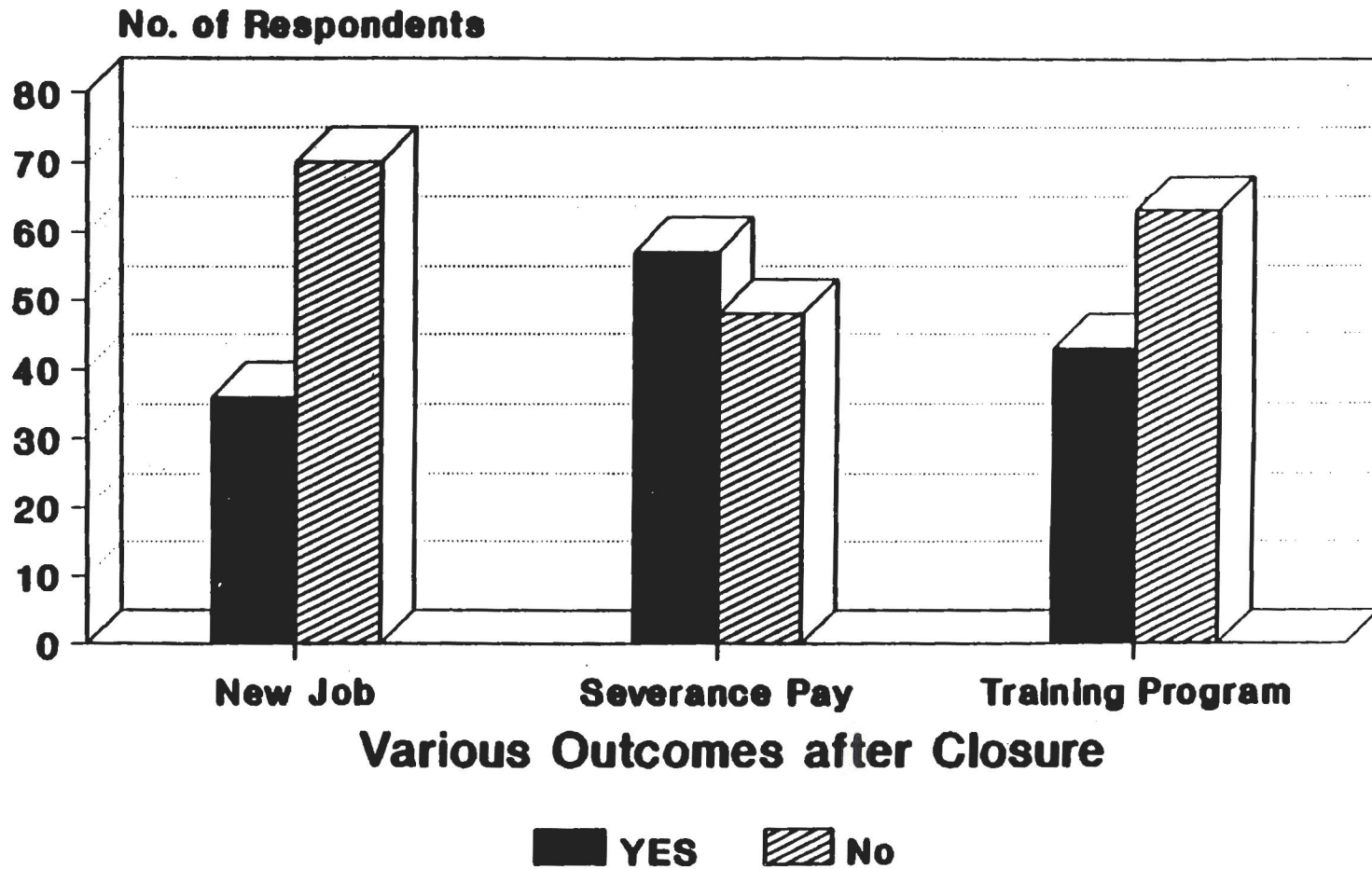
Types of Educ/Training



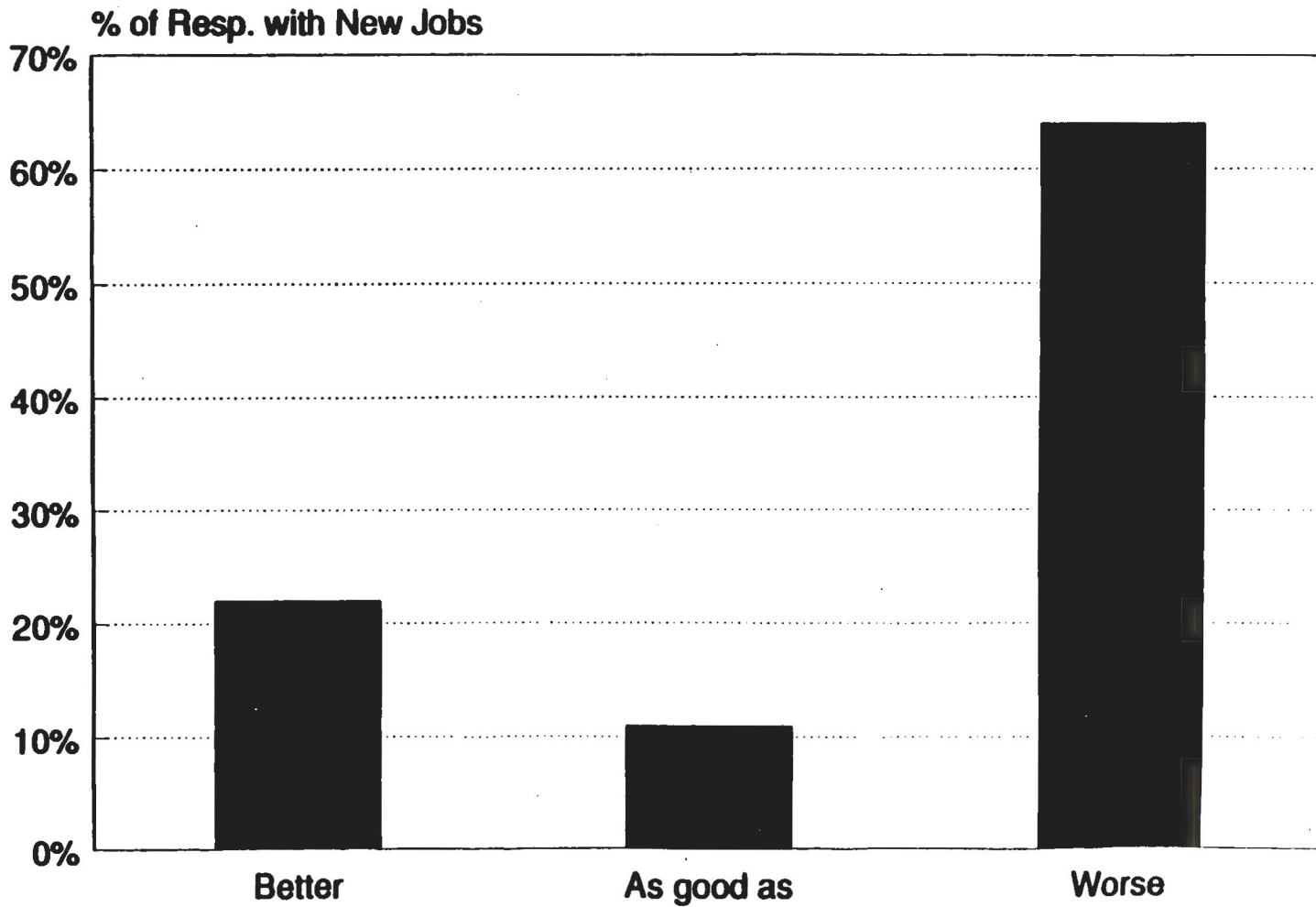
(N=109 on Multiple Response Ques.)

Situation After Closure

(New Job, in Training, Severance)



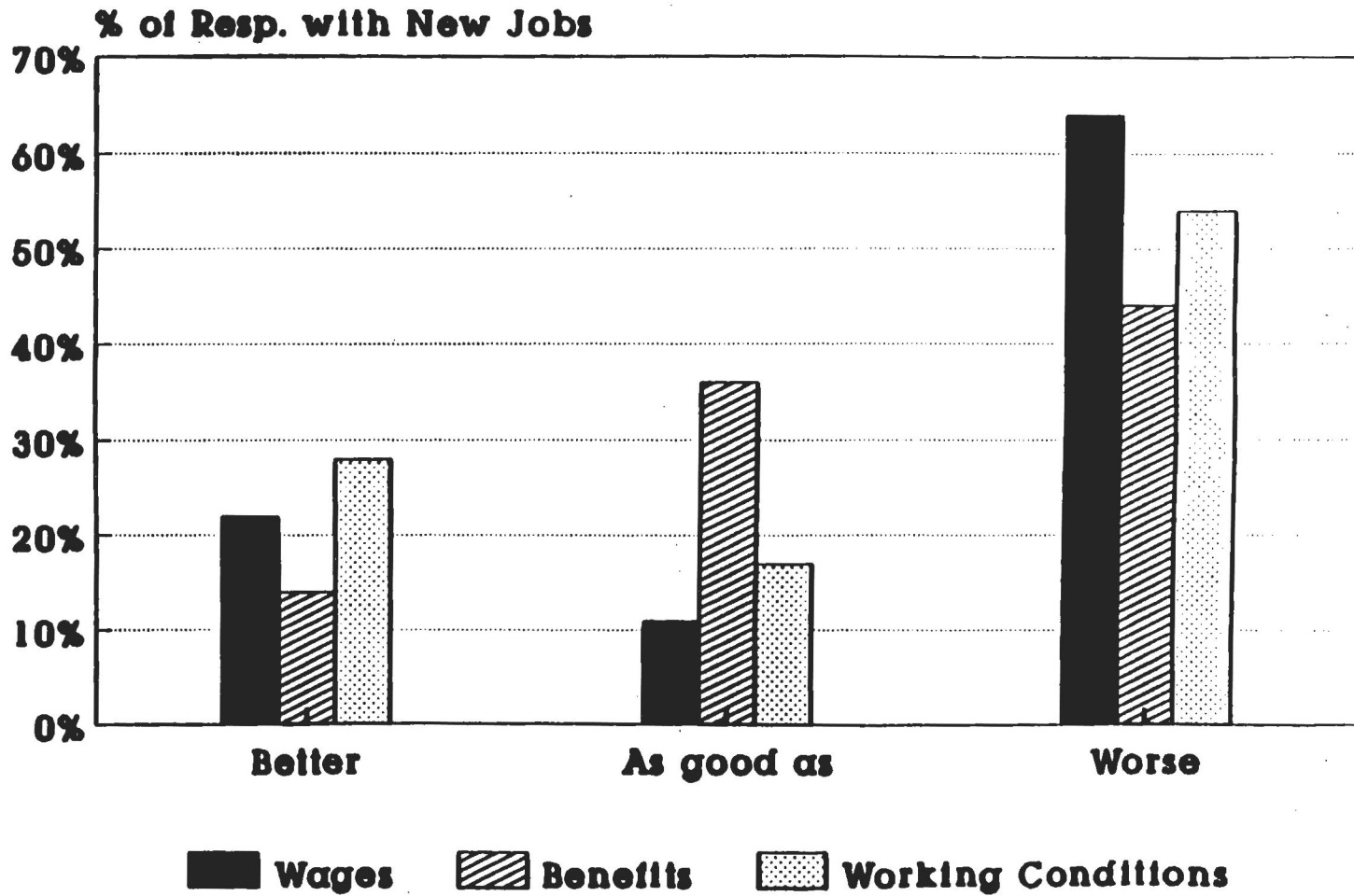
Wages in New Job



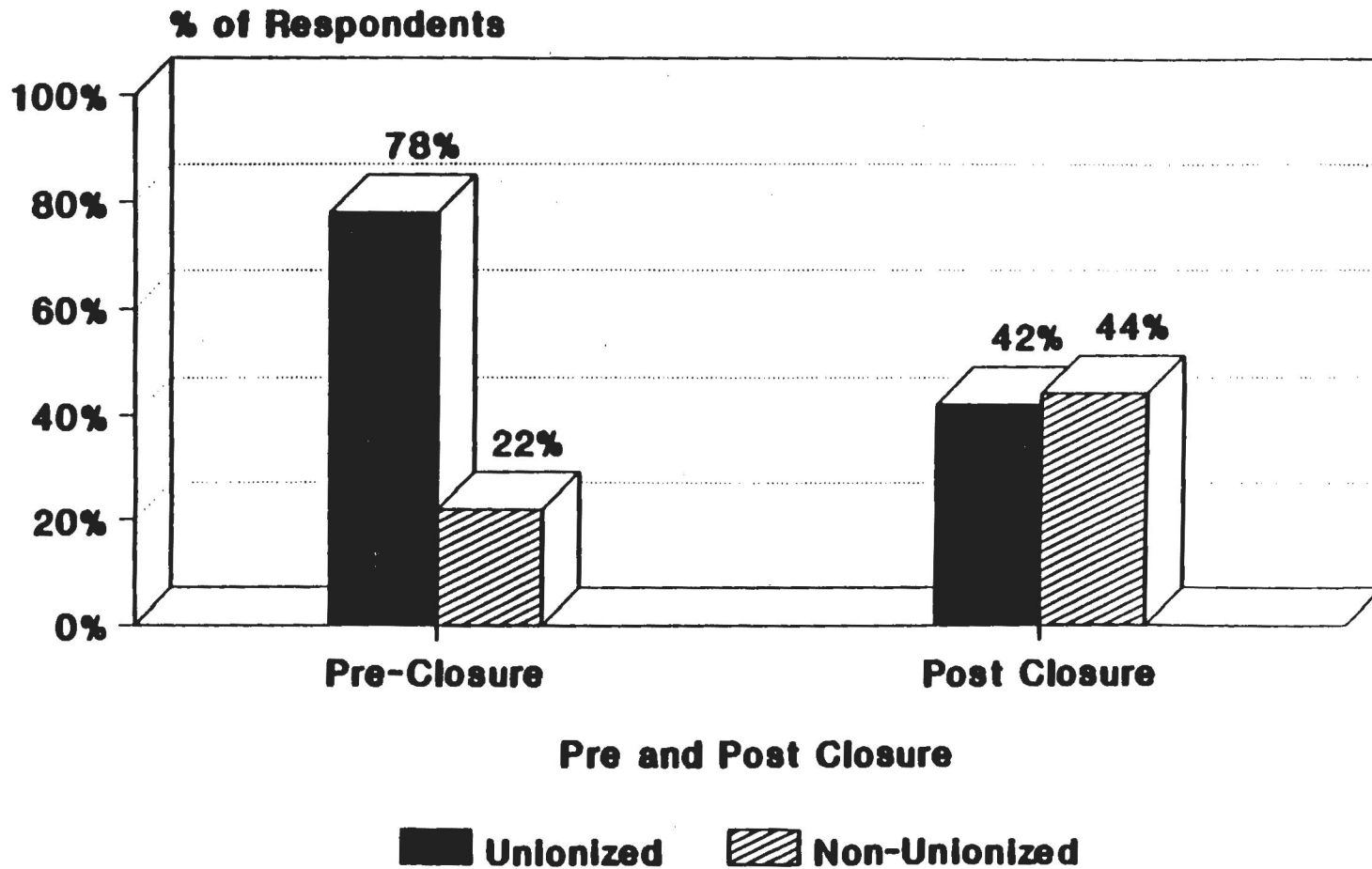
23

N = 36

Wages Benefits and Working Conditions In New Job Compared to Previous Job

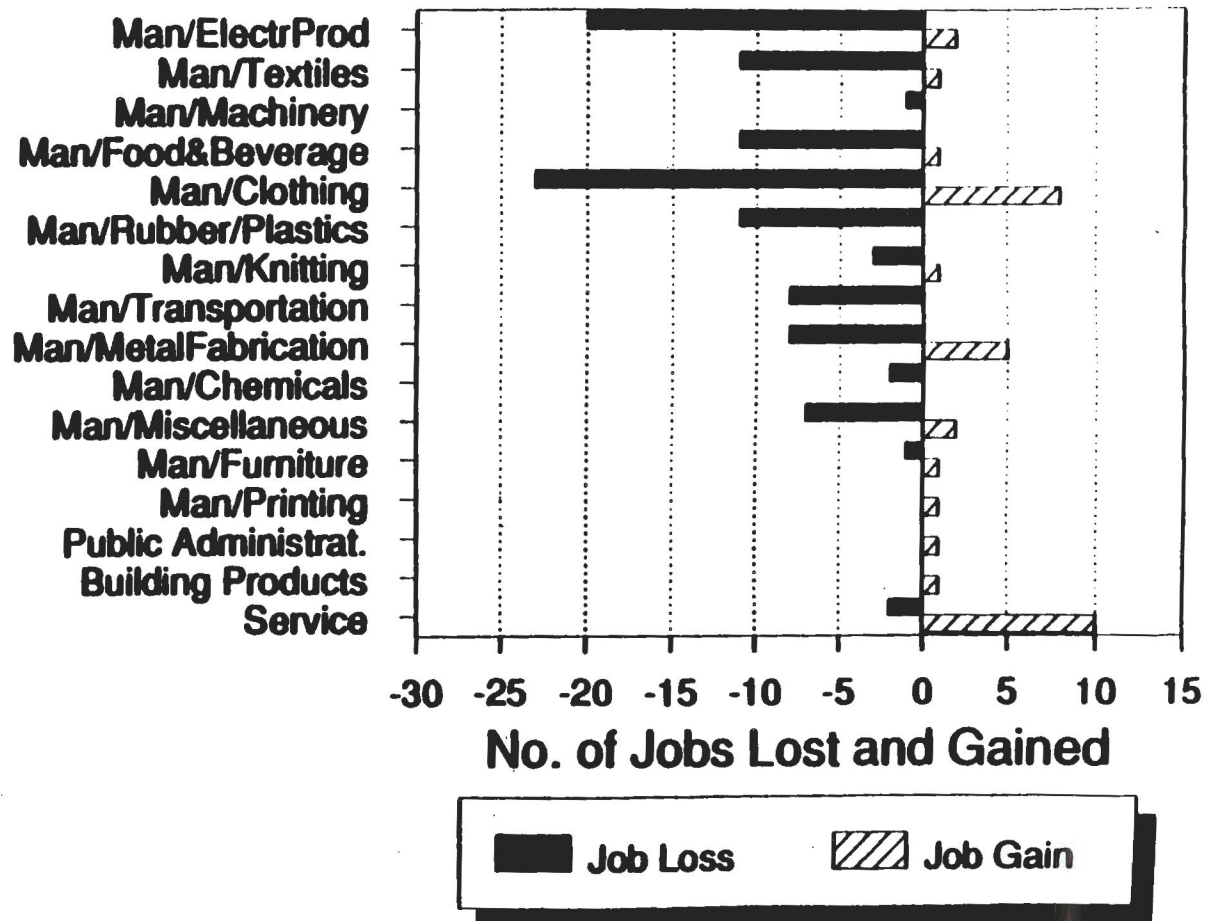


A Comparison of the Proportion Union/ Nonunion Jobs Prior to & After Closure



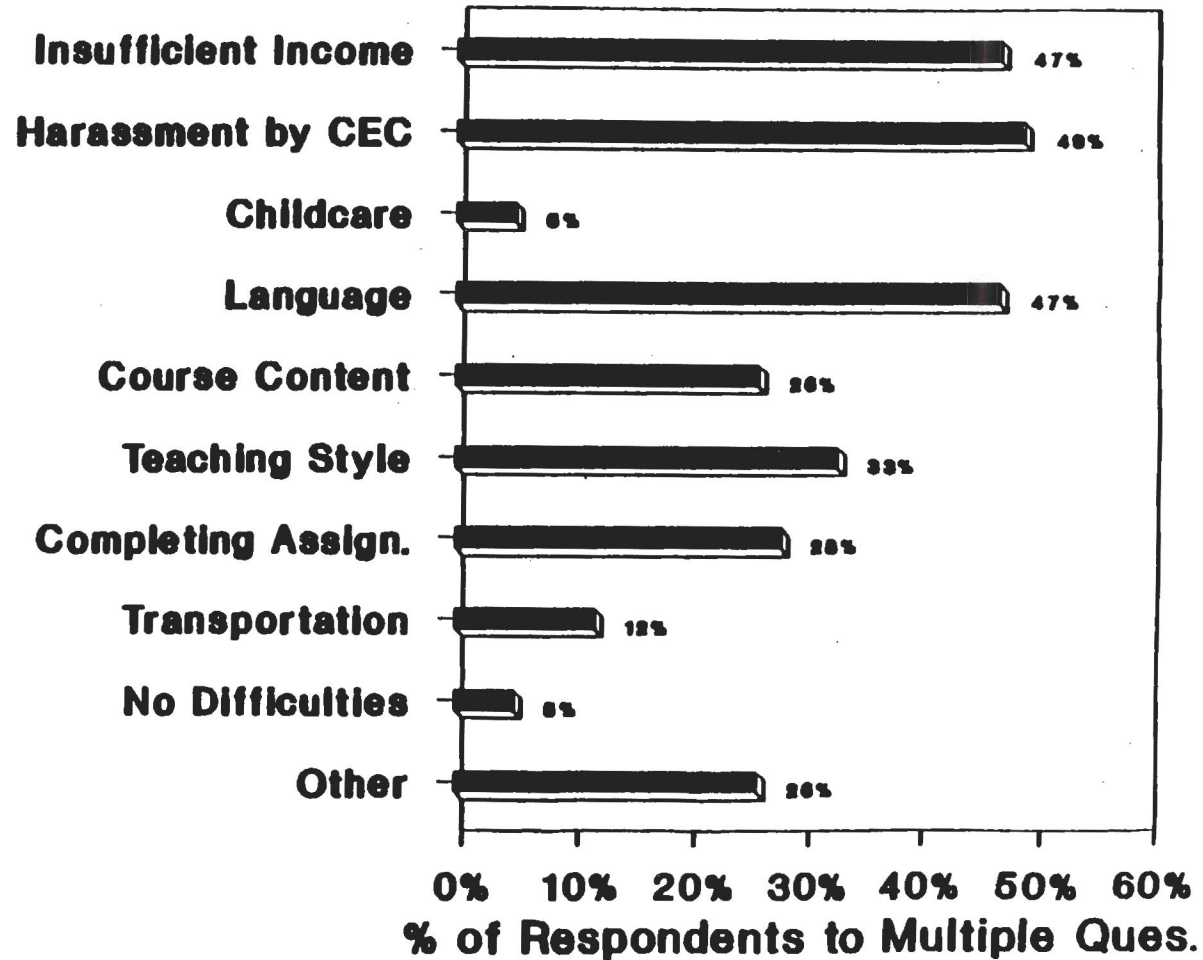
Areas of Job Loss and Gain

Employment Areas (S.I.C.)



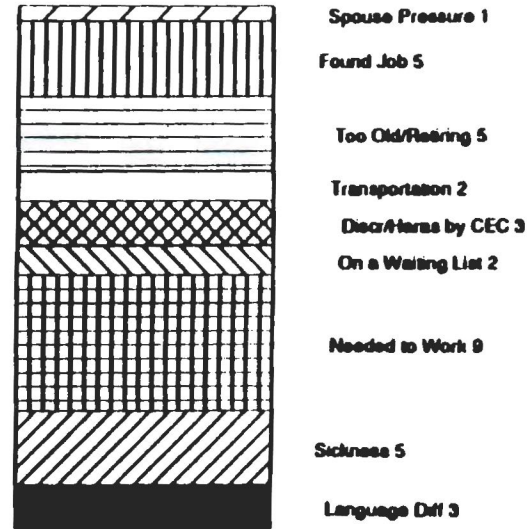
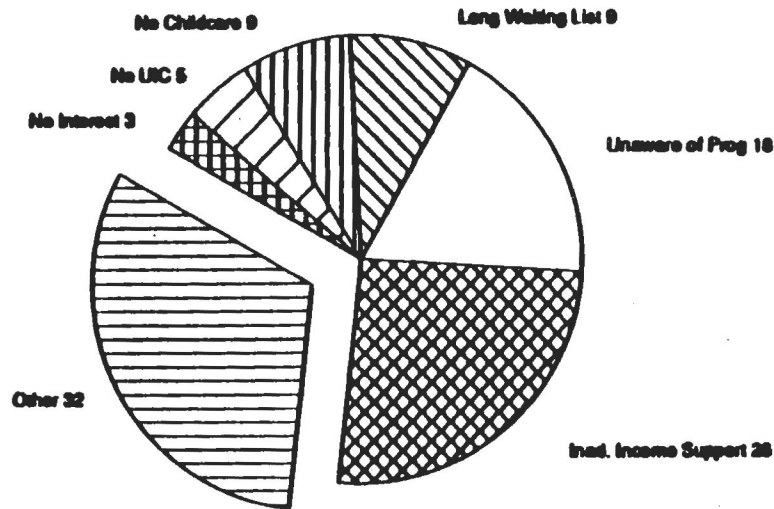
Difficulties in Training Programs

Types of Difficulties in Training



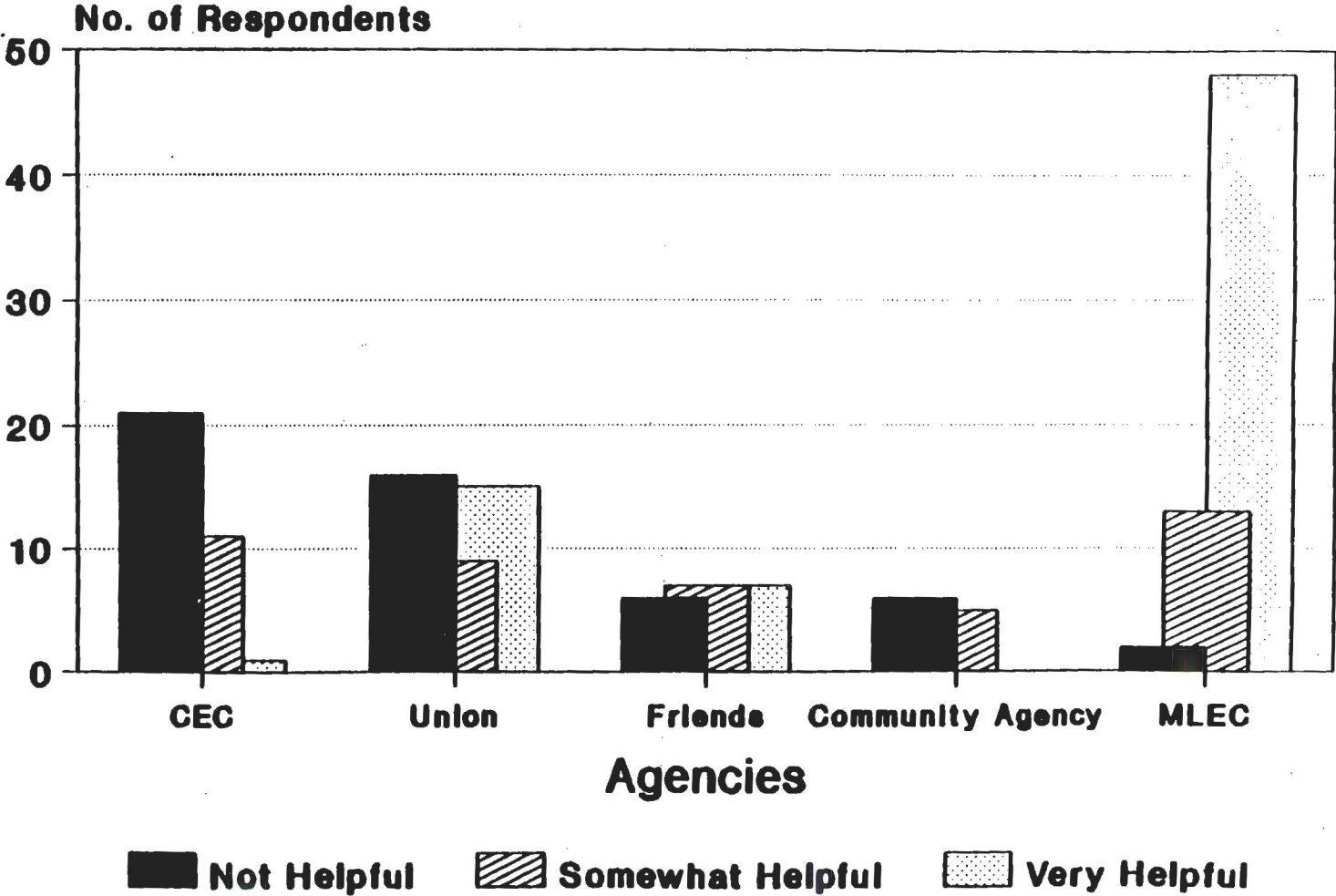
Reasons For Not Being In Retraining

(No. of Responses to Multiple Ques.)

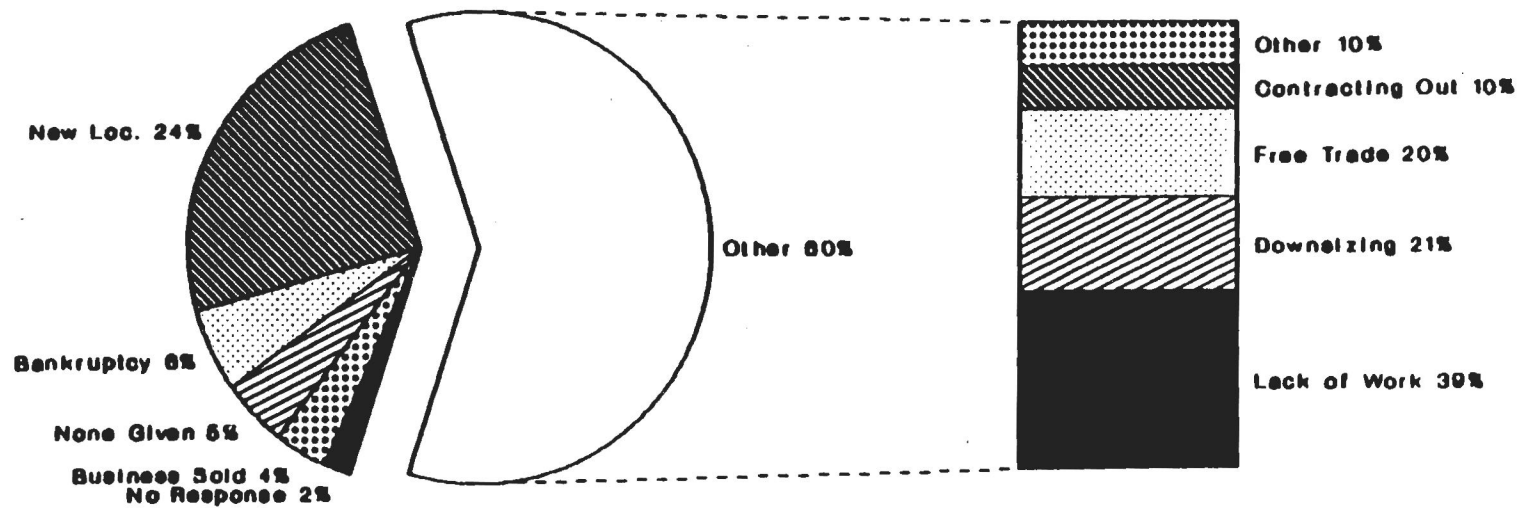


"OTHER"

Ratings for Outside Agencies



Reasons for Plant Closure



"OTHER"

**TABULAR PRESENTATION OF
UNIVARIATES**

**QUESTION 1
WHAT IS YOUR MARITAL STATUS**

Married	78	73%
Single	29	27%
Total	107	100%

**QUESTION 2
WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT AGE**

Less than 31	23	22%
31 to 40	29	27%
41 to 50	30	28%
Greater than 51	24	23%
Total	106	100%

**QUESTION 5
WHAT IS YOUR FIRST LANGUAGE SPOKEN**

English	17	16%
Chinese	27	25%
Vietnamese	9	8%
Italian	14	13%
Portuguese	18	17%
Punjabi	9	8%
Other.	13	12%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 7			
HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN IN CANADA			
Less Than 6	.....	18	17%
6 to 10	.....	22	21%
11 to 15	.....	16	15%
16 to 20	.....	21	20%
21 or More	.....	27	26%
Total	.....	104	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 8			
HOW MANY YEARS OF EDUCATION DID YOU COMPLETE IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY			
Less than 9	.....	62	60%
9 to 10	.....	22	21%
11 to 12	.....	12	12%
More than 12	.....	8	8%
Total	.....	104	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 9			
WHAT TYPE OF JOB TRAINING DID YOU HAVE IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY			
No Response	.....	8	7%
No Training	.....	64	60%
Clerical/Admin	.....	1	1%
Professional	.....	9	8%
Other	.....	25	23%
Total	.....	107	100%

QUESTION 10 WHAT WAS YOUR OCCUPATION IN YOUR HOME COUNTRY		
No Response	5	5%
None	7	7%
Homemaker	27	25%
Unskilled	10	9%
Office/Clerical	1	1%
Professional	7	7%
Other	50	47%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 11 HOW MANY YEARS DID YOU WORK BEFORE COMING TO CANADA		
None	37	38%
1 to 5	32	33%
6 to 10	12	16%
More than 10	12	12%
Total	97	100%

QUESTION 12 DID YOU TRY TO GET YOUR EDUCATIONAL AND/OR WORK EXPERIENCE EVALUATED IN CANADA		
No Response	10	9%
Yes	10	9%
No	87	81%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 13
WHAT SUCCESS DID YOU HAVE WHEN YOU
TRIED TO GET YOUR EXPERIENCE
EVALUATED IN CANADA

At par	2	20%
Lower	6	60%
Not at all	2	20%
Total	10	100%

QUESTION 14
WHY DID YOU NOT TRY TO HAVE YOUR
EXPERIENCE EVALUATED IN CANADA

No Response	3	3%
Didn't know	8	9%
Not relevant	53	61%
Too much time/money	5	6%
Documents unavailable	3	3%
Other Reason	15	17%
Total	87	100%

QUESTION 15
PRIOR TO YOUR PLANT CLOSURE DID YOU
HAVE FURTHER EDUCATION OR TRAINING

High School	12	11%
Community College	1	1%
University		
Skills Training	8	7%
ESL	17	16%
Apprentice Program		
No Training/Educ	71	66%

QUESTION 19			
WHAT IS OR WAS YOUR HOURLY WAGES			
Less Than 6.00	78	73%	
6.00 To 7.99	29	27%	
8.00 To 9.99			
10.00 To 13.99	107	100%	
14.00 To 17.00			
Total			

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 20			
WERE YOU COVERED BY A UNION			
Union	83	78%	
Non-Union	24	22%	
Total	107	100%	

QUESTION 21			
WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE UNION			
Other	3	4%	
CAW	12	14%	
IAM	3	4%	
Steelworkers	13	16%	
ILGWU	21	25%	
International Labourers	8	10%	
United Food/Commercial.....	7	8%	
Dont't know	16	19%	
Total	83	100%	

QUESTION 22			
HOW MANY WEEKS NOTICE OF THE CLOSURE DID YOU HAVE			
None	.....	18	19%
1 To 2	.....	23	25%
3 To 6	.....	22	24%
7 To 12	.....	20	22%
24 Or More	.....	10	11%
Total	.....	93	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 23			
HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE CLOSURE			
No Response	.....	2	2%
Co-Workers	.....	15	14%
Union	.....	16	15%
Employer	.....	73	68%
Other	.....	1	1%
Total	.....	107	100%

QUESTION 24			
WHAT WERE THE REASONS GIVEN FOR THE CLOSURE			
No Response	.....	2	2%
No Reason Given	.....	5	5%
Bankruptcy	.....	6	6%
Move to New Location	.....	26	24%
Business Sold	.....	4	4%
Other	.....	64	60%
Total	.....	107	100%

QUESTION 25			
HOW LONG DID YOU WORK FOR THIS EMPLOYER			
0 To 2	.....	38	42%
3 To 52	.....	10	11%
6 To 10	.....	15	17%
11 To 152	.....	4	4%
16 Or More	.....	23	26%
Total	.....	90	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 26			
DID YOU RECEIVE ANY SEVERANCE PAY AFTER LAY-OFF/PLANT CLOSURE			
No Response	2	2%
Yes	57	53%
No	48	45%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 27			
WHAT ARE YOU DOING NOW			
No Response	2	2%
Work But Layoff Notice	5	5%
In Training Program	13	12%
Training Completed/No Job	7	7%
Unemp, On Waiting List For Training	5	5%
Unemp, Not Aware Of Training Prog	25	23%
Unemp/Trying To Access Training	17	16%
Unemp/Not Interested in Training	3	3%
Presently Have New Job	20	19%
Completed Training & Have New Job	8	7%
Retired	2	2%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 28
PRIOR TO THE CLOSURE WAS THERE
INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO YOU IN THE
WORKPLACE

No Response	1	1%
Yes	58	54%
No	48	45%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 29
WHAT KINDS OF INFORMATION WERE
AVAILABLE IN THE WORKPLACE

Info On UIC	41	71%
Info On Severance Pay	37	64%
Info/Couns For Job Search	43	74%
Info/Couns For Job Place	37	64%
Info/Couns For Retraining	38	66%

QUESTION 30
WERE INFORMATION/COUNSELLING
SERVICES AVAILABLE FROM AGENCIES
OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE

No Response	1	1%
Yes	83	78%
No	23	21%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 31
WHAT AGENCIES DID YOU GO TO AND
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT
HOW HELPFUL IT WAS

CEC		
Not Helpful	21	64%
Somewhat Helpful	11	33%
Very Helpful	1	3%
Total	33	100%
UNION		
Not Helpful	16	40%
Somewhat Helpful	9	23%
Very Helpful	15	38%
Total	40	100%
FRIENDS		
Not Helpful	6	30%
Somewhat Helpful	7	35%
Very Helpful	7	35%
Total	20	100%
COMMUNITY AGENCY		
Not Helpful	6	55%
Somewhat Helpful	5	45%
Total	11	100%
MLEC		
Not Helpful	2	3%
Somewhat Helpful	13	21%
Very Helpful	48	76%
Total	63	100%

QUESTION 32
ARE YOU INTERESTED IN TAKING
RETRAINING OR
UPGRADING PROGRAMS

No Response	1	1%
Yes	86	80%
No	20	19%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 33
SINCE THE CLOSURE HAVE YOU COMPLETED
OR ARE YOU TAKING A RETRAINING OR
UPGRADING PROGRAM

No Response	1	1%
Yes	43	40%
No	63	59%
Total	107	100%

QUESTION 34
IF YOU ARE NOT IN RETRAINING OR
UPGRADING, WHAT ARE THE REASONS

Could Not Get UIC	5	8%
Childcare Unavailable	8	13%
Not Interested	3	5%
Waiting List Too Long	9	14%
Inadequate Income Support.....	26	41%
Unaware Of Programs	18	29%
No Part-Time Work Available.....		
Other Reason Given	38	51%

QUESTION 35
HOW MANY WEEKS DID YOU HAVE TO WAIT
TO GET INTO A TRAINING
OR UPGRADING PROGRAM

None	6	21%
1 To 4	1	3%
5 To 8	4	14%
9 To 12	7	24%
13 And More	11	38%
Total	107	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 36
WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM
HAVE YOU TAKEN

ESL	30	70%
High School Upgrading	2	5%
New Career Training	5	12%
Job Specific Training	5	12%
Other	1	2%
Total	43	100%

QUESTION 37
WHO SPONSORS THE TRAINING PROGRAM

CEC	10	24%
Board of Education	2	5%
Union	1	2%
MLEC	24	57%
Other	5	12%
Total	42	100%

QUESTION 39
WHAT WAS THE DURATION OF YOUR
TRAINING PROGRAM

1 To 4 Months	11	26%
More Than 4 Months.....	28	65%
Ongoing Program	4	9%
Total	43	100%

QUESTION 40
DID YOU RECEIVE ANY INCOME SUPPORT
FROM ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES
DURING THE TRAINING PROGRAM:

UIC	36	84%
Training Allowance	6	14%
Welfare/Family Benefits		
Severance Pay	6	14%
Pension		
Transition Payment	8	19%

QUESTION 41
DID YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THE
FOLLOWING DIFFICULTIES IN THE
RETRAINING PROGRAM

Insufficient Income	20	47%
Harassment	21	49%
Childcare Problems.... ..	2	5%
Language Difficulties	20	47%
Course Content	11	26%
Instructor's Teaching Style	14	33%
Completing Assignments	12	28%
Transportation	5	12%
No Difficulties	2	5%
Other	11	26%

QUESTION 42
HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO FIND A NEW JOB
FOLLOWING THE PLANT CLOSURE?

No Response	1	1%
Yes	36	34%
No	70	65%
Total	107	100%
		100%

QUESTION 43
IF YOU HAVE FOUND A NEW JOB, HOW MANY WEEKS DID IT TAKE?

Found Job Right Away	15	43%
1 To 4 Weeks	8	23%
5 To 12 Weeks	6	17%
13 To 16 Weeks	2	6%
More Than 16 Weeks	4	11%
Total	35	100%

Total represents total number answering question

QUESTION 44
IF YOU HAVE FOUND A NEW JOB, HOW DID YOU FIND IT?

Friends	17	47%
Newspaper	6	17%
Union	2	6%
MLEC		
Community Agency		
Employer	2	6%
CEC	1	3%
Other	9	25%
Total	35	97%

QUESTION 47
WILL YOU BE REPRESENTED BY A UNION IN YOUR NEW JOB?

No Response	2	6%
Yes	15	42%
No	16	44%
Don't Know	3	8%
Total	36	100%

QUESTION 48
ARE THE WAGES IN YOUR NEW JOB AS GOOD AS, BETTER OR WORSE THAN THE JOB YOU LOST THROUGH PLANT CLOSURE?

No Response	.....	1	3%
As Good As	.....	4	11%
Better	.....	8	22%
Worse	.....	23	64%
Total	.....	36	100%

QUESTION 49
ARE THE BENEFITS:

No Response	.....	2	6%
As Good As	.....	13	36%
Better	.....	5	14%
Worse	.....	16	44%
Total	.....	36	100%

QUESTION 50
ARE THE WORKING CONDITIONS:

No Response	.....	1	3%
Yes	.....	6	17%
No	.....	10	28%
Don't Know	.....	19	53%
Total	.....	36	100%

QUESTION 51
OVERALL, ARE YOU AT LEAST AS SATISFIED WITH YOUR NEW JOB AS YOU WERE WITH THE JOB YOU LOST THROUGH PLANT CLOSURE?

No Response	.....	1	3%
Yes	.....	15	42%
No	.....	20	56%
Total	.....	36	100%

CRITIQUE OF EXISTING ADJUSTMENT MODELS

Definition of Term

In this document, adjustment has been broadly defined as a series of outcomes based on criterion immigrant women have defined such as a new job, same or better pay, same level of skill or opportunities to learn new skills, unionization, full time work, and no greater than average physical and mental stress. However, in this section we are attempting to deal with adjustment more narrowly, by defining adjustment as those series of programs, services and other interventions which help ease the shock of plant closings, and facilitate the transition to new employment and/or training. As well, this definition is limited to those rather well established adjustment mechanisms in Ontario which are triggered by the announcement of a closure, and take place before, during and immediately afterward. While training and other services which follow adjustment programs are certainly part of the overall process, they are dealt with under the training section.

Critique of Existing Models

The critique of existing adjustment models is based on extensive discussions with:

- Survey respondents
- Focus Groups
- Community consultations
- MLEC staff
- CSTECH staff
- Employers
- Local unions

Limitations to Existing Models

Through these discussions, five major limitations to adjustment have been identified:

- Voluntarism
- Inaccessibility
- Relevance
- Flexibility
- Follow up and tracking

The section will conclude with recommendations flowing from each of the five areas.

EXISTING ADJUSTMENT MODELS

Currently, adjustment programs for laid off workers are delivered principally by the following:

- 1) Government adjustment programs
- 2) Private adjustment programs
- 3) Joint labour-management programs
- 4) Union based programs
- 5) Community based programs

The effectiveness of each of these programs to immigrant women will be discussed, followed by specific recommendations for increasing relevance and accessibility.

Government Adjustment Programs

Currently, two (2) government initiated adjustment programs are available in Ontario: the Industrial Adjustment Services (EIC), and the Employment Adjustment Program (Ontario Ministry of Labour).

i) Industrial Adjustment Services

The Industrial Adjustment Services is a Federal program, initiated in 1963, and designed to "identify and plan labour market adjustments." During plant closures or lay-offs, a committee made up of equal representatives of management and employees is established by the IAS, and guided by a neutral chairperson and an IAS consultant. The chief function of such committees is to provide information and counselling in the period leading up to, and after, a plant closing or lay-off. Most committees regard job placement for all affected workers as a primary objective, though some evidence of heightened emphasis on both basic skills and job specific training is beginning to emerge.

Government documents and other sources report the IAS model to be highly effective, though limited in its scope by a relatively small budget. Both the Advisory Council on Adjustment and the recently published CLMPC Task Force Report on Programs for Unemployment Insurance Recipients have praised the IAS, and recommended that additional funds be provided to extend services even further. The Federal Government has renewed its commitment to the program most recently in its proposed Labour Force Development Strategy by promising to double the IAS's annual budget to thirty (30) million dollars.

The IAS is now widely used though up to date figures were not made available to the project team by the department. We do know, however, that between

April 1, 1988 and September 1, 1988, 299 new agreements were signed among eligible participants, including employers, associations, unions, other employee representatives, municipalities or provincial governments. The majority of these agreements in Ontario were to assist workers affected by lay-offs and terminations, with slightly more than half signed in unionized workplaces.

In this six (6) month period, 4,380 workers were affected by lay-offs and terminations. 3,454 requested assistance. 2,792 actually received assistance. Therefore, while the proportion of affected workers wanting assistance was high (78.8%), the actual number of those affected who received assistance was much lower -63.74%. Though the use of terms is not defined, one can extrapolate from the figures that a significant proportion of those affected neither requested, nor received, assistance from the IAS.

ii) **Employment Adjustment Program, Ontario Ministry of Labour**

The EAB provides vocational counselling services for workers in plant closings and layoffs in Ontario. Created in 1981, the EAB works in consultation with the IAS to provide job counselling, job search programs and other adjustment measures to assist workers to find new jobs or enter training. The cost of the Adjustment Programs is shared by the Ministry of Labour and the employer, with the program offered either before or after the closure occurs. The EAB contracts with local Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, community groups such as Help Centres, or private consultants, to offer counselling. The goals and objectives of the Adjustment Program are established but both content and process are developed to meet the specific needs of the workers in each situation. Funding for child care and transportation for commuters, and translation services are provided.

Private Adjustment Programs

Many private consulting and out-placement firms offer job search programs and vocational counselling on a fee for service basis in plant closures. Usually, such firms are contracted by the company involved, often before the announcement of a closure is made. Programs tend to be short in length, offered to employees either on their own, or the company's time.

Joint Union Management Programs

While both the IAS and the EAP use a consensual approach to decision making with equal participation among employer and employee groups, there exists one notable joint union management program that is funded as a pilot project by EIC. The Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress is "an experiment to foster both increased labour management cooperation and industry led adjustment measures for laid off workers in the steel industry." (de Grandpre). In primary steel making plants, CSTEAC replaces the

IAS by forming a joint labour management committee which endeavour to provide vocational counselling, job placement assistance, and generous training funds for workers who wish to take job training.

Union Based Adjustment Programs

Though many unions provide some assistance to laid off members such as UIC advocacy, job referrals and personal or "union" counselling, the only union based program established specifically to provide adjustment services is The Metro Labour Education Centre, a project of the Labour Council of Metro Toronto and York Region. Funded by EIC, the MLEC provides union based counselling, group sessions and retraining and UIC information to union members affiliated to the Labour Council who are affected by plant closures. Great emphasis is placed on meeting the needs of immigrant and older workers by offering translated information, multilingual counselling and job search programs, and basic skills upgrading in order to increase access to job training. (See Appendix D)

Community Based Agencies

Though community based agencies offer a wide range of training programs through Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS) sponsorship, none deal specifically with immigrant women affected by plant closures. In fact, the restrictive entrance criterion for most CJS programs will not currently permit funding proposals for unemployed workers laid off less than twenty-four (24) weeks. However, many of these agencies do provide vocational counselling, job search information and life skills in order to assist immigrant women to find employment or enter other training.

Note: It is important to clarify how Community Based Training is situated within the labour adjustment process. The Association for Community Based Training and Education for Women (ACTEW) has made it clear that Community Based Training should not be evaluated according to the narrow definition of adjustment (see p. 46). Rather, Community Based Training should be viewed as providing access to groups of women who are normally denied access to training and personal development. Traditionally these women have not necessarily accessed the workforce or their participation has been interrupted by a variety of factors. Recently there is evidence that more and more women who have experienced layoffs are coming forward to Community Based Training organizations, looking to them for assistance.

LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMS

THE VOLUNTARY NATURE OF ADJUSTMENT

Government Adjustment Programs

While the IAS and the EAB are both well established and widely utilized in plant closures in Ontario, participation rates among immigrant women have tended to be lower than average. We believe this can be attributed to several key factors:

Governmental adjustment processes are triggered when the IAS and/or the EAB are alerted to a closure. This can occur in many ways:

- required reporting to the Ontario Ministry of Labour when lay-offs occur affecting fifty (50) or more employees;
- employer requests for assistance; media reports of closures;
- information from other EIC departments; and
- information sharing between the IAS and EAB.

Though there is no formal agreement which requires both programs be involved in a closure, there appears to be a high degree of cooperation and logical separation of function according to each program's respective mandate. This is especially true outside Metro Toronto and in the non-unionized sector, where few alternative programs such as MLEC or CSTEAC are available to deliver direct service.

While IAS agreements are intended to be equally representative of both employers and employees, many of the union officials interviewed felt that the voluntary nature of the adjustment committee left too much discretion to the employer in determining the type of services and assistance to be offered, and in what way those services would be delivered. Consequently, certain programs and services such as those geared to immigrant women are able to be excluded. For example, the local union at a food processing plant in West Toronto scheduled to close down in the spring of 1990, has had numerous problems implementing needed training and assistance programs due to employer resistance. Though quite advanced notice had been given and the IAS committee was quickly formed, management constantly stalled and impeded the efforts of the committee to provide English as a Second Language classes at the workplace, though a high proportion of immigrant workers would be displaced and would find

accessing further job training difficult due to limited language skills. Similarly, many committees must negotiate with employers to provide needed services and training which will not interfere with production, often resulting in saw-offs where perhaps job training or certification programs may be prioritized over English as a Second Language classes. In yet another example, a employer who had agreed to provide the EAB program to immigrant workers on company time suddenly reversed his decision, saying that he did not understand he was expected to offer any assistance at the workplace and that he could not be forced to do so. Although there is a clause in the Employment Standards Act which states that the Minister of Labour may require an employer to participate in adjustment or measures, the EAB has indicated to us that it would not stand up to a legal test as a requirement.

The voluntary nature of the adjustment process creates a situation wherein services are largely dependant on the goodwill and discretion of the employer. Where these factors exist, workers may receive services at the workplace before the actual closure occurs. The importance of these early interventions cannot be understated. The CLMPC report on Programs for Unemployment Insurance Recipients strongly recommends that "high quality counselling services should be available at the earliest possible period after notice of job loss." The corollary to that recommendation is more advance notice of plant closures "with the goal of ensuring that (notice laws) function effectively as an adjustment mechanism." However, in cases where the employer resists providing services, the IAS and the EAB cannot compel him to do so. In this way, no amount of advance notice will benefit employees unless adjustment programs are also implemented.

The voluntary nature of adjustment is extremely problematic for immigrant women affected by plant closures. Since their training and counselling needs are likely to be greater due to limited language facility and lack of transferrable skills, interventions must be made at the earliest possible moment and provide for the widest range of services, including and especially basic skills training. However, these services can be both costly and organizationally time consuming for employers, and therefore may be withheld as a "frill". Often, minimal assistance will be offered, usually by providing a short term, uniform program, to all employees without recognizing the particular needs of immigrant women. As one union official stated, "You can tell the employer until you are blue in the face what is needed among the workers, but there isn't a single thing you can do to force him/her to give it to you." Since the adjustment process is voluntary, neither the IAS nor the EAP can compel an employer to provide special services and training for immigrant women facing plant closures.

Private Adjustment Programs

These programs appear to have little, if any, benefit to the majority of immigrant women. Often, private firms and management consultants will be contracted by the employer even before a plant announces a closure, often at the direction of the American parent company who may have utilized their services in other situations.

Once contracted, it becomes extremely difficult to refuse participation. Often, immigrant women are not in a position to know what alternative services are available, especially since information about services is not translated or even given to them. Most private consulting firms place major emphasis on the out-placement needs of executives and salaried management workers since this offers the highest financial gain. As a result, their programs for industrial workers tend to be impractical and irrelevant, often lacking information which is needed and useful. Information about such critically important areas as unemployment insurance regulations, pensions and severance pay, is either not offered, or given inaccurately. As a result, immigrant women often find the programs unhelpful, and in many cases, even degrading.

A program offered by a private consulting firm in an Etobicoke closure in 1988 included aptitude and intelligence testing administered by a trained psychologist. Once completed, the tests were evaluated with results returned in a sealed envelope. Most workers in the group, the majority of whom were second language speakers, scored in the fiftieth (50) - sixtieth (60) percentile, and several were told "you seem to have a learning disability; you would be wise to find similar employment and avoid training", and most were told their skills were manual, suited to industrial employment. Upon reading the results of her test, one Immigrant woman who spoke English at a basic level and had been employed for over twenty (20) years with the company, began to cry, saying that the test proved she was "stupid", and that she did not need to think to do her job.

Once again, the voluntary nature of the adjustment process leaves the field wide open for private profit-makers/consultants to exploit the process for their own ends. Though IAS and EAP structures allow some employee participation in choosing services, companies that refuse to establish committees or companies who are directed by head offices to use private consulting firms, do not offer the possibility of employee involvement. In cases where programs and services are irrelevant, inaccurate or even degrading, employees have no recourse but to refuse attendance.

Joint Labour Management Adjustment Program

Like IAS and EAB, CSTECH is a voluntary program, and as such could technically be refused by the employer. However, according to project staff, this has never happened. Because the program is jointly funded and administered by labour and management, the program is not considered to be external to the industry. As well, since generous funding is available, it would be disadvantageous to the employer to refuse CSTECH involvement. Thus, employers within CSTECH's mandate consistently participate in the program. However, since the program is limited to primary steel-making, project staff report that laid off workers are almost exclusively men.

Union Based Programs

Though the MLEC program has established a credible reputation among IAS consultants and EIC officials in Metro, and committees often recommend their services, voluntarism does have a direct impact on the organization's ability to deliver service. Since the organization's mandate is to service unionized workplaces, some employers have resisted and even refused to participate because of a perceived "union bias." In certain cases although the union has strongly supported MLEC's involvement, employers have chosen to contract private consulting firms to deliver assistance. In other cases, the role of MLEC was confined to delivering limited language instruction, while private consultants provided job search information. Such a separation of services has resulted in a confusing and inconsistent program according to immigrant women, since some information is offered in an understandable and sensitive way, while other information is provided in a highly didactic or literate fashion which is inaccessible to second language speakers and those with low levels of literacy.

Community Based Services

Here, voluntarism mitigates against community based programs becoming involved in plant closures. As stated above, none of these programs is specifically mandated to provide adjustment services. However, the major barrier to immigrant women's and other community based services participating is lack of access to the workplace. Although legal clinics, immigrant women's groups and community based training programs could offer helpful services in plant closures such as translation, counselling, life skills, pre employment training and English as a Second Language, the likelihood of their gaining access to a workplace prior to closure is virtually non-existent. Even if such groups were in a position to learn about closures, it would be difficult for them to approach an employer to offer service.

INACCESSIBILITY

Adjustment programs can be made inaccessible in the following ways:

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Language | If programs are offered only in English, immigrant women with limited language skills will not be able to understand information, job search programs, etc. |
| Literacy | If programs are highly literate in nature, utilizing many written materials, they will be inaccessible to women who are not able to read and/or write English. |
| Process | The adjustment process, particularly government initiated adjustment committees, may be difficult to access due to unfamiliarity with language, as well as lack of prior experience in committee structures. |
| Time and Place | If programs are offered in locations which do not ensure comfortability and confidentiality (e.g. workplace cafeterias) they become inaccessible. More significantly, if programs are offered after normal working hours or on weekends, family responsibility often prevents the participation of immigrant women. |

Industrial Adjustment Services - Canadian Employment and Immigration Centre

Questionnaire respondents and interviewees have noted the following limitations to access in the government adjustment programs:

i) Process

In order to be effective, IAS committees require a high degree of participation by worker representatives. Often, immigrant women will neither volunteer for committees, nor be invited to do so by the IAS or their union. Though the facile explanation for this limited language skills, immigrant women's non participation more likely originates from their marginal participation in both workplace and union structures. Even when immigrant women are asked to sit on IAS committees, they may not be clear about the function of the committee, or their role on it. As one Portuguese Immigrant woman from a non union closure told us, "They asked me to join the committee, but I didn't think I was telling them what was going on there. It was not that I didn't want to say, but I couldn't explain myself."

Participating in complex decision making in one's second language is difficult, and represents an unfair burden on immigrant women who sit on IAS committees. Perhaps, the question should not be one of adapting immigrant women to existing committees, but structuring committees in ways that will ensure full participation and decision making.

ii) Language/Literacy

Newly formed IAS committees normally introduce themselves by distributing a letter from the members, or posting a notice on bulletin boards. As the attached examples demonstrate, such letters are almost always unilingual, and are written in complex language. Thus, non-English speakers or those who cannot read English, are unable to understand the purpose of the committee. If questionnaires are used to ask workers if they wish to receive assistance, they may not be responded to. Fear of being set apart by limited language and/or literacy may prevent workers from seeking help. Unilingual and written materials create a situation where immigrant women are consistently excluded and left uninformed.

iii) Time/Location

Adjustment programs are offered in various formats, including programs at the workplace, outside the workplace, during working hours and during off hours. Obviously, those programs and services which are offered at the workplace on the employer's time are the most accessible and will ensure maximum attendance.

Though many IAS consultants would agree on programs offered on the employer's time being the optimal arrangement, there is nothing to compel the employer to release workers from production to attend programs, go to counselling sessions, etc. In fact, workplaces with assembly line operations almost never agree to release employees during working hours due to the cost of replacing them with others. As a result, participation in adjustment programs is often uneven, particularly among immigrant women whose imposed domestic responsibilities prevent after hours attendance.

As well, programs must be offered in locations which are quiet, private and welcoming. Setting up English classes in the cafeteria where other employees drift in at break time, or tease learners in the classes, will be a serious disincentive to many women. According to local unions interviewed, many employers will agree to set up programs in committee, and then use various stalling tactics to delay their start, or to discourage workers from attending. Erratic shift schedules and overtime are serious impediments to effective basic skills training offered at the workplace.

Finally, lack of access is often misinterpreted as lack of interest when workers do not attend adjustment programs. In fact, employers sometimes will use poor attendance as a justification for not providing further services. As one local union president commented, "Management told us that if people were really interested in taking the program they would have to show some commitment and initiative - that since they were losing their jobs, it was really in their best interest to take any help they could get. Pretty ironic that we are supposed to meet them half way when they are the ones who didn't ask us when they made the decision to shut down the plant."

Employment Adjustment Program, Ministry of Labour

i) Language/Literacy

The EAB will provide interpreters for job search programs which have a high proportion of non-English speaking employees. However, such programs also have limitations. Immigrant women may be clustered in regular groups, and feel as though the translation is an annoyance to the others while drawing attention to their supposed "limitations." As well, the opportunity to practice writing, speaking and generally to become accustomed to job search "language" is not really possible with translation alone. While an interpreter will help to make the information accessible, there are still few opportunities to fully participate. An integrated approach giving the opportunity to use reading, writing and listening skills while learning job search techniques was considered by the respondents to be much more effective. When the program is offered to women whose language is at the basic level, access can only be assured by having a bilingual instructor.

ii) Time and Place

Again, the optimal arrangement is to offer programs during regular working hours in a private, convenient location. However, like the IAS the EAB must work within a restrictive framework largely set by the employer.

Private Adjustment Programs

i) Language/Literacy

Curricula used by private consultants are generally the least accessible. Many firms compress a great deal of important information into one or two day seminars, frequently using self-directed workbooks which give complex directions in written English, and do not provide time for review or discussion. In one session conducted by a private firm, a group of ten (10) immigrant women were given workbooks, and were asked to complete their own resumes following directions in the workbook. Though it was clearly evident to the facilitator that no one was writing in the workbook, he simply waited until the suggested time for the exercise had elapsed and said, "That's as much time as there is for resumes. Let's move on to job interview on page 20."

ii) Process

Private firms are contracted by the employer, often at the direction of an American headquarters. As a result, local management may have little information about the program. The purpose of the program is not explained, nor is participation understood to be voluntary. As one Immigrant woman said, "We were told to show up so we went. We didn't know anything about it. The workshop was advertised, but we didn't understand."

RELEVANCE

Another frequent complaint of adjustment programs is their lack of relevance to immigrant women. Information that is critically needed is not offered, or offered in a way that does not recognize the reality of the women's background, work experience and skills.

IAS/EAB ADJUSTMENT PROGRAMS

i) Lack of Information About UIC and Retraining

Information about Unemployment Insurance and retraining is often omitted, or only given in a partial or incomplete way. This has been a major source of frustration for some immigrant women who have felt this omission only underscores the government's assumption that they are not able to access training and therefore have no need for information. As well, questions about Unemployment Insurance regulations, job search obligations, how to avoid disentanglements and disqualifications, successfully appealing decisions, etc., are seen to be extremely important information. Since these areas are not likely to be accessible to workers at Canada Employment Centres, receiving the information before they are laid off becomes imperative. Speaking about the MLEC program, one Immigrant woman said, "They made U.I. understandable for us."

ii) Gender Bias

Many women feel the job search curricula and vocational counselling provided through government adjustment programs is strongly influenced by gender biases and sexism. Job search strategies do not account for the added domestic and child care responsibilities women may face. As one Immigrant woman stated, "The program was good for men, not for us." As well, employment counselling tended to be sex typed, encouraging many immigrant women into job ghettos like the garment industry despite their strong desire to enter training. Some laid off garment workers were told to report to their local CEC's for interviews, and discovered garment manufactures waiting there to interview them. Another Immigrant woman, enrolled in ESL classes at a Community College, was telephoned at home by her former employer who threatened to report her to CEC if she did not leave school and return to her former job in a garment factory. Many women expressed the feeling that CEC offices deliberately discouraged them from pursuing training or seeking alternate forms of employment, particularly those women laid off from garment factories. Quite accurately, many women feel they represent a cheap pool of labour for job ghettos, and as such are discouraged from making the transition to new, or non-traditional occupations.

iii) Cultural Bias

Like gender biases, lack of respect and understanding for cultural differences were cited as sources of dissatisfaction for many women. A common complaint related to the aggressive style of job search techniques taught in job search programs. For example, job search practices such as direct eye contact in interviews, self promotion and descriptions of personal characteristics, may be culturally unacceptable for many women.

Private Adjustment Programs

The harshest criticisms were levelled at private adjustment programs. Women spoke about the lack of relevance such programs had, and the disrespect they felt facilitators demonstrated through their comments and behaviour. Like government adjustment programs, private adjustment services tended to exhibit a lack of sensitivity to gender and cultural differences. Other criticisms were made:

i) Duration

Most private consultants offer an extremely short program, occasionally taught over several days but most frequently compressed into a single day. "The talked about applications, but there was not time to even fill one out," said one Immigrant woman.

ii) Class Bias

Most of the women felt facilitators were more accustomed to working with salaried and executive staff, and that they did not know how to relate to working class women. For example, one private consultant recommended to a group of immigrant women that they could relieve the stress of job loss by "going shopping" or "refinishing antiques." One Immigrant woman told us, "The pushed too much... (they) got mad when someone said that they wanted to stay home for a bit (after being laid off)." Many felt the approach of consultants to be biased toward the employer. "They took the company side," commented one Immigrant woman. "That's why I didn't feel comfortable."

Sometimes, these class differences are palpable. MLEC staff told us a meeting had been initiated with them by a major consulting firm who asked the Centre to provide an ESL component to their program. Said one consultant, "I would not dress this way when I went into the factory. I would wear (the workers) uniform."

iii) Sexual Harassment

One Immigrant woman in the program complained that a consultant had "come on to her", and had "asked to meet her outside."

iv) Lack of Preparation

Some women told us that the consultants "didn't understand everything, and were not prepared." Another Immigrant woman told us, "I know she felt nervous by the way she was talking."

v) Inaccurate/Misleading Information

Practical information about Unemployment Insurance and retraining is not give, or is give inaccurately. For example, one group of women was given completely inaccurate information about when to apply for Unemployment Insurance. In another example, an American based consulting firm used curricula developed in the U.S., and completely omitted information about UIC and other Canadian programs. When one of the women pressed the facilitator for information, he responded, "I don't know anything about UIC or retraining. You'll have to get that information someplace else."

FLEXIBILITY

Adjustment mechanisms in Ontario have become well established in the last ten (10) years. Since its inception in 1981, the Employment Adjustment Branch's Program has been widely utilized. Both the EAB and the IAS have developed well defined procedures determined by regular contact with laid off workers. However, some IAS consultants have followed these procedures in an overly rigid manner which may not always be suitable for women. Some common complaints about inflexibility of procedure have included:

Over-Emphasis on Job Placement

Committees are empowered to determine their mandate, and this can include many different objectives such as job placement, retraining, etc. However, since the consultant and the chairperson are the most knowledgeable about adjustment issues, their influence is significant. This is especially true of committees with weak employee representation. In these cases, a more conservative consultant or chairperson can discourage workers from setting objectives that are unusual. One common complaint of conservative chairs and/or IAS consultants is a perceived over-emphasis on job placement. Such an emphasis is manifest in discussion around assistance program content. Often, more conservative committees will avoid allocating program time to explaining retraining, income supported government programs, unemployment insurance, etc. Similarly, English as a Second Language and Literacy training is rarely offered. While the standard IAS approach may be useful to English speakers who have some skills, and some familiarity with the labour market, immigrant workers are often excluded.

Lack of Information/Access to Government Services and Programs

The Canadian Jobs Strategy and EIC in general represent a confusing myriad of services and programs to most workers. This is especially true for non-English speakers, since Federal Government pamphlets and documents are written in French and English only. As such, committees are generally dependent on IAS consultants to provide information. Consultants can also play an important role in helping committees to "bend rules" in order to access funding from EIC. However, some committee members interviewed by the project team have stated that important information was withheld in meeting, especially information about deferring severance payments in order to collect Unemployment Insurance. According to one union official, "He (the consultant), knew about all kinds of stuff, but he never told us anything unless we dragged it out of him."

FOLLOW UP/TRACKING

One of the major limitations of all existing models is the lack of follow up counselling.

Private adjustment services offer no follow up at all, while government adjustment programs offer services after the closure for a limited period of time. When the adjustment committee disbands, there are no resources available to assist workers who are still unemployed, or have entered training.

Another major limitation is the lack of tracking which now occurs. Both the IAS and EAP do not track unemployed workers after the committee disbands, in fact, the IAS has told the project staff that records are destroyed in order to maintain confidentiality. Consequently, neither follow up services are offered, nor are the adjustment programs able to track subsequent patterns of re-employment and retraining, and to evaluate the long term effectiveness of their programs.

SUMMARY OF LIMITATIONS

Based on our interviews with union representatives, questionnaire respondents, and focus group discussions, the project team has identified four (4) major factors which severely limit the effectiveness of existing adjustment programs. While the strongest criticisms related to government and especially private adjustment programs, even community based programs which represented more relevant and accessible services to immigrant women are severely limited by the voluntary aspect of adjustment. In summary, the four (4) areas are:

Voluntary Aspect

Currently, all adjustment services offered in Ontario are voluntary, dependent on the goodwill and generosity of the employer involved. While there is provision for adjustment measures by employers in the provincial Employment Standards Act, the language is weak and has never been invoked. This has resulted in uneven employer participation in adjustment processed, and poor services to immigrant women. Though women praised adjustment programs such as MLEC's, voluntarism still impacted negatively on the ability of such programs to be involved in plant closures, since employers are in a position to reject all services.

Relevance

Many women have complained about the relevance of adjustment committees, standardization of job search curricula, and more significantly, gender and cultural biases in both programs and among facilitators.

Accessibility

Existing programs are made inaccessible in a number of ways, but most significantly by providing both written and verbal information and services in English only, as well as structuring programs/services in locations and at times that are inconvenient or inaccessible. Finally, the adjustment committee structure was seen to be inaccessible to most immigrant women due to the lack of familiarity with the languages, and generally, little prior experience in workplace and/or union decision making and leadership.

Flexibility

The existing government adjustment process, was seen to be somewhat inflexible, and hence not particularly cognizant of, nor responsive to, immigrant women's needs. Many women felt the IAS committees follow well established procedures and processes too rigidly, while many union officials felt more conservative IAS consultants and chairs lacked imagination, either deliberately or unintentionally withholding vital information about government services and programs.

Follow Up/Tracking

A final limitation to existing models is the lack of follow up and tracking which now takes place. Private consulting firms offer no follow up, while government programs provide follow up counselling only during the life of the committee, after which time records are destroyed. This practice prevents the IAS from providing follow up services, or evaluating the long term effectiveness of their programs. CEIC does send 3 month follow-up questionnaires to all CJS trainees.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The critique of existing model has led to several concrete recommendations which could be implemented at both the legislative and policy levels:

VOLUNTARY ASPECTS

This area impacts significantly on the ability to deliver meaningful adjustment services to women. While government programs can be improved and modified, until employers are compelled to provide adjustment services determined by the women themselves, according to their own needs and priorities, adjustment services will continue to be largely ineffective.

Several steps could be implemented to eliminate voluntarism in adjustment services:

Mandatory Reporting of All Closures and Layoffs in Ontario

Currently, only those closures affecting fifty or more employees must be reported to the Ontario Ministry of Labour. Thus, one of the means of triggering the EAB and the IAS is eliminated in smaller workplaces. This has a significant impact in two (2) ways. First, employers in small industries - particularly the garment industry - are able to gradually downsize their labour force to under fifty (50), thereby avoiding reporting and severance obligations. Since many women are forced into small, labour intensive industries like garment manufacturing, they are almost excluded from adjustment services. Bankruptcy is also a frequent occurrence in the labour market intensive of secondary labour market, where immigrant women are clustered. In such cases, women do not receive severance pay, and often not even wages and holiday pay.

Though the IAS and EAB programs are not strictly dependent on the reporting mechanism, and are willing to offer services in smaller plants, they do so far less frequently, both because they may not be aware of smaller closures, and also because employers in the secondary labour market are less likely to be able to make their contribution to the cost of the committee. Mandatory reporting would alert all levels of government to any closures, thereby establishing the basis for a variety of adjustment models to be delivered.

Compulsory Adjustment Services

This is extremely important. Employers must be obliged to offer adjustment services in all workplace closings and layoffs. If the employer is unable to pay, the government can continue to cover the costs of adjustment committees. However, this should not absolve the employer of the responsibility to provide the infrastructure for adjustment services, ie; time off with pay to attend both basic skills and job search programs; time off with pay to attend one-to-one counselling sessions; arranging for space to set up a counselling centre; providing equipment, such as desks, computers, etc., to the adjustment committee.

Self Determined Adjustment Services

While compulsory adjustment mechanisms would ensure a program is delivered, this would not eliminate the problem of having disproportionate employer control over delivery of services. Though the IAS is ostensibly consensual, the employer has traditionally had the stronger voice on committees. Moreover, the committee structure has not been an easy one for women to access or participate in (developing more responsive committee structures will be discussed elsewhere). Adjustment programs and services must be determined by the women who are affected, and the employer must be obliged to provide those services. One of the cornerstones of such a policy would be the Right to Refuse.

i) Worker's Right to Refuse:

Too often, employers initiate adjustment services which are inappropriate and even degrading to women. In no circumstances should women be forced to participate in adjustment programs which do not meet their needs, respect their values, or recognize their life experience and circumstances.

Additionally, for those workers who refuse to participate in private adjustment programs, the alternative must not be no service. If services are refused, alternate services must be put in their place by the employer.

Self-determined adjustment services can be compelled through legislation. However, this transition would require a tremendous amount of supervision and watchfulness on the part of both the Provincial and Federal Governments. We can expect many employers to resist such changes, since they represent increased costs and decreased control over workplace programs. In order to ensure such requirements, once legislated, are lived up to, the following structures would prove to be useful:

Community Worker Advisor

The non union sector has less access to adjustment services, particularly in the secondary labour market where immigrant women are disproportionately segregated. As well, the lack of union representation means less of a "voice" for workers in general, as well as

less familiarity with joint union management ventures, negotiations, etc. While the EAB and IAS make no distinction between organized and unorganized closures, unorganized women do not have the level of representation their organized counterparts do. Moreover, many important decisions must be made by workers in plant closures that are outside the domain of adjustment committees. In order to assist women in non-union plant closures, a Community Worker Advisor would be appointed to join adjustment committees. Worker Advisors would be selected from a list put forward by local community groups serving immigrant women, on the basis of suitability. Such an advisor would act as the employees advocate, educate to encourage meaningful participation on adjustment committees, ensure that needs determined by the workers were met, and generally represent the interests of employees. In essence, such an advisor would have the same role as a union staff representative in the organized sector. Though there may be a stipend for the Community Advisors, these positions would be largely voluntary, i.e. outside of their permanent paid positions. In this way, Advisors would be non-aligned, able to represent women without constraints placed upon them.

Accountability/Monitoring System

Guidelines for quality adjustment services must be established by labour and community groups. If the criterion for effective adjustment services are to include compulsory service, accessibility, relevance, flexibility and follow up, guidelines could be established by a specially created agency empowered to assure quality control, and made up of community organizations, labour, and representatives from the EAB and IAS. All adjustment programs would be expected to follow the guidelines, and to provide proof to the designated agency responsible that those guidelines were being met.

ACCESSIBILITY

Language, literacy, process and time and place of adjustment programs and services for immigrant women must be made accessible in order for them to be effective. Accessibility could be enhanced in the following way:

Language

All communication from adjustment committees, in job search and other programs, as well as one to one counselling must be offered in the first language of basic speakers. Information sessions could be offered in small groups by facilitators who spoke the women's first language, or by providing simultaneous translation. For workers who speak limited English, programs could be less didactic, and paced according to women's ability to understand the language. A proper language assessment before programs began would help to form groups according to language level.

Literacy

A major limitation of existing adjustment models is an overemphasis on printed materials, work books, handouts, etc. In this way, workers who are not literate in English are excluded and worse, made to feel inadequate and uncomfortable. Again utilizing a language assessment, women who cannot read or write in English could be grouped together, and offered a program which demphasized written materials and exercises and utilized more group work and discussion to cover material.

Process

Women are consistently under-represented on IAS and other workplace adjustment committees. In order to encourage meaningful participation, women must be included at all levels of decision making. If there are several major language groups in the workplace, efforts must be made to ensure women from all those groups are represented on committees. If women speak at a basic level, translation should be provided at the meetings. In non union closures, the Worker Advisor would ensure that women are represented on adjustment committees, and provide training and information to assist them to be active participants. In unionized closures, local unions would actively solicit the participation of women. Again, if adjustment measures were compulsory and carried out according to guidelines monitored by a specific agency, representative participation would be necessary.

Time and Location

The additional domestic responsibilities all working women bear must be recognized and accommodated for in the adjustment process. The employer must provide an infrastructure for program delivery which recognizes women's responsibilities. All programs should be offered on paid company time in order to ensure maximum attendance and participation. Programs should be offered in quiet, private and comfortable places at the workplace, or near the workplace. Under no circumstances should programs be offered in areas used by employees not attending, i.e., English classes held in the cafeteria. If programs cannot be held during working hours, wages should be paid at the usual overtime rates that would apply were the women working.

IAS and EAB

i) Language/Literacy.

All information coming from the IAS or EAB should be translated and personally distributed (not left on bulletin boards) to workers in the predominate languages of the plant. If information is given in English, it should be plainly written and avoid jargon. Under no circumstances should assistance be linked to completing questionnaires since this will exclude those women not literate in English. Personal, one-to-one interviews should be the only basis for determining employment and training goals. At all times, efforts should be made to provide facilitators/counsellors who speak the languages of the workplace, or to provide simultaneous translation. If outside groups are contracted to provide information sessions, accessibility should be ensured in the same way according pre-established guidelines and closely monitored by the appropriate agency.

If IAS committees are in place, guidelines which ensure representative participation among women on committees must be followed.

ii) Mandatory training for IAS chairs and consultants to heighten awareness of literacy and ESL needs in workplace closings.

All IAS consultants, and chairs, should regularly receive community based training in order to be sensitive to the needs of women in plant closures.

RELEVANCE

Program relevance could be enhanced by the providing the following information, again following guidelines for accessibility:

UIC and Retraining

Information about these areas is often not given, or given in an incomplete or inaccurate way. It is absolutely imperative that women understand their rights and entitlements in these two areas.

All information about UIC and retraining should be offered in both basic English and the predominate languages of the workplace in a simple, easy to understand way.

Group sessions should be set up to explain both UIC and retraining. These sessions should be offered by facilitators who originate outside the bureaucracies offering programs, i.e. non-CEC personnel. As well as offering information, efforts must be made to help prepare women to deal with the various problems associated with UIC and accessing income supported training.

Private consulting firms should not be permitted to deliver information in this area except under very exceptional circumstances, and only when conforming to the strictest guidelines of accuracy, relevance and accessibility.

Gender/Cultural Biases

In this area, guidelines must be strictly followed. No programs or services should be permitted in adjustment programs which do not respect the cultural values and life experiences of women.

i) Uniformity

Standardized job search formats whose use is intended for white, literate English speakers should not be used. If the EAB wished to provide guidance in this area, a job search manual for non-English speakers could be developed, but only as a basis for providing an outline to facilitators.

ii) Gender bias

All job search programs, counselling, etc., should be cognizant of additional domestic responsibilities the vast majority of women have, and the constraints such responsibilities may impose on job search objectives.

iii) Cultural bias

Under no circumstances should a standard job search format be imposed on women which makes them feel uncomfortable or embarrassed. Programs and counselling must be set up in such a way that respects cultural values and preferences.

iv) Selection of IAS chairs

Independent chairs are often recommended by IAS consultants. In the Metro area, these chairs have tended to be predominately white males, either retired or in management consulting. In almost all cases, they have a management background. While these chairs may be quite sympathetic and effective in their role, relevance would be enhanced by broadening the group of IAS chairs to reflect the populations in plant closings. For example, a group of chairs could be selected with community involvement, and representative of the language and cultural groups common to the area.

As well, IAS chairs should come from a wide variety of backgrounds, including trade unions, the community, women's groups, etc.

v) Cross-Cultural Training

Regular training in cross-cultural communication and awareness for all IAS chairs and consultants, on a regular and mandatory basis.

Private Adjustment Programs

Based on the feedback the project has had from women, questionnaire respondents, and unions, it is strongly recommended that private for profit consulting firms NOT be permitted to deliver adjustment services. However, should consultants be contracted, their services must conform to the highest standards of quality in the areas of accessibility, relevance, flexibility, etc. In all cases where such consultants are utilized, community involvement and monitoring must be strong. Should private firms fail to meet guidelines, they should be immediately released from their contract.

Enhanced Community Based Trainer Involvement

This is an important recommendation based on extensive consultations with community based training groups, both in Metro Toronto as well as Sudbury, Niagara Falls and Kitchener-Waterloo. Discussions with representatives of community based training programs in all four areas indicate a high level of awareness about the problem of worker displacement. However, community based trainers have little access to women prior to a plant closing. A project staff member from an immigrant women's training program in Kitchener told us of one such example. A poultry packing plant closed in the area, displacing forty (40) Portuguese women. While the project staff wanted to recruit the women into their program, they had no way to reach them before the plant closed. Further, the restrictive CJS criterion would not allow the forty women to enter the program while collecting UI. As the project staff told us, "It would have been so

easy to reach out to them. We had the space to set up an ESL bridging program, and could have asked for a teacher from the Board of Education. But we didn't know how to get to them, or around the criterion." Thus, community based trainers - while expressing a high degree of interest in recruiting women from plant closures, were limited in their ability to do so by a) lack of access before closures and b) restrictive CJS criterion.

Such barriers could be removed by:

i) Expanding the role of community based trainers and umbrella groups to provide adjustment services

In the same way the MLEC model has proven to be successful because of its flexibility and relevance to women, community based training programs and umbrella groups represent an alternate mechanism for delivering assessment, counselling and job search programs. Programs such as the YWCA's Working Skills for Women, Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre and others in Metro Toronto are well established and specifically mandated to serving the needs of immigrant women. This is even more true in areas outside of Toronto where there may be only a few agencies which are well established and recognized. Undertaking adjustment services could be easily accomplished with additional funding for staff. However, the funding issue was a sensitive one for the training programs we spoke to. All of them complained of being responsible for far more services than they were mandated to provide already, and could not foresee additional services without generous funding. Therefore, in order for community based agencies to have a meaningful role in delivering adjustment programs, funding for additional staff and resources is absolutely imperative.

ii) Getting Rid of Restrictive CJS criterion

While this point will be made elsewhere in the document, all the community based agencies spoke of their inability to recruit UI recipients because of restrictive CJS criterion. This was felt to be especially problematic were such groups to be involved with adjustment services. It made little sense for these groups to undertake delivery of pre-closure services if the women would not be eligible for any of their programs after they were laid off. In order to increase access, the training groups felt all CJS criterion must be relaxed in order to allow UI recipients to enter their programs immediately following layoff.

FLEXIBILITY

The existing adjustment models are well established, and therefore have become fairly standardized. The benefit of standardizing any program or service is that regular implementation should lead on going improvements and modifications. This is partially true of government models which have attempted to meet the adjustment needs of industrial workers by developing programs which are specific to them. However, the limitation of a standard program, once established, is the temptation to follow it too rigidly, or to fail to see its limitations with respect to certain groups.

In the opinion of the project team, the existing government adjustment model reflects certain gender and cultural biases which make it unhelpful and even harmful to immigrant women. Planning adjustment processes, programs, services and outcomes for women must be done in a manner which reflects women's STATED needs and objectives, particular circumstances and cultural preferences. In the same way that many adjustment programs would not think to use job search techniques designed for use by "professionals" among "non professionals", differences among industrial workers must also be recognized and accommodated for. This requires more flexibility and creativity in planning adjustment, and can only be done with active and genuine consultation with the community.

i) Emphasis on " options", rather than job placement

Committees must recognize the complexity of the labour market and rapid rate of change. It is clear that Canada is experiencing a rapid rate of deindustrialization. IAS committees that remain fixated on placing workers in non-existent manufacturing jobs fail to recognize a reality that most industrial workers recognize only too well. As well, committees must recognize that the labour market is rigidly segmented, and that not all workers will begin their job search from the same starting line. Immigrant women, and women in general, are still disproportionately segregated into a small number of low paying, low status occupations, with little possibility of advancement. Unionized manufacturing jobs have historically represented one of the few areas of employment with higher wages and benefits for immigrant women. As these jobs disappear, women's standard of living will continue to be erode as they forced into low skill jobs in expanding employment areas. IAS committees must recognize and openly discuss these characteristics of the labour market, and plan accordingly. Encouraging women into non-traditional occupations through the use of bridging programs could be a high priority for IAS committees, rather than trying to place them, could be a priority, but rarely is.

As well, **training** options are almost never clearly explained to women. We feel this underlies that assumption among government adjustment program staff that immigrant women would not want to train, or that their training would take such an inordinate period of time and cost it should be discouraged. We believe this to be patently unfair and wrong. All immigrant women must be provided training information which is understandable and which clearly explains how to enter the training system despite the many barriers that are erected to deny them access.

ii) Integration of above recommendations

In summary, we see the recommendations made with regard to compulsion, relevance, and accessibility as the cornerstones of establishing a flexible adjustment program. Meeting objectives set by immigrant women themselves in those areas, as well as providing follow up services will result in an holistic, flexible adjustment program that genuinely facilitates immigrant women's transition to meaningful training and/or employment.

FOLLOW UP/TRACKING

Follow up and tracking must be included to have effective adjustment programs. The disbanding of IAS committees and the resulting destroying of records represents a serious limitation to follow up services. We recommend the following be implemented:

- i) Establishment of a permanent tracking system for all EAB and IAS committees**
All women who are assisted through committees should be tracked on a regular basis up to five years to determine patterns of reemployment and retraining. Such tracking could also provide the basis for referrals to community based help centres, government sponsored programs, etc. Tracking interviews should be done either in person or by telephone, and whenever needed, conducted in the Immigrant woman's first language.
- (ii) Public information bank on tracking information**
All statistics related to women's reemployment and retraining should be available to the public in order to judge the effectiveness of government adjustment models, as well as to help plan community based and other programs according to needs identified by tracking (i.e., certain populations and age groups that have greater difficulty finding employment).

(iii) Permanently funded community-based Help Centres

Once a closure occurs, all women should have access to follow up services and counselling in their community. Providing permanent funding to community based centres in order to deliver services and ensuring that women are clear about how to find the centre nearest to them, would ensure long term follow up.

CRITIQUE OF INCOME SUPPORT

TYPES OF INCOME SUPPORT

Lack of adequate income support remains the single greatest obstacle to accessing training for adults generally, and immigrant women specifically.

The following methods of income support for trainees will be critiqued:

- 1) Unemployment Insurance
- 2) EIC Training Allowance
- 3) CJS Training Allowances or "Wages"
- 4) Employer Subsidy
- 5) Ontario and Canada Student Loans
- 6) Program for Older Worker Adjustment
- 7) Social Assistance/General Welfare

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance remains the principal form of income support for displaced workers seeking retraining. Training can be approved under the following sections of the UI Act:

- **Section 14**
"This section states that a claimant must be available for and actively seeking work. While there is a strong presumption of non-availability, a claimant may be eligible for benefits while taking courses. The claimant's intentions and the nature of the course will be on an individual basis. If a job becomes available the claimant must leave the training course."
- **Section 26**
This section of the UI Act permits claimants to train for up to 104 weeks, subject to the approval of an EIC counsellor. Claimants can seek Section 26 approval through either the Direct Purchase Option, where they are referred by EIC to training seats previously bought by the commission; or as fee-payers, where claimants pay their own fees, but are able to collect UI while in school. In order to be considered full time, programs must be 25 or more hours a week, and must run continuously. However, full time training may be semestered.

Please note: Since this report was first drafted, the Feepayer Option under Section 26 has been closed to all new entrants as of July, 1990. EIC will honour commitments made to trainees prior to that time; however, any laid off worker wishing to access training through the Feepayer program after July is no longer able to do so. EIC claims that, due to higher than usual demand, the fund for Section 26 feepayers has been exhausted, resulting in the closing of the program for an indefinite period of time.

Unemployment insurance has serious limitations as a form of income support for immigrant women due to the following:

i) **Negative treatment by CEC staff**

49% of the women surveyed feel as though EIC actively discourages them from training, either by disentitling them for reasons they do not understand, or by pushing them back into the labour market, usually to jobs they do not want and are trying to make a transition from. Most immigrant women are disentitled because their obligations with respect to job search, obtaining approval for training and reporting, are never explained to them. All forms and correspondence from EIC are in English, and written in complex language. It is common for women who cannot read English to receive a notice to report, not understand it and therefore fail to report and be disentitled. In some cases, a notice of overpayment is issued even before notice of disentitlement! In other cases, immigrant women who have been referred to training have been recalled by employers who threatened to report them if they did not return to work. In general, immigrant women reported a high level of negative treatment which acts as a strong disincentive to training. It is also important to note that the passage of Bill C-21 will almost certainly result in greater intimidation of immigrant women, since the federal government expects to generate revenues from increased penalties and disentitlements. Immigrant women feel they are the most vulnerable group to suffer from this treatment by unemployment insurance officers.

The cancellation of the Section 26 Feepayer program has meant that many immigrant women waiting to enter training programs as feepayers will not be able to do so. In fact, in some cases women who had received verbal approval from EIC, had been accepted by programs, and told to return to the CEC to complete documentation in August 1990. Those women are now being told they will not be given Section 26 feepayer approval.

Please note: It should be clear that many of the criticisms referred to above would be shared by the Canada Employment and Immigration Union - the union which represents counsellors and other staff at the CEC offices. However according to the Union, staff are also under increasing pressure because of cutbacks, restrictions on time for counselling and generally deteriorating conditions.

ii) Lack of information

Immigrant women report that they are not given information about retraining when they see an EIC counsellor, or they are told there is no training suitable to them available. Information is not given in languages other than English and French. Consequently, even if there are training options available to them, they have no way to access the information.

iii) Entrance requirements

If an immigrant woman is in fact referred to training, she must first provide proof she can meet the entrance requirements of the training program. If she does meet the formal requirements, she must write an entrance exam at the community college, the results of which are returned to the EIC. Many immigrant women have complained about such tests, claiming they are difficult to understand, impose artificial time limits and are culturally biased against them. While there is value in determining a candidate's appropriateness for training, many immigrant women felt the function of such testing is to discriminate against them, and that alternate forms of testing would more accurately reflect their skills and abilities. By requiring such standard tests, EIC acts as a gatekeeper to training, and often excludes immigrant women.

iv) Lack of access to English as Second Language/Upgrading programs

This is linked to the above category, and is an enormous source of frustration for immigrant women. Unless referred to Direct Purchase English as a Second Language courses, immigrant women are normally not allowed to take basic skills upgrading programs while collecting UI benefits. This becomes problematic when women cannot access direct purchase courses due to lack of available spaces, or the inappropriateness of the level offered (usually basic). Since many women require a period of pre-training before accessing job specific training programs, EIC's refusal to grant Section 26 approval for ESL creates a serious bottleneck to training.

Please note: In May 1990, the policy of not allowing UI claimants to enter upgrading as feepayers was changed. At that time, EIC stated that due to the lack of direct purchase seats in

cutbacks to Direct Purchase seats has meant income supported ESL/Literacy training is more inaccessible than ever.

v) Lack of recognition of foreign credentials

Immigrant women who are trained as professionals in their countries of origin are rarely encouraged to take training to obtain Canadian certification. Many women working in the garment industry complained that they were nurses or teachers in their native countries, but find little support from EIC when seeking to obtain certification. Little distinction is made between those immigrant women who have professional training and those who do not.

vi) Inadequate income

All the women surveyed said that unemployment insurance was an inadequate form of income, particularly those women who were earning low wages while employed. For many displaced garment workers, UI payments of \$120.00 - 150.00 weekly are not uncommon.

Without adequate income support, training becomes an impossibility.

vii) Severance as earnings

For immigrant women displaced from higher paying, unionized workplaces, severance entitlements may be significant. However, since 1987 these entitlements have been considered as earnings, and are added to the UI waiting period. For some immigrant women, this means waiting up to a year to become eligible for unemployment insurance. Should an Immigrant woman decide to begin training during this waiting period, she faces the uncertainty of not having her training approved when she becomes eligible for benefits. However, the major problem associated with severance is the pressure women feel to return quickly to work in order not to use their severance as income. For many displaced workers, severance represents the most significant savings they will ever have. Many intend it for their retirement. In order to keep this money, many workers chose low paying jobs rather using severance as a means of income support while training.

EIC Training Allowance

An EIC Training Allowance is available for those individuals who do not qualify for unemployment insurance, or whose unemployment insurance has expired. However, this allowance is extremely inadequate as a means of income support. The payment is currently \$125. weekly, with an additional \$25. per dependent child. However, should the trainee have a spouse, the allowance is less. To the immigrant women consulted for

the project, undertaking training with this form of income support would not be considered a possibility.

CJS Allowances

Some CJS categories such as Job Development and Job Entry provide training allowances or "wages" in their project funding. These "wages" range from minimum wage to about \$7.00 hourly. However, there are serious limitations to such income support.

i) Non insurable earnings

Usually, CJS programs combine classroom and work experience over twenty four weeks. However the wages paid during classroom training are not considered to be insurable earnings. For women who take a twenty four week program, there may be as few as eight weeks insurable earnings, rendering them ineligible for unemployment insurance benefits when the program ends. This acts as a serious disincentive to using this form of income support.

ii) Inadequate income support

Again, the maximum weekly earnings likely to be received under CJS are \$300.00. For some women, this would mean less income than they received while collecting UI benefits.

Employer subsidies

Certain categories of the CJS will also allow for individually subsidized jobs, meaning that if the trainee can find or be referred to an employer, EIC will fund part of the cost of her wages. Several barriers to such income support exist:

i) Lack of access to higher paying, unionized jobs

Since most union collective agreements will not allow for trainees to be placed at lower than agreed wage rates, women rarely have the opportunity to be placed in good jobs. Consequently, women are more likely to be placed within the labour intensive, non union jobs, which in turn are less likely to offer permanent, well paying positions at the end of the work placement.

ii) Lack of job security

Since there is no assurance an immigrant woman will be hired permanently after a work placement, it becomes a great risk to discontinue unemployment insurance. This is especially true if the work placement offers a lower rate of pay, which in turn will result in a lower benefit rate if she must go back on unemployment insurance in the future.

Ontario and Canada Student Loans

While this type of income support is available to women taking post secondary education, either in community colleges or universities, it is seldom used, principally because, it is not possible to collect unemployment insurance and receive student loans.

Program for Older Worker Adjustment

This newly established federal-provincial program will provide income support to displaced workers between 55 - 65 (70% of UI benefits) if the plant from which they were laid off is designated by Labour Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Labour, and if they have exhausted all other benefits and training and job possibilities. Since receiving POWA will be based on the latter criterion, it is difficult to foresee many workers using it as a means of income support for training.

Social Assistance/General Welfare Assistance

None of the women in our survey were on social assistance. However, the limitations of such forms of income support have been well documented elsewhere. Moreover, we can expect those women who "fall" from the UI safety net to social assistance to be extremely demoralized and possibly less willing to undertake a training program. As one Sudbury project manager dealing with social assistance recipients who had originally been laid off from Inco said, "When the trainees come into this program, they are so beaten that it takes them months even to begin to consider the possibility of doing job training." Discussions with an IAS representative counselling long-term unemployed Canada Packer workers in Winnipeg were similarly revealing. When asked about referring those workers (now collecting welfare) to training, the counsellor said: "These workers have had so many doors shut in their face, it's all we can do to get them to make a telephone call, much less get involved in training." It is not yet known how many workers displaced from recent closures have exhausted UI benefits and gone on to social assistance programs. Again, the passage of Bill C-21 will undoubtedly have an impact in this area, since claimants in areas of "high employment" such as Metro Toronto will be able to collect for fewer weeks, therefore exhausting benefits sooner.

Please note: In July 1990, the City of Toronto reported that the number of individuals receiving social assistance was at its highest level in history. As well, the Skills Training for Unemployed Workers Program reports that many workers have exhausted UI benefits, are now applying for general welfare assistance. It seems clear that many displaced workers who have now exhausted UI benefits, are being forced onto welfare. Moreover, the number of women living in poverty in Canada is also at an all time high (Toronto Star, August 14/90). Given our understanding of the disadvantaged position immigrant women occupy in society, we can expect increased unemployment and general impoverishment of women will worsen their situation dramatically.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment insurance is still the principal form of income support used by displaced workers seeking retraining. 84% of the women surveyed who were training were collecting UI. 47% identified income support as a serious problem during training. One of the serious limitations of UI as a form of income support to trainees is its regressive nature. Those claimants displaced from low paying jobs will have the lowest benefit rate, making it even more difficult for them to consider training. For example, women laid off from the garment industry may only collect \$125-150. weekly, while those laid off from high paying unionized jobs frequently receive the maximum entitlement - \$383. weekly.

As well, the entire referral and approval system which is centred in CEC represents significant impediment to training for immigrant women. 49% felt they were harassed by CEC, either through disentanglements or active discouragement of training. Focus group discussions indicate that almost without exception, immigrant women feel intimidated by Canada Employment Centres, and seek to avoid them wherever possible.

An ideal income support system would be a training allowance which is not linked to the unemployment insurance program, provides a decent income, is available for extended training, and has wide eligibility, including basic skills and pre-training.

Training Allowance for Displaced Immigrant Women

Displaced immigrant women should be automatically entitled to a training allowance should they chose to enter training.

Such an allowance could be made available on the following bases:

i) Eligibility

All immigrant women displaced by plant closings and layoffs would automatically be entitled, regardless of length of service at the workplace. Payments would be standard, and other earnings would not be deducted (i.e. severance) though such a training allowance would take the place of unemployment insurance. Under no circumstances would such training allowances be subject to a means test.

- ii) **Non-biased assessment**
An assessment would be available free of charge to those who had been approved for training. However, the purpose of this assessment would be to determine length and type of training needed to meet objectives. Such an assessment would be conducted in a manner which was culturally non-biased.
- iii) **Benefit rate**
Determining "adequacy" is difficult, since this is a relative concept. However, adequate could mean no less than the maximum UI entitlement, though preferably more.
- iv) **Additional support**
Transportation and child care costs would also be available where needed.
- v) **Funding and administration**
The training allowance should be jointly funded by employers and government, and administered separately from the UI program. Though it is not within the domain of this project to suggest administrative structures, we are concerned that the outcome be payments which are distributed to trainees in a timely and efficient way. In no way should such an allowance, once approved, be linked to success in the training program, regular attendance, or other arbitrary criterion which may establish the basis for disentanglement.
- vi) **Application for training allowances**
Applications should be available to all deliverers of adjustment programs and services, including government, community based and union based adjustment programs. Applications should be written simply (the application for the provincial training program Transitions is a good example), in different languages, and distributed widely throughout community based groups, CEC offices, union offices, etc.
- vii) **Eligible training programs**
The training allowance should be available for all training programs, including and especially language training. As well, training allowances should be available to those trainees who go into semestered programs, and should not be cut off during regularly scheduled breaks.
- viii) **Time limits**
The training allowance should be available for up to three years in order to permit a longer period of training for those who first require basic skills upgrading.

ix) Access to UI after training

For those trainees who complete their training programs or who exhaust their training allowance, unemployment insurance benefits should be available without any disentitlements for the period the training allowance was collected.

EIC Training Allowance, CIS Allowance, Employer Subsidy

We would ideally see a standard training allowance replacing all these forms of income support.

Failing such a restructuring of the current income support system in Ontario, there are many improvements which can be made within the existing parameters.

Unemployment Insurance

i) Automatic entitlement to Section 26

Unemployment insurance benefits under Section 26 should be automatically authorized by EIC for all immigrant women who are displaced in plant closings.

ii) Top up to low-benefit rate

For those claimants with low benefit rates, a top up should be provided in order to encourage training.

iii) Community based counselling and referral

Currently, the majority of training referrals and counselling takes place at Canada Employment Centres. We have already noted that many immigrant women feel CEC's are inaccessible to them due to unavailability of counselling in different languages as well as systemic discrimination which discourages them from training. Community based EIC services that conform to adjustment guidelines of relevance, flexibility and accessibility, would be a good alternative. **We do not mean to suggest EIC services should in any way be privatized.** Rather, we see the EIC counsellor being based in the community and working in tandem with community based trainers and umbrella groups to facilitate training. For example, community based agencies would have an easily identifiable symbol indicating the availability of government services at that location. EIC counsellors would be assigned to work with the agency in order to meet with trainees, complete necessary documentation and assist with any UI problems. To do this however would require hiring many more EIC counsellors for the service to be worthwhile.

- iv) **Guaranteed and automatic access to language training**
All language based training, including those programs offered by community agencies, colleges and school boards, should be eligible for Section 26 approval.
- v) **Elimination of testing requirement for Section 26 approval**
All training programs should be empowered to accept clients according to their own criterion. No further proof of eligibility need be provided to CEC officials outside the agency's acceptance of the trainee.
- vi) **Severance**
Severance should not be considered earnings and delay unemployment insurance benefits for any claimant, regardless of whether they enter training or will be looking for work.
- vii) **Extended Hours**
CEC branches should be open during the evening and perhaps Saturday mornings in order to increase access to those workers still employed but facing plant closures.

EIC Training Allowance

For those trainees who exhaust their UI, the EIC Training Allowance should match the previous benefit rate.

CJS Allowances or "Wages"

CJS Allowances must be much more generous, and should be considered insurable earnings without exceptions.

Employer Subsidy

All wage rates should conform with those paid to regular, permanent employees. Under no circumstances should substandard wages be offered to trainees for work which is similar to that done by permanent employees.

Ontario and Canada Student Loans

These programs should be open to UI recipients, particularly for tuition costs.

FEDERAL PROVINCIAL RELATIONS IN ADJUSTMENT

This area impacts significantly on the delivery of an integrated adjustment program in several key areas:

Rigid Jurisdiction for Training the Unemployed

Currently, all programs for unemployed Ontarians are funded by the federal government. This has several significant impacts:

i) **Eligibility for training programs**

Many provincially funded training programs are appropriate for displaced immigrant women, but not eligible for UI training. One example is the Ontario Basic Skills programs at the community college level. Another is the widely available ESL and Literacy programs offered at school boards. Such programs are free, have continuous intake, and in the case of OBS, provide a small child care and transportation allowance. However, neither OBS nor school board programs are open to UI recipients except under extremely rare circumstances.

ii) **Lack of coordination between federal and provincial funding sources for the unemployed**

• **Transitions**

This funding source, provided by the Ontario government, provides \$5,000. in training vouchers to displaced workers over 45. However, though it is relatively simple to receive Transitions, there is no concomitant guarantee from the federal government that income support will be provided. Consequently, many immigrant women feel Transitions to be a hollow program. "The money is nice," one immigrant woman told us. "But if you can't get UI, it's not worth a thing."

iii) **Overlapping Jurisdictions in Adjustment**

While there seems to be informal cooperation between the federal and provincial adjustment programs, the jurisdiction between the two is confusing. In some cases, the province is heavily involved in adjustment committees; in others cases, there involvement is minimal or non existent. A more coordinated approach to adjustment would enhance the level of service overall.

Please Note: The recent report issued by the Premier's Council, "People and Skills in the Global Economy," supports our comments about confusing jurisdictions:

"There is no clear distinction between the responsibilities of the federal and provincial governments in the provision of labour market adjustment assistance. Overlapping responsibilities for training and adjustment assistance and income support make the system confusing and difficult to navigate for those needing assistance..... Fragmented delivery leads to sometimes illogical and counter productive outcomes."

CRITIQUE OF EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTIONS

Definition of Term

Training is defined here as both an integral element of the adjustment process, as well as an outcome of it. In this definition, training has wide meaning and includes both generic and job specific training, i.e. both English as a Second Language and literacy/numeracy, as well as, for example, computerized numerical control.

Critique of Existing Models

The critique of existing training programs is based on:

- 1) Survey respondents
- 2) Focus group participants
- 3) MLEC staff
- 4) Interviews with employer, union and government representatives

Limitations to Existing Adjustment Models

Through these discussions, four major limitations to training have been identified:

- 1) Lack of ongoing information and support to trainees
- 2) Assessments which fail to recognize existing qualifications and skills, especially foreign credentials
- 3) Lack of accessible training due to language, literacy, child care, transportation, etc.
- 4) Lack of relevance in level of instruction, content and curriculum, teaching style, and portability of skills learned

In addition to this critique which is based on discussions noted above, we will deal with the issue of privatization. Though this concept was not identified by the women as such, we see that it has major implications for the direction of training, particularly with respect to the proposed Labour Force Development Strategy.

TYPES OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Currently, training for displaced workers is available through both the federal and provincial governments. For the purposes of this document, we will describe both categories in terms of funding provided by government, as well as delivery of training.

FEDERAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

Training for unemployed persons is funded and administered by the Ministry of Employment and Immigration. The following training is funded by EIC:

The Canadian Jobs Strategy

The CJS was created in 1985 at a First Minister's Conference, and was intended to replace the previous National Training Act. The purpose of the CJS is to provide assistance to specific groups which have been targeted as severely employment disadvantaged in the following categories:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Job Development | This program includes funding for projects and employers training persons severely disadvantaged either due to long term unemployment (24 of the previous 30 weeks), language facility, psychological or medical problems, physical disabilities, visible minority status, etc. |
| Job Entry | This program funds projects and employers to train youth under 25 to enter the labour market. |
| Job Re-entry | This program funds projects and employers to train women re-entering the labour market after an absence of three or more years. This program also includes a severely disadvantaged (S.E.D.) component. |
| Skill Investment | This program funds employers to provide training to workers who are threatened with lay off due to technological change and market change. Recently, this mandate is said to have been expanded to workers who have been laid off, though the project is not aware of any specific programs which have been set up for laid off workers under this category. |

Community Futures This program funds regionally based economic development projects in communities with high rates of unemployment.

Innovations This program provides one-time funding to test new and innovative solutions to labour market problems.

Direct Purchase Option

EIC purchases seats in local community colleges which are open to displaced workers and other workers who meet the pre-established criterion (i.e. those seats funded by Job Development would require that entrants be unemployed 24 of the last 30 weeks). Direct Purchase courses conform to nationally and locally determined skill shortages.

Community Industrial Training Committees

CITCs are locally based advisory committees with employer, education and EIC representatives. Labour is nominally involved. CITCs receive generous funding from EIC, and are able to purchase training seats at local community colleges and through private institutions to meet skill shortages identified by local employers. Some of these seats may be open to displaced workers if they meet preestablished criterion.

DELIVERY OF FEDERAL TRAINING

Federally funded training is delivered through the following mechanisms:

- 1) Directly
- 2) Public education systems including community colleges and boards of education
- 3) Non governmental community agencies and organizations
- 4) Private training institutions
- 5) Employer based training

Direct Delivery

The function of the CEC is to assist workers to find jobs, or to collect UI. CEC's also refer displaced workers directly to training offered by public, private and non governmental institutions and organizations. CEC's do not deliver training.

Delivery Through Public Education Institutions

i) Direct Purchase Courses at the Community Colleges

The direct purchase option is used most widely at community colleges. EIC purchases seats, either in existing programs and courses, or purchases entire blocks of seats. Trainees are referred and approved by EIC. If individuals are referred they are able to collect unemployment insurance or a training allowance while they are in full time attendance. Though EIC funds the purchase of such seats, the college sets entrance requirements, delivers the training and provides certification to the trainee.

ii) Training for Feepayers

Again, EIC refers individuals to college courses, but as feepayers. In this case, the trainee pays the tuition fees, but is approved to collect unemployment insurance while in attending the program. This type of training does not differ from that undertaken by any student in the college, except that the trainee is collecting unemployment insurance. The training must be approved by EIC according to nationally and locally defined skills shortages.

iii) CJS Programs in the Community College

Community colleges are also free to apply for funding through the Canadian Job Strategy. In this case, the college would be given funds to provide training to target groups, i.e. computerized office skills for severely employment disadvantaged visible minority women.

iv) Training Through Boards of Education

In extremely rare circumstance, individuals may be referred to public boards of education for pre-training, such as English as a Second Language, Literacy, Numeracy, etc. EIC does provide income support to approved trainees.

Training Delivery by Non Governmental Groups

Federally funded training is delivered by the following non-governmental groups:

- 1) Community based training programs
- 2) Union based training programs
- 3) Private training institutions
- 4) Employer based training

Community Based Training Programs

The majority of CJS programs are delivered by non-governmental community based groups and organizations. Groups apply for funding to establish specific projects which meet the criterion of either Job Development or Job Entry, with referrals made by EIC. Trainees also refer themselves through program outreach, word of mouth, etc. In Toronto, wide consultations were held with community based training programs. Listed below are several examples of community based training programs in the Metro Toronto area: Rexdale Microskills, Skills for Change and the YWCA's Working Skills for Women.

Community based training is largely dependent on year to year CJS funding. Unless a project generates its own revenue by charging fees for service to customers, or does private fund raising, it is highly vulnerable to cutbacks by EIC. It is not uncommon in Metro Toronto for a project to be discontinued due to a lack of funds.

Union Based Training Programs

Unions may also apply for CJS funding to set up training programs. There are two examples in the Metro Toronto area:

i) Metro Labour Education Centre

This project is currently funded by Innovations, with continued funding for a fourth year now approved. MLEC provides bridging training for workers displaced by plant closings and layoffs (see Adjustment Programs). The Centre provides English as a Second Language combined with Job Search, Literacy/Numeracy combined with Job Search, Vocational Counselling, Training and Unemployment Insurance Information and Advocacy, etc. The program is affiliated to the Outreach Department of George Brown College, and all programs consisting of 100 or more hours are certified by the college. The mandate of the program for unemployed workers is providing assistance to make the transition to meaningful employment and/or training. The major emphasis of the adjustment and training program is to provide support and assistance to displaced immigrant workers, older workers, and visible minority workers.

ii) Labourers International Local 183

This union provides job training for both union members, as well as social assistance recipients and unemployment insurance recipients. Some funding is provided through the Direct Purchase Option and the Canadian Jobs Strategy for trainees who meet specific criterion.

iii) Private training institutions

Under certain circumstances, training may be purchased by EIC from private training institutions. Typically, this is done when courses are not available from in the public sector, or if it is more cost efficient to purchase seats from a private training institution.

iv) Employer based training

Employers who are willing to hire trainees or train current employees can have a portion of the wages paid by EIC.

PROVINCIAL TRAINING

Provincially funded training is provided through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, and Ministry of Education. Training which is available to displaced workers includes:

- 1) Community college programs
- 2) Apprenticeships
- 3) Boards of Education

None of these forms of training are targeted specifically to unemployed workers. In other words, an unemployed worker would not be seen as distinct from other students. In the case of community colleges, trainees could access programs as fee-payers, meaning they would pay regular fees and costs but be approved by EIC to collect UI benefits while attending. Similarly, neither apprenticeship programs nor Board of Education programs would reserve space for unemployed workers. The province does have jurisdiction over training for unemployed individuals, nor does it provide specific income support to them.

LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING TRAINING PROGRAMS

The four major limitations in existing training have been identified by the project:

- 1) Lack of on going information and support
- 2) Assessments which fail to recognize qualifications and skills, especially foreign credentials
- 3) Lack of accessible training due to language, literacy, child care and transportation needs
- 4) Lack of relevance due to type of content and unportability of skills learned

Lack of on-going information and support

Community college programs

Immigrant women find community college programs difficult to access, and, having accessed them, feel there is a lack of on going information and support for the duration of the program. Lack of information is a constant dilemma in all steps of the training process, beginning with the initial information and referral through local CECs.

- i) **Lack of on-going information and referral to training by CEC.**
As noted in the section on Adjustment, most immigrant women do not receive accessible and clearly explained information about training through the existing adjustment programs. Therefore, the option of training must be explained by the

local CEC once they are displaced. It is this structure which represents a significant bottleneck to immigrant women. Typically, they are not told what training options are open to them, including ESL at the community college; information is not explained in one's first language; written information is in English or French; and appointments with Employment counsellors take up to eight weeks to arrange. Once an appointment is set up, counsellors (whose numbers have been seriously depleted by EIC cutbacks) have approximately eight minutes per client to discuss training options. Should an immigrant woman need vocational counselling, or require more explanation due to her language level, no special allowance is made. In short, no distinction is made for the different needs of immigrant women, either by assigning special, bilingual counsellors to their cases, or providing multilingual information. All claimants are treated as an undifferentiated mass by the Department, with the responsibility of meeting women's needs left to individual counsellors operating under organizationally imposed policies and time constraints.

In addition to a lack of accessible information, immigrant women feel they are deliberately excluded from training by EIC. Because their training may be extended by language pre-training, immigrant women feel there is a perception among many counsellors that they are not suitable for training. Many women have internalized this perception themselves, telling us, "It would take too long," for them to train, and therefore it is not an option. Often, immigrant women are pushed back into low paying jobs from sectors they were displaced from. Most frequently, women laid off from the garment industry (many of whom have already experienced multiple plant closures) are referred to similar jobs, even when they are on waiting lists for ESL programs.

Part of the difficulty according to EIC staff is the rigid separation of employment and unemployment insurance in the EIC structure. While counsellors may approve training, it remains within the domain of the unemployment insurance agent to authorize Section 26. It is not uncommon, therefore, for women to be referred to training by a counsellor at the same time a UI agent is pressuring them to accept employment. MLEC staff report many cases where immigrant women were waiting for training, or already in training, and told to accept employment by their local CEC office. In some cases, outside advocates may bring pressure to bear on UI agents and have such decisions reversed. However, one can only speculate at how few opportunities immigrant women realistically to obtain information about training from local CECs. Moreover, most immigrant women do not have advocates to assist them to access training. Without such advocacy, it is difficult to imagine how immigrant women can be prevented from being pushed back into low-wage, low skill job ghettos after plant closings.

ii) Lack of available seats through the Direct Purchase Option

While the direct purchase option represents the least expensive route to training, it is also one of the most inaccessible. Though seats in ESL and Upgrading programs are available at the college, few of them are Direct Purchase seats. According to college personnel, the number of Direct Purchase seats has been cut by more than half in the last several years. This results in fewer tuition free seats for displaced women, as well as longer and longer waiting lists for available seats. As noted above, immigrant women on waiting lists for ESL are particularly vulnerable to EIC pressure to accept unemployment. While entry as fee payers would be a quicker alternative (albeit a more costly one), this access is effectively blocked by not allowing UI recipients – except under extremely rare circumstances – to collect unemployment insurance while attending full time ESL programs.

iii) Lack of on going support and counselling while training

Should an immigrant woman overcome the formidable barriers outlined above and access college training, once there she is left largely to her own devices. While counselling is available through the regular counselling department, she may feel the college to be a large, bureaucratic setting where she is isolated by virtue of her language, her experience, and in the case of older women, her age. Those women who make the transition from a community based program seem to feel this change even more keenly. Accustomed to small groups, informal teaching, and personal attention, college programs require a different set of skills, study habits and routines. MLEC staff report many women return to the Centre for supportive counselling when they experience difficulty with curriculum, teaching style or testing at the college.

NON GOVERNMENTAL PROGRAMS

Overall, women had high praise for the level of information and support offered in non governmental programs, such as those offered by the community based organizations and MLEC. However, there were complaints about the lack of access to some programs.

i) Community based training programs

While some of these programs are targeted specifically to immigrant women and are therefore highly sensitive to their needs, there nevertheless remains a lack of clear information and referral through CEC. Often, immigrant women do not even know community based training is available. Existing adjustment programs, with the exception of MLEC, rarely provide information about training which is available in the community. However, the lack of information about programs poses yet another dilemma for community based training programs. Since there are so few spaces available in their programs, there is real concern among

program staff about more extensive outreach. Programs such as Skills for Change example, may have as many as 400 applicants for 20 training seats.

ii) Employer based training programs

While CEC will subsidize wages for women who are able to find host trainers in the private sector, it is difficult for women to access information about such subsidies, as well as to locate employers willing to hire them. This form of training is extremely rare among immigrant women unless they are referred to employers through community based agencies or a EIC counsellor.

Once women are placed with employers, little formal counselling is available to them. If problems should occur at the workplace, the kind of supportive counselling which is needed is not available.

ASSESSMENTS OF SKILL, QUALIFICATIONS AND FOREIGN CREDENTIALS

Assessment is a pivotal element of the adjustment process, and especially critical in determining the type and level of training women require. However, the types of assessment which are commonly used to determine an immigrant woman's suitability for training have serious limitations and effectiveness:

ii) Direct Purchase Courses

In order for a woman to be referred to a direct purchase course at the community college, she must meet the entrance requirements set by the program. For most direct purchase courses, this is usually a minimum of Ontario public school education (Grade Eight). If women do not meet formal education requirements, or have educational credentials obtained but not recognized from their country of origin, they must first pass a Functional Level Test or Mature Students test. Each of the colleges normally designs and carries out this testing, and utilizes a series of reading, writing, comprehension and numeracy tests to determine functional levels of literacy and numeracy. In order to be approved for training by CEC, a woman must first pass the test, the results of which are automatically given to CEC. These tests are extremely difficult for many immigrant women to pass due to their level of English proficiency, artificially imposed time limits, and cultural biases.

ii) Community college courses

For women who wish to access community college courses as regular students or feepayers collecting unemployment insurance, the same entrance criterion would apply. Few courses have a minimum Grade Eight requirement. More frequently, entrance requirements are minimally Grade Ten, with a majority of training programs requiring a Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The same test would be used for feepayers and regular students as those seeking entry to Direct Purchase Courses.

iii) Community based training programs

The majority of community based training programs we consulted with had some minimum entrance requirements. In the case of some projects where trainees are referred by EIC, the same community college functional level test is required. Other programs establish their own entrance requirements, which may include some language testing, a personal interview, testing of skills specific to the training, etc. For many women, even the minimum entrance requirements may be too high, particularly if they speak English at a basic level. In these cases, the assessment is used as a gatekeeping device to keep certain women out of programs while admitting others.

LACK OF ACCESSIBLE TRAINING

The types of training now available are rendered inaccessible due to:

- 1) Level of language proficiency required;
- 2) Level of literacy and numeracy required;
- 3) Times and locations of classes;
- 4) Availability of child care;
- 5) Availability of transportation

Community college training

Other than ESL and Upgrading programs, there are virtually no community college programs which integrate English language training with job skills. Thus, unless a woman is proficient in English at the level required, she is prevented from taking training in most college courses. Similarly, women who speak English but are not able to read and write are not able to access programs. Though there are upgrading courses available, until recently access was restricted since EIC would not authorize Section 26 coverage while taking pretraining (see Income Support). However, with access to the feepayer program now eliminated indefinitely, upgrading is no more accessible than it has ever been. A further limitation exists. While ESL and upgrading is available, it is not linked specifically to the job training which will eventually be pursued; moreover, advance credit for upgrading is not able to be applied against the training program once entrance has been achieved. Consequently, the opportunity to integrate the specific job training with upgrading or ESL is lost, and the overall training is extended, with greater financial costs. Availability of on-site child care poses yet another problem, as does transportation. Women who need to travel long distances to colleges, or who do not have access to adequate and affordable training, find training extremely difficult.

Community Based Training

While community based training programs represent a more supportive, accessible learning environment for women, there are few programs which are specifically mandated to immigrant women. Moreover, even those programs which integrate English as a Second Language into their programs may not be accessible to women who speak English at a basic level. Similarly, child care is rarely able to be offered due to limited funding, and projects may be made inaccessible by location.

Employer based training

A minimum proficiency in English language is usually required by employers who offer work placements. Moreover, language training is seldom integrated into the work placement. The greatest fears expressed by women about employer based training is that employers do not have to be accountable for the quality of the training offered, nor are they expected to hire women permanently after the work placement is completed.

Private training institutions

Again, language requirements tend to be higher than those of community based agencies. Since few of the courses will be paid for by EIC, fees must be paid by the learner. In many private training programs, costs are prohibitively high, i.e. as much as \$1500-1600 for a short term office training program.

LACK OF RELEVANCE

Many training programs lack relevance to immigrant women on the following bases:

- 1) Level of Instruction
- 2) Content and curriculum
- 3) Teaching style
- 4) Portability of skills (types of training available)

Level of instruction

i) Community Colleges

Many of the women felt that the level of instruction was either too basic or too advanced for them. The Direct Purchase ESL courses tend to be at the basic level, thereby forcing women who wish to pursue ESL training through this option to enter the program at a level that may be inappropriate for them. This is especially true since the ESL program is intended primarily for newcomers to Canada, rather than those who have been in Canada for a long period of time and are fluent speakers but may need to upgrade writing and reading skills. Others state that training may be too advanced, and that few adaptations are made for second language speakers.

Content and curriculum

i) Community colleges

Course content and curriculum generally follows pre-established guidelines and terminal performance objectives. In this way, learners are not actively involved in designing and guiding what is to be learned, at what pace, or for what length of time. For displaced workers who have long work histories, program content may lack relevance, since it is not likely to relate to their experiences or background. Similarly, content is not likely to reflect cultural and linguistic differences. The design, content and curriculum of the course is left largely to the individual instructor according to pre established academic guidelines.

ii) **Community based training programs**

While there is greater latitude in terms of participating in content and curriculum here, women in community based training programs normally follow pre-established course outlines and learn a job specific skill. Moreover, CJS programs have specific time limits (most programs last approximately 24 weeks), making it difficult to stray from the established content and curriculum. While greater emphasis may be placed on serving cultural and needs differences in these programs, it is not possible to make distinctions for women who have experienced plant closings. Thus, a laid off woman may enter a community based training program and find herself among newcomers to Canada, women re-entering the labour market from the home, or social assistance recipients. While there will be common objectives and experiences among the group, she may feel isolated by her own background and particular set of circumstances. This is especially important when considered in the context of job loss.

• **The Stress of Job Loss**

The stresses faced by victims of plant closures are well documented. In fact, it is theorized that losing a job in plant closures is more traumatic than quitting a job, though the outcome is the same; and that in many cases, plant closings are as emotionally traumatic for workers as the death of a loved one. Victims of plant closings experience feelings of grief, anger, denial and apathy, placing unique stressors on them which are not experienced by other learners in training programs.

In order for training to be truly relevant to displaced workers, recognition of these stressors must be made, and content and curriculum designed accordingly, and supportive counselling offered throughout.

Teaching Style

Success in training programs is highly dependent on teaching style as well as content and curriculum. For many women, the style of teaching may impede their ability to learn.

i) **Community Colleges**

While the ability of individual teachers to deal sensitively to the needs of learners may vary, instruction is frequently carried out in a didactic way which relies heavily on written material. In addition to teaching style, the approach of some teachers was seen to be problematic. Many of the women surveyed complained that teachers did not seem to "respect them", or have much patience. Others reported that they felt they were being condescended to. In some cases, upgrading programs are self directed, making it difficult for women with limited reading skills to keep up. Many of those who had come from the MLEC program missed the personal attention and involvement they had received there.

Portability of Skills

This aspect relates to the type of training which is available at both the community college and community based level, and calls into question the entire notion of generic versus specific skills training (a concept which will be further elaborated in the section on Privatization).

i) Community College Programs

In general, the direct purchase option courses have limited long term value. Designed to meet skill shortages, DPOs are usually no longer than 52 weeks, and are selected without regard to the level of income, unionization, working conditions, etc. of the occupational groups they are targeted to. The example of Niagara Falls is highly illustrative of this. Hospitality and tourism services was the only Direct Purchase Course available locally due to the high demand for employees in that occupational group. However, short term training can only lead to employment in the lower end of this occupational cluster. In short, direct purchase courses tend to prepare workers for employment in yet another job ghetto. The direct purchase courses which immigrant women are likely to be directed and counselled toward by EIC reflect this to an even greater degree. For example, many of the direct purchase courses prepare learners for unskilled or semi-skilled industrial occupations, i.e. production machining vs. an apprenticeship in machining. Women are seldom encouraged to take this type of training, instead being streamed into Direct Purchase courses which are related to automated office systems, or life skills/vocational counselling programs. The programs which are classified under the broader "skills shortages" list (which includes professional and paraprofessional employment) have very rigid eligibility criteria, including a high level of English language proficiency. In practice, community college programs as they presently exist are not a viable option for immigrant women. They are not set up to address the special needs of immigrant women, particularly those who are displaced. Women we have talked to do not see themselves in the college milieu, except in ESL programs, which also have difficult entry requirements.

ii) Community Based Training programs

At present, community based training programs offer the greatest "window of opportunity" for immigrant women who hope to retrain for new occupations. Access is easier; greater integration of ESL into job training is present; and teaching style, content and curriculum offer greater participation and relevance. However, the funding parameters within which community based groups must operate severely curtails their ability to provide the type of generic training and/or skills training which leads to employment at the high end of occupational clusters.

- **Reproducing Job Ghettos through the Canadian Jobs Strategy**
Many of the programs which are funded through the CJS programs prepare immigrant women for low paying, low status employment with little chance of mobility. This phenomenon is continually reproduced through the criterion for project funding which demands community organizations train women in job specific rather than generic skills that would lead to broader occupational choices. For example, projects are normally funded only if they are short term (usually 24 weeks), teach a specific job skill, and include a work placement with an employer.

A survey of well established CJS programs for women in Metro Toronto demonstrates this. Rexdale Microchip, Skills for Change and YWCA'S Working Skills for Women, among others, all train women in computerized office systems. A community based training program in Kitchener trains women to be industrial sewing machine operators, or to work in retail. Yet another program to train women to be daycare worker assistants gives one pause to think when considering the already low wages of daycare workers themselves.

The targeting of occupations for funding criterion may be related at least in part to a fundamental restructuring of existing occupations. The example of training for office skills is a good example of this. As office management systems are more and more highly automated, it becomes increasingly possible to hire workers with fewer of the skills traditionally thought to be necessary to employment in that sector, i.e literacy and communications. This restructuring has meant that immigrant women who may not be trained in those skill areas are increasingly able to fill for low wage, low skill jobs in a sector historically closed to them. In essence, the "office factory" will now be open to them in the way the garment factory has always been. The funding of longer term training which offers a wide range of generic skills would help to redress this inequity, but the rigidity of the Canadian Jobs Strategy shows little signs of being relaxed. In fact, the trend toward job specific, privatized training appears to be intensifying. It's most recent incarnation is the proposed Labour Force Development Strategy.

Towards Privatization of Training

There is no doubt that the federal government is actively promoting the privatization of training. The changes to the unemployment insurance act embodied in Bill C-21 propose diverting unemployment insurance funds to training. However, the Bill should also be clearly seen as an attempt by government to privatize the unemployment insurance system by withdrawing federal contributions.

The proposed Labour Force Development Strategy whose funding is dependent on this privatization, clearly demonstrates this. Both the deGrandpre Report ("Adjusting to Win") and the recent reports of the Labour Market and Productivity Centre Tasks Force, make stronger cases for increased employer training.

We believe such a thrust to be extremely worrisome, particularly as it relates to the adjustment needs of immigrant women. We have already noted that the current system of voluntary adjustment results in poor and inconsistent levels of service, largely because adjustment is dependent on the cooperation of the employer. It is difficult to envision employers providing the type of training which would be accessible and relevant, that is to say able to be taken advantage of by immigrant women. Critics of such a thrust, including this project team, fear that employer training will be in job specific, non portable skills which will not prepare immigrant women to make the transition to different, more highly skilled employment.

There are clearly limitations within the public education system, as we have noted. However, **it is our firm belief that, with improvements, the public education system is a far more accessible and publicly accountable means of retraining for displaced workers.** Many progressive forces within the community college system recognize the lack of access, and have worked to eliminate some of the barriers to entry. One such example is the **Community Outreach Department at George Brown College in Toronto.** The Outreach Department actively recruits community based training programs to affiliate and be certified by them, thereby increasing the potential for adult learners to have access to the college. Moreover, the reports prepared by Terry Dance, Dean of the Access Department, for the Vision 2000 study of the college system, underscore the growing awareness of the college in this area. It appears that the desire to increase access is strong among both academic and administrative levels in the college.

We strongly support the notion of public education, and feel hopeful that the recommendations confined in this report will provide some useful recommendations for increasing access for immigrant women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Specific recommendations, listed here, flow from the critique of existing training systems:

Lack of On-Going Information and Support

Community college programs

The community college system in Ontario has an extremely valuable and irreplaceable role in the education of adults. Colleges are able to offer a wider range of skills training and provide more resources than an individual employer is able to do; moreover, the public education system offers greater opportunities for both students and training and increasing access than would be possible among private sector employers.

Colleges have not traditionally structured programs and services specifically to immigrant and visible minority women. However, there are encouraging signs that this beginning to change. The Access Department of George Brown College in Toronto has for some time been keenly aware of the lack of access among certain groups, and has devoted time and resources to increasing access. A positive innovation at George Brown is the creation of a Community Outreach Department which encourages community based training programs to affiliate to the college in order to establish a closer working relationship between the two systems. This type of relationship provides an ideal mechanism for immigrant women who first become involved with community based agencies to make the transition to college training. This concept will be elaborated in the proposed model.

- **Increasing Access through CEC**

As noted in the critique, CEC functions as a bottleneck for immigrant women seeking training through the college system. Available programs must be clearly explained, in the first language of the woman if necessary.

The issue of CEC functions cannot be separated from the overall process of adjustment. As long as CEC functions and services can be only be offered in CEC offices, they will remain effectively out of reach for the majority of women. In order to make CEC services truly accessible, they must be located within the community.

- **Community Information and Referral Services**

Decentralizing CEC services requires a fundamentally different approach from that which is now being suggested by EIC at this time. However, we are suggesting the structures which will maximize access.

Furthermore, as noted in the Income Support section, we do not mean to strengthen the federal government's thrust toward privatization by suggesting decentralization. We strongly believe CEC functions and services should continue to be offered by EIC personnel, but in the community rather a government office, and according to the guidelines laid out here for effective adjustment: accessibility, relevance, and flexibility.

CECs are widely perceived to be impersonal and bureaucratic. Locating services in community centres, community based agencies and training programs, colleges and other locations convenient and accessible to women, would greatly enhance access. As well, placing EIC personnel in the community would help to break down some of the systemic discrimination which currently takes place in CEC offices, and is continually reproduced by departmental policies such as those which place ever increasing emphasis on finding so-called "abusers" in the UI system.

EIC services, including applying for UI, the training allowance we are proposing here, counselling and referrals to training, could easily be provided in community centres. An easily recognizable symbol indicating the availability of EIC services could be created, and placed in highly visible areas outside the Community centre.

Staff in the community based agencies, including counsellors whose responsibility would be to assist displaced women specifically, would be available for translation, counselling and advocacy.

Within EIC, departmental policy should reflect the particular needs of immigrant workers. Information should be simplified, and translated into the predominate languages of the community where offices are located. All staff, including both front line staff and those at the departmental and policy level, would receive regular training in cross-cultural awareness and anti-racism. For those employees who are members of the Public Service Alliance (Canada Employment and Immigration Union, CEIU), such training should be offered by the union or by labour centrals the union was affiliated to.

The implementation of a training allowance, or restructuring of the Section 26 provision of the UI act, would help to remove the discretionary nature of training referrals.

What is needed is a fundamentally different attitude and approach to training by EIC, one that recognizes the different linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of displaced workers, and respects the **right of all displaced workers to accessible, relevant and flexible training programs of their choice.**

- **Lack of available seats through the Direct Purchase Option**
Generous funding should be provided to community colleges to increase the number of direct purchase option (DPO) seats. The breadth of courses eligible for DPO should be dramatically increased, so that longer term training, generic training, and basic skills training could be made available through the Direct Purchase Option. One possible mechanism might be designating ten-fifteen seats in every course at the college for DPO referrals.
- **Lack of ongoing support and counselling while training.**
Women should have access to ongoing support and counselling while training through multilingual counselling services offered at the college. As well, counsellors should be trained to provide counselling in all areas related to unemployment and job loss.

For those women who make the transition from community based bridging or training programs, a formal link should be maintained with the original program whereby women would be allowed a certain period of time weekly to return to the community agency for a support group, counselling, etc. If such bridging programs were actually affiliated to the college in question, such a relationship could be further formalized.

Non Governmental Programs

- **Community based training**
Generous funding must be made available to community based groups which are able to offer counselling and training, both bridging training and job specific training, to women. The entire system of year to year funding has a destabilizing effect on community based training programs, since it prevents long term planning and squanders valuable project staff time during the period of funding "crises". The value and legitimacy of community based training must be recognized and funded accordingly. Such funding would help to ease the tensions between community based trainers and colleges as well, since the two training systems would both be recognized and accepted as valid, and would not have to compete for a shrinking CJS budget. Once funded, community based agencies are presently able to conduct effective outreach and offer relevant, accessible and flexible services to displaced women.
- **Metro Labour Education Centre**
This program has proven to be a highly effective model for labour adjustment. The federal government should continue to provide funding for the MLEC program, as well as to other trade unions and labour centrals who wish to be actively involved in the adjustment process.

- **Employer based training**
Employers who receive wage subsidies through EIC should conform to strict guidelines for training women. Moreover, at least 50% of all training provided should be in generic skills – both job skills and basic skills. English as a second language or literacy/numeracy should be mandatory for all employers who are subsidized. If the employer fails to meet such guidelines, there should be penalties, or the trainee should be removed from the workplace with full maintenance of the wages that would have accrued during the training period.

ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS, QUALIFICATIONS AND FOREIGN CREDENTIALS

The current form of assessment is considered to be inaccurate and biased by many of the women we spoke to.

- CEC linking of testing with referral to training should be abolished. The purpose of assessment should be to determine the level of skill of the claimant, and to plan training. No woman should be denied access to training on the basis of testing.
- Non biased assessments should be developed at the community college level. Many colleges, George Brown among them, now recognize the limitations of conventional testing, and devising new ways of assessing skill level. Many useful recommendations concerning testing can be found in the report prepared by Terry Danse for the Vision 2000 Committee.
- The number of community based training programs should be increased and permanently funded in order to offer a greater number of basic level programs.
- Immigrant women with skills and professional qualifications from their native countries should be strongly encouraged, and provided with income supported training in order to receive Canadian accreditation.

LACK OF ACCESSIBLE TRAINING

Training is rendered inaccessible due to the high level of language proficiency required; the high level of numeracy and literacy required; time and location of classes; lack of child care; and availability of transportation. We recommend:

- **Integration of language training with skill training.** Currently, language training is "front loaded" onto skills training, thereby increasing the length and cost of training. Integrating English as a Second Language with skill training would

provide greater access to programs generally, and link language training with the content of the skill training.

- Child care should be provided free of charge at all public training institutions. For women who wish to arrange their own child care, subsidies should be available.
- Eligibility for UI coverage – or the proposed training allowance in this report – should be available to all trainees, regardless of the type of training needed.
- Subsidies should be provided to cover transportation costs.
- College programs should be offered in a variety of accessible locations, both before and after plant closings.
- Colleges should be actively involved with IAS and other adjustment committees, in order to provide as much training at the worksite before the closure occurs.

LACK OF RELEVANCE

Many programs lack relevance due to the level of instruction, content and curriculum, teaching style and the portability of skills being taught.

- **Level of instruction.** Programs at the community college, particularly basic skills programs should be offered a number of different levels to meet all needs. All levels should be eligible for UI coverage. Language training should be relevant, in that it is linked to the job skill to be learned later.
- **Content and curriculum** should be learner centred, reflecting cultural and linguistic differences among trainees.
- **Teaching style** should be sensitive to the background and experience of women who have experienced job loss through plant closures. Teaching should be highly participatory, using a group problem solving, rather than a didactic or independent approach to learning.
- **Portability of skills.**
 - (i) **College programs**
A proportion of all courses should be reserved for displaced workers, including targets for immigrant and visible minority women, through the Direct Purchase Option. This would broaden the number of courses

available, and increase womens opportunities to take longer term training leading to more occupational chances.

CASE STUDIES

GERBER BABY FOODS

The project team was able to observe a CSTEK-sponsored adjustment program which took place in March 1990, at the Gerber Baby Food Plant in Niagara Falls.

Gerber Baby Foods processes and bottles infant food in an older factory in downtown Niagara Falls. There are approximately 100 unionized employees who belong to the United Steelworkers of America. There are about 20 salaried employees. The plant is relocating to Michigan. All but two executive level employees will be laid off in April 1990.

Gerber Baby Foods is a well known plant. As one young man told us, "Everyone in Niagara Falls has either worked at Gerber at one time, or has known someone who has." The announcement of the closure sent a shock wave throughout a community that has seen many manufacturing plants close. The Executive Director of the local Unemployment Help Centre told us that over the last decade, almost all the manufacturing plants have shut down in Niagara Falls.

The local economy in Niagara Falls is based largely on seasonal employment, primarily in the hospitality and tourism industry. Smaller hotel and motel operators must generate enough income during the high season to sustain them during the winter months. Up until recently, this was possible to do. In fact, one worker about to be laid off is the son of a man who operates a small motel. Asked about his father's business, he responded enthusiastically. "He's doing fantastic," he told us. Others are concerned. Many large hotel chains are buying property, tearing down old hotels and businesses, and building large, expensive hotels. Many feel this will make it increasingly difficult for small motel and hotel operators to survive. Manufacturing jobs represented a form of security. Now they, too, are disappearing.

The workers at the Gerber plant fall into two rather distinct groups. The first are younger, white Canadians, probably between the ages of twenty-five and forty. Most are males, many have had some college education. They seemed concerned, but not hopeless about the closure. The second group are predominately Italian, though there are also several of Eastern European descent. Both men and women, this group has high seniority, many having worked at the plant for over twenty five years. Though they speak English fluently, the twenty five workers the project staff met with could neither read nor write in English.

The adjustment program took place over 3 days at the Ramada Inn in Niagara Falls. During that time, operations at the plant ceased entirely as workers were asked to attend the job search program with pay at the hotel. Free coffee, donuts, and a hot lunch were provided daily.

Workers were grouped informally by the union president, also an Italian. Because the CSTECH staff were aware there would be second language speakers, they had arranged to have one group facilitated by a trained ESL instructor from the Metro Labour Education Centre. The Metro Labour Education Centre and CSTECH agreed informally that an MLEC instructor would be provided in exchange for access by the OWD project staff, who also assisted with the adjustment program.

The large group met daily at 8:30 a.m. for an opening plenary which covered such areas as goal setting, resume writing and UI and Retraining Information. After about one and half hours, the large group was split into four smaller groups, with each group assigned a facilitator who helped them to complete resumes, practice job interviews, etc.

Accessible training in the community was scant. The nearest community college was in St. Catherine's. Though there was a campus in Niagara Falls, it had only one Direct Purchase course in hospitality and tourism training. It was impossible to obtain a list of the Direct Purchase courses from the local CEC. In fact, all those interviewed including college staff, Help Centre staff and workers themselves, said the local CEC was extremely difficult to get information from. We were told by the Registrar that there were only five direct purchase courses he was aware of, including ESL.

Twenty-four (24) week ESL programs were available under both the Direct Purchase and Feepayer option at the St. Catherine's campus of the college. The ESL Program coordinator told us that she had no idea how long the waiting lists were, since all referrals were done by CEC. She told us CSTECH could not be met by this group in three days. It took almost three days to explain, and complete an application form and resume.

As far as we could see, there would be little follow up or counselling provided after the CSTECH program. Normally, CSTECH would not do a program outside primary steelmaking. However, an exception was made in this case at the Steelworker's request. Nevertheless, the usual CSTECH adjustment committee and training authorization did not take place at Gerber. One wondered constantly about these workers, and what would become of them.

It seemed little follow up services, counselling and advocacy would be available to them after the CSTECH program was over, outside the Unemployment Help Centre.

LARK MANUFACTURING INC.: A Story of the Unorganized

On September 28, 1988, Lark Manufacturing Inc., a garment factory on Carlaw Avenue in Toronto, ceased its operations and 148 employees were laid off on half an hour's notice. The workers, most of whom were Chinese immigrant women, were owed over half a million dollars in wages, vacation pay, and termination pay. To use the words of a community worker at Woodgreen Community Centre:

"The story of Lark is a very simple one. It's so simple that our sophisticate legal system cannot deal with it. It is so simple that the workers keep working and working and all of a sudden, their employer tells them there is no pay, and no job. Just go home. The workers are out on their own."

A few days prior to the closure, the workers had been nervous about Lark's ability to pay them and threatened to stop work. The company's President convinced them to stay on. Then on the 28th, he announced the lay-off. Those few days had been used to load the trucks. The workers were understandably angry and refused to leave the factory without getting paid. The owner told them he would get their pay if they went with him to the bank. He did take them to the bank, but no payment was issued. His action had been a ruse to get them out of the factory.

Legally, Lark Manufacturing never went into receivership and the directors never declared bankruptcy. In fact, a few months after the closure, two of the Toronto directors were operating in another garment factory next door - New Heights. Much of the materials and equipment from Lark had been moved to New Heights, beginning several months before the Lark closure. As well, these directors bought shares in two racing horses just before the closure. The three Montreal directors continued "business as usual", at their company in Montreal, Triton Industries Inc.

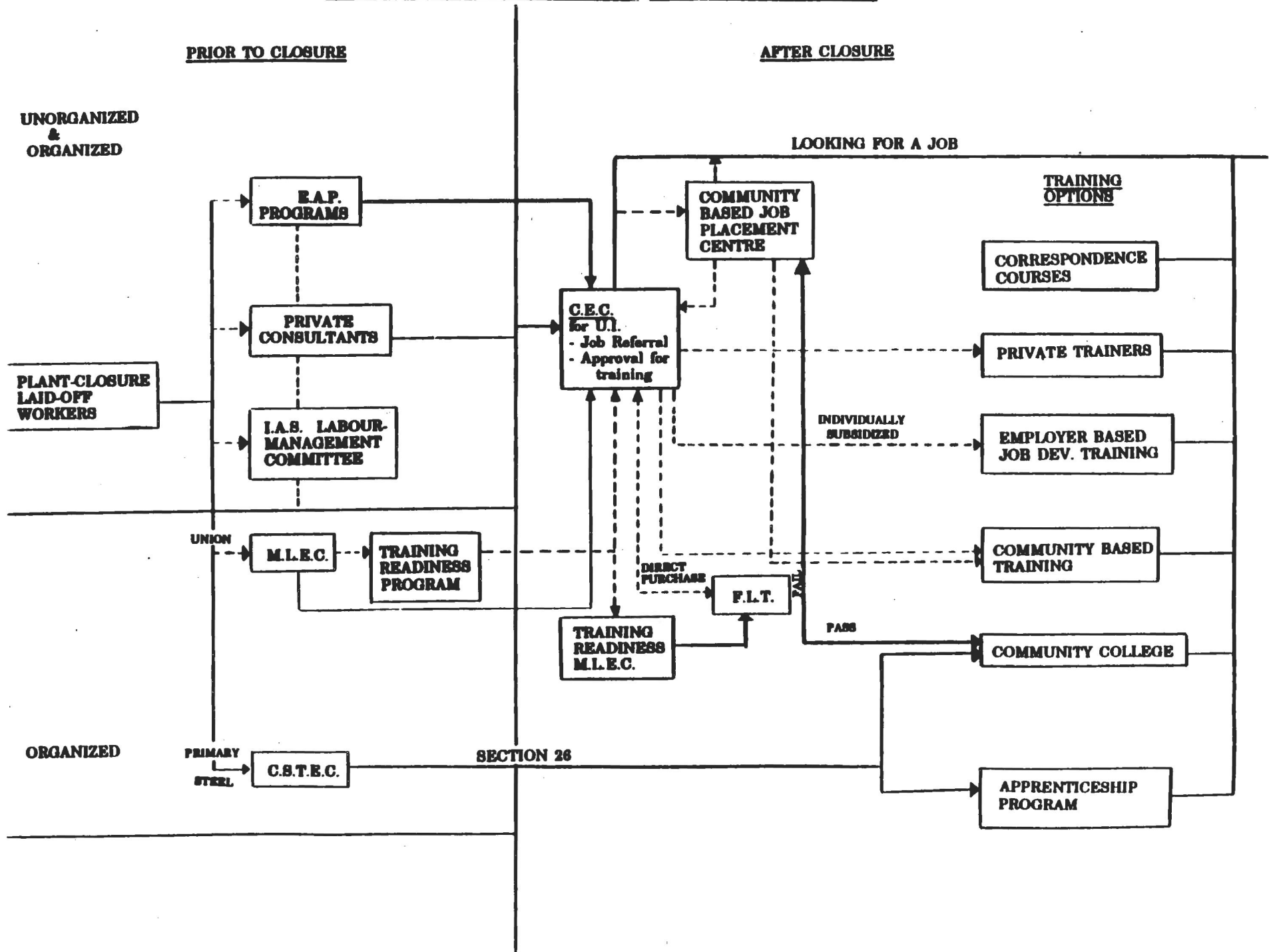
Enraged and out of pocket, the workers went to Woodgreen Community Centre for help. An official complaint to the Employment Standards Branch was launched. It took the Branch four months to make orders in unpaid wages and another five months for orders in termination pay. In September, 1989, a year after the closure and after much public outcry, the Employment Standards Branch announced plans to prosecute the three Directors. It is only the second time in the history of the Ministry of Labour that employers have been prosecuted. The first trial date was on March 6, 1990, at the Provincial Court, where many workers took time off and lost a day's pay to attend. The directors and their lawyer never arrived, and the trial has been postponed until May.

What happened at Lark is not unique; the inaction of the Employment Standards Branch in representing the unorganized workers in Ontario. What is extraordinary however, is the resolve and the determination of the Lark workers. They were supposed to just greet this gross abuse of their rights in total silence and then move to another garment plant or sweatshop, to have the same thing happen over again. Much to the astonishment of the Ministry and the employer, they stood together and fought back.

After the closure, the period of unemployment for the Lark workers varied. Many were unemployed for four to six months. Some older workers were still unemployed a year after the shutdown. Most felt that with their limited English, their only options were to work in another garment plant or in a Chinese restaurant where the conditions are well below the statutory minimums. Some of those who had found work were working only part time or on a seasonal basis. As an income supplement, they in turn took garments from sub-contractors to sew at home. (From an informal survey of those Lark workers present at the Inquiry into Garment Factory Closings, held on September 9, 1989, at Woodgreen Community Centre.)

**TOWARDS
A
NEW MODEL**

THE PRESENT SCHEDULE - The Maze



The Flow Chart in the preceding page entitled "The Present Scenario: The Maze" encapsulates some of the major criticisms that we have outlined in the last two sections on labour adjustment and training.

The dotted lines throughout the chart show the extent of voluntarism in this labour adjustment and training process. There is no federal or provincial legislation that impose a mandatory implementation of labour adjustment programs in a closure situation. There is also no legislation that stipulates a period of early closure notice. The unpredictability of a closure in a "market-driven" economy has left workers, particularly in the unorganized sector, even more vulnerable to abuse.

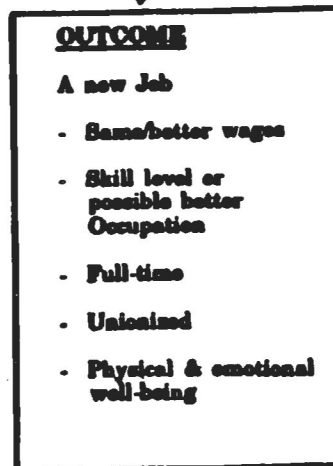
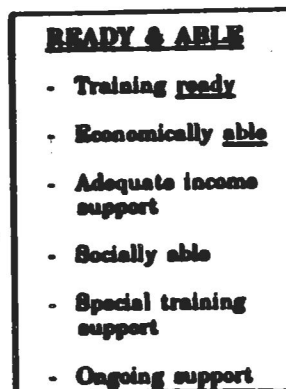
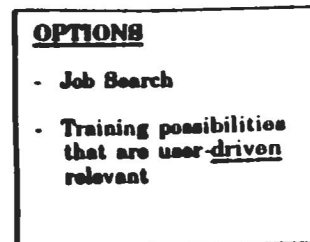
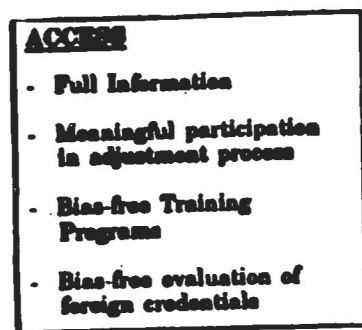
The chart also graphically illustrates where the bottleneck is located. The CEC has served as the gatekeeper as to who is allowed training, whose benefits are to be cut off and who should be referred to what jobs. Through our interviews and focus group discussion with the immigrant women, we have heard many horrendous stories on the sexist and racist biases of CEC policies and their implementation. The problem is structural and systemic rather than rooted in individual practice.

Once a laid off immigrant woman worker passes the first bureaucratic hurdle of CEC, the other systemic barrier for her to confront, if she intends to pursue the training option, is the Functional Level Testing system (FLT) which is now used by community colleges to screen out "unqualified" candidates.

Last but not least, we also acknowledge the fact that because of the voluntary nature of the labour adjustment program and the "lottery-draw" availability of training seats, workers in both the organized and unorganized sectors face similar barriers and discrimination. The only exception is within the labour movement; there is a better infra-structure and support system to advocate on behalf of the membership. For example, in the primary steel industry where all the adjustment programs are run by the joint management-labour Committee (CSTEC), Section 26 is granted and this effectively speeds up the training process for the workers. The next question is then how applicable this model would be in another industry where a higher concentration of immigrant women workers are found.

For the unorganized immigrant workers in the Metro area, there are more community services available in different languages provided the women know that such services exist. For immigrant women in other Ontario regions, multi-lingual services are virtually non-existent. The feeling shared by many immigrant and visible minority women of being caught and being trapped is the key issue that an ideal labour adjustment model would aim to address.

ACCESS & OPTIONS MODEL

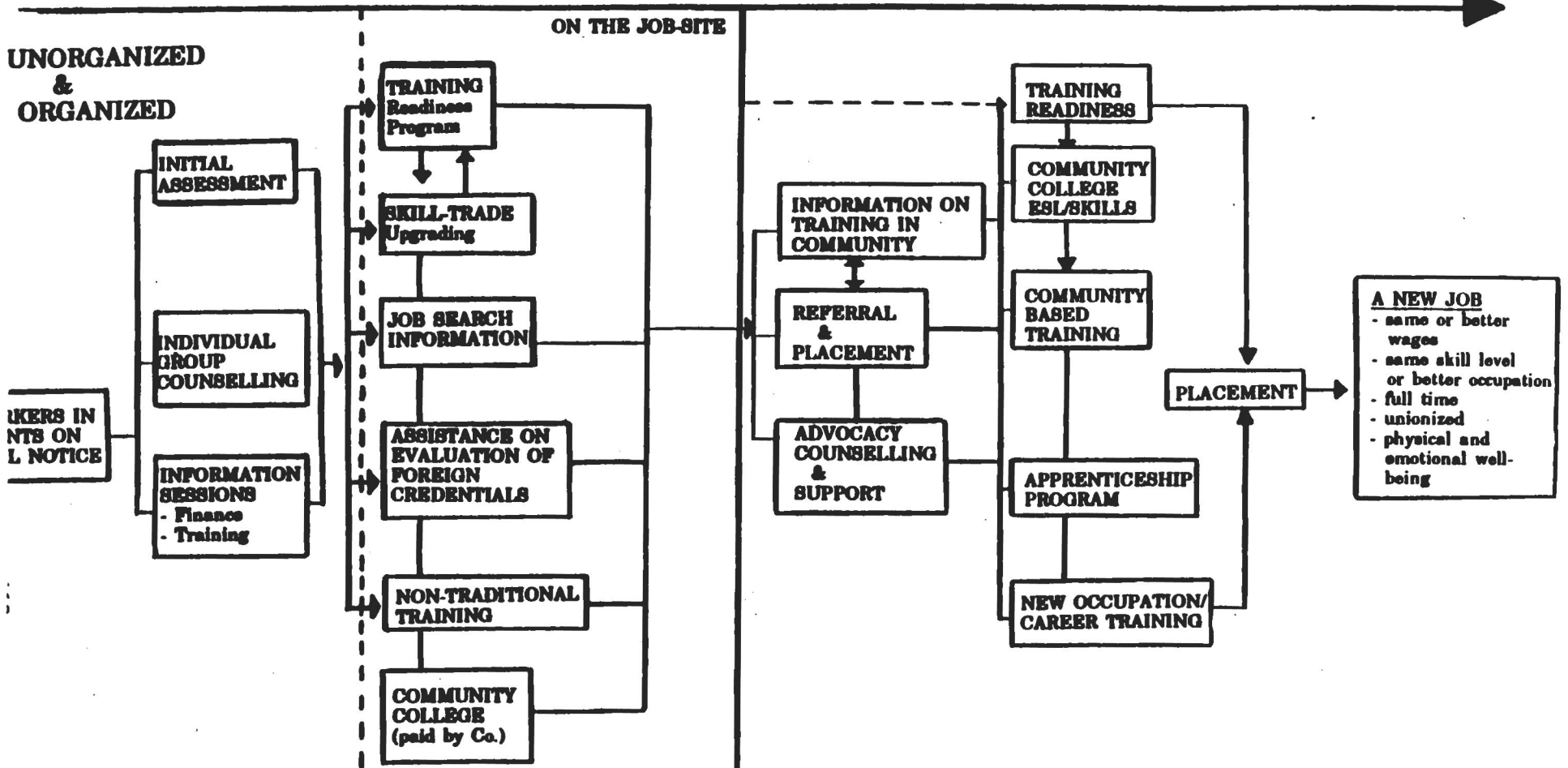


THE IDEAL VERSION: A PROCESS OPTIONS MODEL

Prior to Closure

After Closure

ONGOING SUPPORT/TRACKING



CONDITIONS

- One year early notice
- Severance pay for all workers regardless of length of service or size of workplace

- Adequate Income Support
- Daycare expenses
- No harassment from C.E.C.
- Control over training content

An Access and Options Model

An ideal labour adjustment model for immigrant and visible minority women will be based on a new set of parameters, i.e.;

- 1) workers are the most valuable resources and asset in our society and as such should be enabled to reach their fullest potential;
- 2) structural barriers based on colour, race, gender, age and language fluency well entrenched in our employment and training system; this system has kept immigrant and visible minority women "invisible";
- 3) ensuring equal access and options for immigrant and visible minority women will require the political and economic will of the three levels of government as well as better coordination among the policy makers and the training delivery system.

The Model will take a more holistic approach and start from the vantage point of the women workers. The two key priorities are **ACCESS** and **OPTIONS**.

ACCESS will mean the removal of systemic barriers to ensure immigrant women have full access to:

- Linguistic-specific and culturally sensitive materials and information on how to deal with a plant closure;
- Meaningful participation in a worker-centred labour adjustment process
- Linguistic-specific and culturally sensitive information on potential training options;
- Ongoing support and employment counselling in different languages;
- Training programs that will be freed of artificial entrance requirements; and
- Training programs that are relevant and geared to the long-term employment needs of immigrant and visible minority women.

OPTIONS will mean the range of possibilities and choice that immigrant and visible minority women will be able to make to best suit their needs. Such options could include new career or occupational training, non-traditional training, further academic studies and better job search strategies, etc. Ultimately the decision should be made by the woman herself. Having the range of options will provide the woman with the choice to refuse, or turn down a dead-end job.

Aside from advocating and working towards equal access and better options, an integral component of the model will be to provide the support and advocate for the changes that will ensure the women will be **READY** and **ABLE** to make their choices. By ready and able, we are implying that a woman is training-ready, be it in ESL, Upgrading or credit evaluation process, and both economically and socially able, i.e.; with adequate income support and daycare arrangement, etc., to select her option.

Hence, the final outcome of this labour adjustment model can be illustrated by the diagram on the following page.

APPENDIX "A"

OWD QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- ___ 1. Please indicate if you are: (Check one only)
- Married ___
- Single ___
- ___ 2. What is your current age? (eg. in number of years)
- ___ years
- ___ 3. How many dependents do you have? (eg. number of children and they may also mention a number of older dependents)
- ___
- ___ 4. What are the ages of your dependents? (in years)
- _____
- ___ 5. What is your first language spoken?
- _____
- ___ 6. Do you speak any other language? (List all that are given)
- _____
- ___ 7. How many years have you been in Canada? (in number of years)
- ___ years

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PREVIOUS WORK
EXPERIENCE IN HOME COUNTRY BEFORE COMING TO CANADA

_____ 8. How many years of education did you complete in your home country? (number of years)

_____ years

_____ 9. Which of the following statements describe the job training you went through in your home country before coming to Canada? (Check all that may apply)

a) I had no special job training _____

b) I was trained for a skilled trade _____

c) I was trained in clerical/administration _____

d) I was professionally trained (eg.nurse/teacher) _____

e) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 10. What was your occupation in your home country?

_____ 11. How many years did you work before coming to Canada? (in years)

_____ years

_____ 12. Did you try to get your educational qualifications and/or work experience evaluated or recognized when you arrived in Canada? (Check one only)

Yes _____

No _____

(IF YES, ASK QUES. 13; IF NO, ASK QUES. 14)

_____ 13. If you did try, please indicate whether they were:

- a) Evaluated at par _____
- b) Evaluated lower _____
- c) Not recognized at all _____

_____ 14. If you did not try, which of the following reasons best describes why you did not do so:

- a) I didn't know I could _____
- b) It would not be relevant _____
- c) It would take too much time or money _____
- d) Documents in home country not available _____
- e) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 15. Prior to your most recent or current experience with a plant closure, did you have any further education or training in Canada in any of the following areas? (Check all that apply)

- a) High school _____
- b) Community college _____
- c) University _____
- d) Skills training _____
- e) ESL _____
- f) Apprenticeship program _____
- g) No training or education _____

EXPERIENCE WITH A CURRENT OR RECENT PLANT CLOSURE

_____ 16. Are you now, or have you recently been involved in plant closure? (Check one only)

Yes _____

No _____

_____ 17. If you have been involved in a plant closure, what is the name of the Company?

_____ 18. What is or was your occupation or job title with this company?

_____ 19. What is or was your hourly wages? (state in terms of \$ per hour)

_____ dollars per hour

_____ 20. Were you covered by a union in this company? (It is possible that people will not know the answer to this question, and if that is the case please mark it clearly as DK for don't know)

Yes _____

No _____

Don't know _____

_____ 21. If yes, what's the name of the union? (Some will also not be able to give the name of the union, and once again mark it as DK)

_____ (READ LIST OF UNIONS, IF NEEDED)

_____ 22. How many weeks notice of the plant closure did you or do you have? (in number of weeks)

_____ weeks notice

_____ 23. How did you find out about the closure?

a) From co-workers _____

b) From the union _____

c) From the employer _____

d) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 24. Sometimes the reasons for plant closure are given. In your case which of the following best describes the reason?:

a) No reasons given _____

b) Bankruptcy _____

c) Moving to new location _____

d) Business sold to new owners _____

e) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 25. How long did you work for this employer? (in years)

_____ years

_____ 26. If you have already lost your job due to layoff, did you get any severance pay.

Yes _____

No _____

INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT SITUATION

27. What are you doing now?

- a) Still working but on notice _____
- b) Still working but on notice and
on waiting list for a training program _____
- c) In a training program _____
- d) Completed a training program but
not found a new job _____
- e) Unemployed but on waiting list for
training program _____
- f) Unemployed and not aware of any
training programs _____
- g) Unemployed, not on a waiting list
for training, but trying to get access
to a training program _____
- h) In a new job after plant closure _____

28. Prior to the plant closure, was any information available to you in the workplace that could help you find a new job or training programs?

Yes _____

No _____

_____ 29. If yes, what kind of information was it? (Check all that may apply)

- a) Information on UIC _____
- b) Information on severance pay _____
- c) Information/counselling for job search _____
- d) Information/counselling for job placement _____
- e) Information/counselling for retraining _____

_____ 30. Did you receive any of these sorts of information/counselling services from agencies outside the workplace?

Yes _____

No _____

(IF YES, ASK QUES. 30)

31. What agencies did you go to; and what do you think about how helpful it was?

<u>AGENCY</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Somewhat Helpful</u>	<u>Very Helpful</u>
_____ a) CEC	_____	_____	_____
_____ b) Union	_____	_____	_____
_____ c) Friends	_____	_____	_____
_____ d) Community Based Agency/Help Centre	_____	_____	_____
_____ e) MLEC	_____	_____	_____

EXPERIENCE WITH RETRAINING/UPGRADING SINCE CLOSURE

_____ 32. Are you interested in taking retraining and upgrading programs?

Yes _____

No _____

_____ 33. Since the plant closure, have you completed, or are you currently taking a retraining or upgrading program?

Yes _____

No _____

(IF NO, ASK QUES. 34 AND SKIP TO QUES 42; IF YES, SKIP TO QUES. 35.)

_____ 34. If you have not been involved in retraining or upgrading since the plant closure, what are the reasons?: (Check all that apply)

a) Could not get UIC _____

b) Could not make childcare arrangements _____

c) Not interested _____

d) Waiting list too long _____

e) Inadequate income support _____

f) Unaware of training/upgrading programs _____

g) No part time or evening work available _____

h) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 35. If you have been involved in a retraining/upgrading program since the plant closure, how many weeks did you have to wait to get into the program? (in terms of the number of weeks)

_____ weeks

_____ 36. If you have been involved in a retraining/upgrading program since the plant closure, what type of program have you taken?

a) English language training _____

b) Job search skills _____

c) High school upgrading _____

d) New career training _____

e) Job specific training _____

f) Apprenticeship _____

g) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 37. Who sponsors the training/upgrading program you are involved in?

a) CEC _____

b) Board of Education _____

c) Union _____

d) Community Centre _____

e) Community College _____

f) MLEC _____

g) Other (please specify) _____

_____ 38. Did any of the following agencies provide retraining upgrading programs in your own language?:

	<u>Agency</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
a)	CEC	_____	_____
b)	Bd. of Ed.	_____	_____
c)	Union	_____	_____
d)	Community Centre	_____	_____
e)	Comm. College	_____	_____
f)	MLEC	_____	_____

_____ 39. Please indicate which of the following time lengths best describes the duration of the retraining/upgrading program in which you are involved:

- a) The program is short term, lasting from 1-3 months. _____
- b) The program is long term, lasting more than 4 months. _____
- c) The program is ongoing, no known termination date. _____

40. Please indicate whether or not you have, or are receiving any income support or financial assistance during the training program from any of the following sources: (Check all that apply)

<u>Source</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
a) UIC	_____	_____
b) Training allowance	_____	_____
c) General Welfare Family Benefits	_____	_____
d) Severance	_____	_____
e) Pensions	_____	_____
f) Transition payment for over 45's	_____	_____

41. People may face a lot of difficulties in retraining/upgrading programs. Did you experience any of the following situations: (Check all that apply)

- a) Insufficient income support _____
- b) Harassment by CEC _____
- c) Childcare problems _____
- d) Language difficulties _____
- e) Course content/curriculum _____
- f) Teaching style of Instructors _____
- g) Difficulty completing assignments _____
- h) Transportation _____
- i) No difficulties _____
- j) Other (please specify) _____

EXPERIENCE IN FINDING A NEW JOB SINCE CLOSURE

_____ 42. Have you been able to find a new job following the plant closure?

Yes _____

No _____

(IF NO, THIS IS ALL YOU HAVE TO ASK - END THE INTERVIEW.)

_____ 43. If you have found a new job, how many weeks did it take?

_____ weeks

_____ 44. If you have found a new job, how did you find it?: (Check all that apply)

a) through friends/co-workers _____

b) through newspapers _____

c) through the union _____

d) through MLEC _____

e) through community-based agency _____

f) through employer _____

g) through CEC _____

h) other (please specify) _____

_____ 45. What is the name of your new employer or company?

_____ 46. What is your new job title or occupation?

_____ 47. Will you be represented by a union in your new job?

Yes _____

No _____

_____ 48. Are the wages in your new job as good as, better or worse than the job you lost through plant closure?: (Check one only)

As good as _____

Better _____

Worse _____

_____ 49. Are the benefits:

As good as _____

Better _____

Worse _____

_____ 50. Are the working conditions:

As good as _____

Better _____

Worse _____

_____ 51. Overall, are you at least as satisfied with your new job as you were with the job you lost through plant closure?

Yes _____

No _____

APPENDIX "B"

LIST OF AGENCIES & INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS:

ACTEW
TORONTO ORGANIZATION FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS' RIGHTS (INTERCEDE)
CANACT
CANADIAN CONGRESS OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF ADULT EDUCATION
ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION
GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
SHERIDAN COLLEGE
SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL OF METRO TORONTO
SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S GROUP
CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE
WOMEN WORKING WITH IMMIGRANT WOMEN
SKILLS FOR CHANGE
TIMES CHANGE
WORKING SKILLS CENTRE
RIVERDALE IMMIGRANT WOMEN'S CENTRE
REXDALE MICROSKILLS CENTRE
REXDALE WOMEN CENTRE

FEDERAL SOURCES:

CANADA EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION COMMISSION
CANADA EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

PROVINCIAL SOURCES:

MINISTRY OF LABOUR: LABOUR ADJUSTMENT BRANCH
MINISTRY OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

EMPLOYER REPRESENTATIVES:

FORD ELECTRONICS: PRODUCTION MANAGER

ACADEMICS:

NANCY JACKSON, MCGILL UNIVERSITY
ROXANA NG, OISE
KARI DEHLI, OISE
TANYA DASGUPTA, GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE
DR. CHARLES PASCAL, COUNCIL OF REGENTS

UNION REPRESENTATIVES:

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

**CANADA AUTO WORKERS: BRIAN WILSON
JOE DEBIMONE
TED KAPUSTA
ROD STEVENSON**

**UNITED STEEL WORKERS OF AMERICA: Omero Landi
BOB KEEFE
MILA HUSH
B.W. BROWN**

LABOURERS INTERNATIONAL UNION OF NORTH AMERICA: GARY CAROLINE

UNITED FOOD & COMMERCIAL WORKERS: STAN HENDERSON

INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS UNION: ALEX DAGG

UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS & JOINERS OF AMERICA: DIANE WEIS

COMMUNICATIONS & ELECTRICAL WORKERS OF CANADA: DARCY MARTIN

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MACHINISTS, LOCAL 2113: ROD REYNOLDS

**LEATHER GOODS, PLASTIC & NOVELTY WORKERS INTERNATIONAL:
FRED SARTORELLI**

List of Community-Based Agencies Represented at the two Consultation Meetings:

- Women Working With Immigrant Women
- Skills for Change
- CANACT Skills
- INTERCEDE
- Riverdale Immigrant Women Centre
- Congress of Black Women, Toronto Chapter
- Job Development Association
- Times Change
- Advocates for Community-Based Training and Education for Women
- Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants
- National Organization of Immigrant & Visible Minority Women
- Working Skills Centre
- Cross-Cultural Communication Centre
- ONeSTEP (Ontario Network of Skills Training & Employment Program)

Out of Town Consultation:

- CAPRI (Career Preparation for Immigrants), Sudbury
- Cambrian College, Sudbury
- Focus for Ethnic Women, Waterloo
- PWL Manufacturing Inc., Waterloo

Telephone Consultation:

- Mary Benson-Albers, Women Entering Skills Training (Windsor)
- Arlene Timmins, Women Immigrants of London (London)

APPENDIX "C"

Codebook listing - A:CBOWD

Variable # 1 - Marital-Status
Start column = 1 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Married
b=Single

Variable # 2 - Age of Respondent in Years
Start column = 2 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 3 - Number of Dependents
Start column = 4 Number of columns = 1 Type = Numeric

Variable # 4 - Age of Dependent One
Start column = 5 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 5 - Age of Dependent Two
Start column = 7 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 6 - Age of Dependent Three
Start column = 9 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 7 - Age of Dependent Four
Start column = 11 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 8 - Age of Dependent Five
Start column = 13 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 9 - Age of Dependent Six
Start column = 15 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 10 - First Language Spoken
Start column = 17 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=English
b=Chinese
c=Vietnamese
d=Italian
e=Portuguese
f=Punjabi
g=Other

Variable # 11 - Number of Years in Canada
Start column = 18 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 12 - Years of Education in Own Country
Start column = 20 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 13 - Job Training in Own Country
Start column = 22 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=No training
b=Skilled trade
c=Clerical/admin
d=Professional
e=Other

Variable # 14 - Occupation in Own Country
Start column = 23 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=None
b=Homemaker
c=Unskilled
d=Skilled
e=Office/clerical
f=Professional
g=Other

Variable # 15 - Years Worked in Own Country
Start column = 24 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 16 - Evaluation of Ed/training Experience
Start column = 26 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 17 - Success with Evaluation
Start column = 27 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=At par
b=Lower
c=Not at all

Variable # 18 - Reasons for not Evaluating
Start column = 28 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Didn't know
b=Not relevant
c=Too much time/\$
d=Document unavail
e=Other

Variable # 19 - High School in Canada?
Start column = 29 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 20 - Comm.College in Canada?
Start column = 30 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 21 - University in Canada?
Start column = 31 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 22 - Skills Tr. in Canada?
Start column = 32 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 23 - ESL in Canada?
Start column = 33 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 24 - Apprentice in Canada?
Start column = 34 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 25 - No Training/Ed in Canada?
Start column = 35 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 26 - Involvement in Plant Closure
Start column = 36 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 27 - Hourly Wages
Start column = 37 Number of columns = 5 Type = Numeric

Variable # 28 - Covered by a Union?
Start column = 42 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No
c=Don't know

Variable # 29 - Name of Union
Start column = 43 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Other
b=CAW
c=IAM
d=Steelworkers
e=ILGWU
f=Intnatlabors
g=United Food/comm
h=Don't Know

Variable # 30 - Number of Weeks of Notice
Start column = 44 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 31 - Source of Knowledge re Closure
Start column = 46 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Co-workers
b=Union
c=Employer
d=Other

Variable # 32 - Reasons for Closure
Start column = 47 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=No reason given
b=Bankruptcy
c=Move to new Loc
d=Business sold
e=Other

Variable # 33 - Years with Employer
Start column = 48 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 34 - Severance Pay?
Start column = 50 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 35 - Current Situation
Start column = 51 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Work but notice
b=Wk/not, on waitL
c=Training program
d=Tr comp/no job
e=Unemp, on waitL
f=Unemp, not aware
g=Un/no WL, but try
h=Un/no WL, no Int.
i=New job
j=Comp tx. & new job
k=Retired

Variable # 36 - Information Available in Workplace
Start column = 52 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 37 - UIC Available in WkPlace?
Start column = 53 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 38 - Severance Information
Start column = 54 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 39 - Job Search Information
Start column = 55 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 40 - Job Placement Information
Start column = 56 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 41 - Retraining Information
Start column = 57 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 42 - Help From Outside Agencies?
Start column = 58 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 43 - Help From CEC?
Start column = 59 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 44 - Rating for CEC
Start column = 60 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Not helpful
b=Somewhat
c=Very helpful

Variable # 45 - Union Help Available?
Start column = 61 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 46 - Rating for Union Helpfulness
Start column = 62 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Not helpful
b=Somewhat
c=Very helpful

Variable # 47 - Friends/co-workers Help?
Start column = 63 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 48 - Rating of Friends Helpfulness
Start column = 64 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Not helpful
b=Somewhat
c=Very helpful

Variable # 49 - Community-Based Agency Help?
Start column = 65 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 50 - Rating of Community Agencies
Start column = 66 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Not helpful
b=Somewhat
c=Very helpful

Variable # 51 - MELEC Help?
Start column = 67 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 52 - Rating of MLEC Helpfulness
Start column = 68 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Not helpful
b=Somewhat
c=Very helpful

Variable # 53 - Interested in Retraining?
Start column = 69 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 54 - Completed or in Retraining?
Start column = 70 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 55 - UIC a Barrier to Retraining?
Start column = 71 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 56 - Childcare Barrier to Retraining?
Start column = 72 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 57 - No Interest in Retraining?
Start column = 73 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 58 - Waiting List Too Long?
Start column = 74 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 59 - Inadequate Income Support?
Start column = 75 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 60 - Unaware of Retraining Opportunities?
Start column = 76 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 61 - No Part-time/Evening Work?
Start column = 77 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 62 - Other Barriers to Retraining?
Start column = 78 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 63 - No. of Weeks of Waiting for Retraining
Start column = 79 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 64 - Type of Retraining Program
Start column = 81 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=ESL
b=Job search skill
c=High school upgr
d=New career train
e=Job specific tr
f=Apprenticeship
g=Other

Variable # 65 - Sponsor of Retraining Program
Start column = 82 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=CEC
b=Board of educ
c=Union
d=Comm.Centre
e=Comm.College
f=MLEC
g=Other

Variable # 66 - CEC Provision in Own Language?
Start column = 83 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 67 - Board of Ed. Provision in Own Language?
Start column = 84 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 68 - Union Provision in Own Language?
Start column = 85 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 69 - Comm.Centre Own Lang?
Start column = 86 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 70 - Comm.College Own Lang.?
Start column = 87 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 71 - MLEC Own Language?
Start column = 88 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 72 - Duration of Retraining
Start column = 89 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Short term 1-3mo
b=Long term 4mo+
c=Ongoing

Variable # 73 - \$'s Available from UIC?
Start column = 90 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 74 - \$'s Available from Training Allowance?
Start column = 91 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 75 - \$'s From General Welfare?
Start column = 92 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 76 - \$'s From Severance?
Start column = 93 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 77 - \$'s From Pensions?
Start column = 94 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 78 - \$'s From Transitions Program?
Start column = 95 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 79 - Difficulties-Insufficient Income Support
Start column = 96 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 80 - Difficulties-CEC Harassment
Start column = 97 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 81 - Difficulties-Childcare
Start column = 98 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 82 - Difficulties Language
Start column = 99 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 83 - Difficulties-Course Content
Start column = 100 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 84 - Difficulties-Teaching Style
Start column = 101 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 85 - Difficulties Completing Assignments
Start column = 102 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 86 - Difficulties - Transportation
Start column = 103 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 87 - No Difficulties Experienced
Start column = 104 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=None experienced
b=Some experienced

Variable # 88 - Other Difficulties
Start column = 105 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 89 - New Job Found After Closure
Start column = 106 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 90 - How Many Weeks Till New Job?
Start column = 107 Number of columns = 2 Type = Numeric

Variable # 91 - Find Job Through Friends/Co-workers?
Start column = 109 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 92 - Through Newspapers?
Start column = 110 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 93 - Through Union?
Start column = 111 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 94 - Through MLEC?
Start column = 112 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 95 - Community-Based Agency?
Start column = 113 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 96 - Through Employer?
Start column = 114 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 97 - Through CEC?
Start column = 115 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 98 - Through Other Sources?
Start column = 116 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 99 - Union In New Job?
Start column = 117 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No
c=Don't Know

Variable # 100 - Wages Compared to Old Job
Start column = 118 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=As good as
b=Better than
c=Worse than

Variable # 101 - Benefits Compared to Old Job
Start column = 119 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=As good as
b=Better than
c=Worse than

Variable # 102 - Working Conditions Compared to Old Job
Start column = 120 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=As good as
b=Better than
c=Worse than

Variable # 103 - Overall at Least as Satisfied?
Start column = 121 Number of columns = 1 Type = Alpha

a=Yes
b=No

Variable # 104 - ID
Start column = 122 Number of columns = 3 Type = Numeric

APPENDIX "D"

UNIONS AND WORKER ADJUSTMENT

There is growing evidence that the issue of worker adjustment is being taken up by the trade union movement. In recent months, two major industrial unions have developed plans to deliver adjustment programs to members displaced by plant closings and layoffs. The United Food and Commercial Workers are planning to establish a national adjustment program for members at this time. A resource manual is being prepared to help union representatives and staff deal more effectively with plant closings. As well, a number of union representatives will be trained in September 1990 to deliver adjustment services nationally, i.e., Assessment, advocacy, and information in plant closings. Similarly, the Canadian Auto Workers in Windsor, Ontario, recently submitted a proposal to the Minister of Labour asking for funds to establish a permanent adjustment service for unions experiencing plant closures. This service, consisting of a number of programs to be delivered by permanent, full time staff, is intended to replace Industrial Adjustment Committees.

Both these programs have drawn from the model for worker adjustment developed by the Labour Council of Metro Toronto and York Region.

The Metro Labour Education Centre

In September, 1987, the Labour Council of Metro Toronto and York Region established the Metro Labour Education Centre. Located at 954 King Street West in Toronto (the Massey Ferguson building, now converted to office space) the Centre is the successor to Labour Council's original education program, the Centre for Labour Studies.

First set up in 1982, the Centre for Labour Studies offered both a certificate program in Labour Studies (30 hour programs in areas of interest to trade unionists, i.e. collective bargaining; health and safety; labour education; work, racism and labour; labour history, etc.) as well as an English in the Workplace.

The English in the Workplace Program was the first union based workplace program in Canada. Through the EWP program, union members who speak English as a Second Language have the opportunity to learn language in a relevant and accessible way. Instructors teach at the workplace, with most classes held partially on company time. The program is learner centred, teaching practical, workplace language. Another important element is to build confidence among the learners in order to help them participate more actively in their unions and the workplace.

It is this original program which established the philosophy that underscores the Labour Council's approach to worker education today: to provide education programs and services reaching out to those groups most marginalized and oppressed in the trade union movement - immigrant workers, visible minority workers, older workers and

women workers. It is this same philosophy which informs and guides the adjustment model created in 1986.

In September 1986, the Labour Council received additional funding from both the Province of Ontario through the Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace program, and the Federal Government through the Innovations Program. This funding allowed the Centre to expand its range of services by creating two additional programs.

The first, Adult Basic Education, was created due to a growing recognition that trade union members who were native speakers of English needed to improve literacy and numeracy. Since its inception, the Adult Basic Education program has expanded dramatically, providing English and Math to 800 union members annually. More recently, computer awareness and blueprint reading classes have been offered to both English and non-English speaking workers.

The second program, Skills Training for Unemployed Workers, began in 1987. Originally intended to provide assistance programs to 150 laid off workers, the Skills Training Program has at this time assisted over 2,000 workers.

The Skills Training for Unemployed Workers has been continually evolving in response to the crisis in plant closings and the needs of workers most affected by them.

The Skills Training Program is an holistic adjustment program, which offers two streams: Workplace or Pre-closure Programs: and In House Programs.

Pre-Closure Programs

The Skills Training Program is a labour based program. Thus, the first and primary relationship is between MLEC and the local unions affected. Once the Centre is notified of a plant closing, immediate contact is made with the union at both the local and national (or international) level. A special course is offered to union representatives in order to equip them with the resources and information to participate effectively in the adjustment process. Though the Program will work independently with the union, in most closures an Industrial Adjustment Services committee is in place. MLEC works with the committee in order to provide necessary adjustment services.

The steps in the Adjustment Process are as follows:

- 1) Plant Closure course for local union representatives;
- 2) Training sessions for union stewards to provide information on the shop floor;
- 3) Attend initial IAS committee meeting, and explain services;

- 4) Advise the union in all matters related to adjustment process, and suggest recommendations to be made at committee;
- 5) Set up an assessment process for all workers in the plant. This is an extremely important step. The assessment is a one to one interview lasting 45 - 60 minutes, with a counsellor.
The purpose of the assessment is to determine employment and training objectives, and functional level of literacy. This assessment was developed based on the extensive need for language training identified in the vast majority of plant closures in Metro Toronto and York Region. The assessment is offered in the first language of the worker wherever possible, and is intended to assess goals and skills, as well as build confidence in the MLEC staff.
- 6) Once completed, the individual assessments (conducted at the workplace, on company time) are summarized into aggregate information. No personal and confidential information is made available. However, the aggregate information provides an extremely valuable "blueprint" with which MLEC and the adjustment committee can plan programs/services and training.
- 7) Depending on the date of closure, implement basic skills training. Obviously, a great deal more is possible when there is advance notice. Basic skills training normally includes English in the Workplace, Adult Basic Education, Computer Awareness and Blueprint Reading. As much as possible, these classes are offered on company time.
- 8) Vocational counselling is established immediately, with workers able to talk with a MLEC counsellor, sometimes in their first language. Counselling is offered in the plant, with appointments booked through the union. Workers are normally allowed time off the job to see the counsellor.
- 9) Give extensive information on Unemployment Insurance and Retraining. Workers have many questions about these areas. There is a great deal of fear and apprehension about UI in particular. Information is given on a regular basis in various languages.
- 10) Job Search. As the date of closure approaches, Job Search programs are offered. MLEC strives to have such programs, normally five days in length, offered on company time. Here, the voluntary nature of adjustment restricts the ability to do so, since few employers are willing to release employees in order to attend. However, MLEC is quite flexible in its approach, and is willing to arrange classes in whatever way needed.

The Job Search Program is unique in that it strives not only to provide practical information about changes in the labour market (extremely important to long

term employees), but also to situate the experience of unemployment in a political, rather than a personal context. Through group discussion, workers are able to understand concepts such as "skill", "credentialism", "training", "unemployment insurance", and "stress", in both a personal and political way. It is not satisfactory simply to explain the concept of a "resume" in a de facto way; workers must first be helped to understand the origin and underlying meaning of "job search" techniques. This process is far more thorough than that of one or two day job search programs. It is also more culturally sensitive, recognizing the fact that "job search" skills are laden with assumptions about ways of behaving which may be biased against certain groups. The program strives at all times to be relevant to working class people and to value their life experiences.

- 11) Provide follow up counselling. Once the plant has closed, workers will have access to training and counselling for as long a period of time as needed.

In House Programs and Services

The Labour Education Centre functions as a permanent and on going support system to laid off workers. A number of services are available at the Centre:

- 1) The Action Centre. Recently set up, the Action Centre is a walk in centre staffed by a counsellor. Both written and verbal information is available in different languages, as well as advocacy and referral services. The Action Centre also has an intake function, where workers wishing to take full time in house programs can attend every Monday morning to be signed up for class.
- 2) Counselling. Both personal and group counselling is available at the Centre by arranging to see one of three full time counsellors. Information about the labour market and retraining programs is available, as well as referrals to community based organizations. Counsellors provide extensive information and support to both in house, as well as other unemployed workers not enrolled in programs.
- 3) In House Programs. The Centre offers long term assistance programs to workers attempting to make the transition to new employment and/or training. Classes combining language training with job search, UI information and vocational counselling, are provided in order to help immigrant workers make choices about new occupations. Many immigrant workers feel discouraged about training, and rarely receive the kind of information which leads to the choice of training. MLEC's intent is to "decipher" confusing information about CEIC programs and services, and to advocate on behalf of immigrant workers who wish to retrain.

Currently, In House Programs are of short duration, primarily due to constraints by unemployment insurance rules and regulations. However, a new funding arrangement will allow MLEC to offer longer term assistance/language training

programs with guaranteed income support under Section 26 of the Unemployment Insurance Act.

The programs and services of the MLEC are certified by George Brown College, to which it is affiliated. This relationship provides the framework for discussing questions such as access to training for laid off workers and developing innovative approaches to adjustment.

The Skills Training Program is a highly integrated, holistic adjustment program developed by the trade union movement. It is highly responsive to the needs of displaced workers, and extremely flexible in its approach. It has represented a good working model for those unions currently interested in establishing adjustment programs.

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THE FORGOTTEN WOMEN

LABOUR ADJUSTMENT FOR IMMIGRANT WOMEN

Phase II

**Metro Labour Education Centre &
Coalition of Visible Minority Women**

April 1991



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THE STEERING COMMITTEE:

Judy Wolfe, Chair, Policy Analyst, Economics, Ontario Women's Directorate

Lisa Avedon, Coordinator, Employment Adjustment Programs, Ministry of Labour

Anne Richmond, Policy Analyst, Ontario Women's Directorate

Benita Swarbrick, Policy Advisor, Labour Policy and Programs, Policy Branch,
Ministry of Labour

Susan Coulter, George Brown College

Barbara Cameron, International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU)

Laurell Ritchie, Vice President, Canadian Textile & Chemical Union

Ann Masson, Canada Employment & Immigration Centre

Armine Yalnizyan, Program Director, Social Planning Council of Metropolitan
Toronto

Christina Lee, Policy Analyst, Ontario Women's Directorate

Akua Benjamin, Coalition of Visible Minority Women

Shelly Gordon, Executive Director, Ontario Network of Employment and Skills
Training Projects

Barbara Anderson, Coordinator, ACTEW

Trish Stovel, Director, Metro Labour Education and Skills Training Centre

Nancy Green, Canada Employment & Immigration Centre

This report is a documentation of our experiences of working with displaced immigrant women. We hope that our learning helps individuals and organizations who are engaged in the never ending struggle to eradicate systemic barriers faced by immigrant women.

Project Staff

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- D. Program Content List of Topics**

I. INTRODUCTION

The Labour Adjustment for Immigrant Women Project had two phases. The first phase was to conduct research on the basis of which a model for labour adjustment could be developed. Phase I was completed and a report of the findings prepared. These findings echoed the words of Naomi Alboim in references to the issues of skills training, language training and childcare. She said "underlying these particular issues is a concern of visible minority and immigrant women that they lack up-to-date information on the programs and services provided by Government (and other agencies). They are further concerned by apparent barriers within government which cause difficulty to their gaining equal access and equal participation in those programs and services which they attempt to use."¹ The findings of Phase I had clearly articulated the difficulties and barriers which immigrant women experience in regard to **English language fluency, financial problems and the inherent racism** in all institutions of Canadian society. It was therefore imperative that, for displaced immigrant women to experience success in adjustment, the above mentioned barriers be removed. In operational terms the removal of these barriers meant the following:

1. arrange stable income support to enable (the) women to pursue full time language and skills training
2. arrange for financial assistance to cover actual childcare and transportation costs
3. arrange to supplement their U.I. benefits to enable them to maintain a 'decent' standard of living while they were pursuing training
4. provide for a thorough assessment including Prior Learning Assessment
5. provide a learner centred and relevant language upgrading program together with counselling facilities
6. arrange for seats in relevant skills training programs

A model with three separate modules was proposed and agreed upon by the Steering Committee. The three modules were to be implemented in three separate situations to address the specificity of the experience of the displaced immigrant women under different situations.

Though workers move in and out of the labour force for a multiplicity of reasons,

¹ *Keynote speech by Naomi Alboim, then OWD, in Community Workshop with Visible Minority and Immigrant Women, 1987.*

the focus of this study was to examine the situation of workers displaced due to plant closures. These closures may be partial or total, and they may occur because of different circumstances such as bankruptcy, downsizing, relocation of operations, production cut-backs, and technological change.

Selection of the three workplaces to be studied was made in consultation with the project Steering Committee after much deliberation and discussion. While we recognized that it was not possible to conduct a study with wide transferability due to the range of economic conditions across the province, we felt it important that any study conducted for the province should include a site outside Metro Toronto. We therefore established the following criterion for a workplace closing outside Metro Toronto:

1. a smaller community, with a population base between ten to thirty thousand
2. a community affected by plant closings and layoffs
3. a workplace with a high proportion of immigrant women
4. a community with limited social services and training opportunities

The final criterion was especially key, since we felt that in order to demonstrate transferability of a model, the "lowest common denominator" should apply. Since we had neither the financial nor project staff resources to conduct a study in Northern Ontario, for example, we attempted to find a community in Southern or Southwestern Ontario with economic conditions that resembled the more remote communities that might potentially be affected by plant closings.

After selecting the out of town site (Niagara Falls, Ontario), we decided on the following three situations as a reasonable reflection of the reality confronting immigrant women affected by plant closings:

- *Pre-closure - non-unionized (Metro Toronto)*
- *Post-closure - unionized (Metro Toronto)*
- *Post-closure out-of-town*

Currently under the Employment Standards Act of the province of Ontario, closures affecting fifty or more employees must be reported to the Ministry of Labour. The notice required depends on the size of the workforce, for example, the maximum notice required by law is sixteen weeks where there are five hundred or more employees.

We realized that most closures in these medium to large size plants usually meant

that those workplaces would be unionized. While we were trying to locate a site with sixteen weeks notice of closure that had representation of non-unionized workers, we soon acknowledged the impossibility of that task. In consultation with the projects Advisory Committee and Steering Committee, it was decided that in order to operationalize the Pre-closure Model, the previous decisions be reviewed. In the Pre-closure Model, it was agreed that the criterion for selection be changed from a program for the non-unionized, to a program for the unionized. The Post-closure Model would therefore be changed to a program for the non-unionized.

Each of the models outlined in this report therefore reflect the different situations and circumstances that emerge in each specific model. While each model is somewhat different, the barriers/issues faced by immigrant women were the same. Consequently the observations and recommendations in this report reflect our attempts to address the overall problems faced by displaced immigrant women.

The models then became:

- ***Pre-closure - unionized (Metro Toronto)***
- ***Post-closure - non-unionized (Metro Toronto)***
- ***Post-closure - out-of-town***

II. PRE-CLOSURE MODEL

Objective: To facilitate with the Adjustment Process in a pre-closure situation.

1. SELECTION OF SITE

Limitations

The plan was to select a plant where workers would have received a minimum of sixteen weeks notice of closure to accomplish the following: conduct an initial assessment to get at the composition of the workforce; assessment of their needs, report preparation of the findings, negotiation of implementation plans with the company and finally delivery of the programs.

Recognizing that sixteen weeks of statutory notice is mandatory only in workplaces employing more than five hundred workers, our search was limited to medium to large sized plants, excluding workplaces where the notice is either minimal or non-existent. However, we felt this compromise was necessary in order to have sufficient time to test the model. In addition, the notice had to coincide with the time lines of the pilot.

Pre-Closure Site

In our attempts to locate a site for the Pre-closure Model with a minimum of sixteen weeks notice, we decided upon A.B.C. Warehouse² since it met our initial criterion. Our objective was two-fold: first, we were expecting to be able to deliver an intensive bridging program for ten immigrant women; and second, to assist an adjustment committee in the Labour Adjustment process. In order to accomplish the above, we set out to conduct an initial assessment of the workers in the company to obtain base line data. This process alone took over two months for a variety of reasons not in our control.

Innumerable delays were caused, primarily by the employer, who seemed both unable and unwilling to make timely decisions about the assessment process. Workers could not easily be released and had to be re-scheduled several times, with many becoming demoralized by the delays, while others were absent or on vacation. All of these delays provided the company with a justification not to accept preliminary results of the assessment and to begin adjustment activities.

² *The organization's name has been changed to protect its identity.*

Finally, early analysis of the data revealed that there were not enough women who would benefit from a bridging program. Proportionately, few of the women employed at A.B.C. were immigrant or visible minority women. Another significant factor was that most of the women, based on their fluency in the English language and some formal education, were relatively "training ready" and needed a different nature of assistance in accessing training programs than we planned to offer.

A final impediment was the company's decision to hire private consultants to deliver job search information sessions to the workers. As we could not control the program content or behaviour of these consultants, we could not perceive how we could test the model properly.

We were able to assist the committee in establishing a union-run Action Centre within the workplace. This Centre acted as a resource to the workers and was staffed by an A.B.C. worker. Advice and assistance with Unemployment Insurance and retraining were provided.

The decision to abandon A.B.C. as a test site and pursue another company was made on the basis of the developments outlined above. This led us to our alternate location at Angel Incorporated³.

Angel Incorporated is a large food processing plant employing almost one thousand workers, with a high proportion of immigrant women. We were alerted to a partial down-sizing of the workforce affecting approximately one hundred and fifty workers by the Metro Labour Education Centre.

In mid-October 1990, we approached the union local at Angel Incorporated to explain the purpose of the study, and gained their approval of our involvement.

Most of the workers affected by this partial down-sizing were immigrant women with low seniority. The workers at the plant represented a wide range of age and experience. These workers carried out various functions of production line work, consisting of sorting, inspection, machine operating, material handling and packaging of various products.

³ *The organization's name has been changed to protect its identity.*

In light of our specific experience at Angel Incorporated and our experience of other plant closures, it was imperative that an adjustment committee be set up as soon as possible, and that this committee be fully trained in order to participate meaningfully and effectively in the adjustment process.

2. TRAINING OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The local union selected four immigrant women to form the adjustment committee in the workplace. These women had not held prior union office and had no background in labour adjustment. Instead, they were selected on the basis of their familiarity with the different cultural groups in the workplace, their ability to communicate in the common languages spoken in the workplace, and their previously demonstrated leadership roles.

While these women were highly motivated and had excellent interpersonal skills, they were not able to perform effectively in their new role without training. It was therefore determined that the first step in the adjustment process at Angel Incorporated should be training for the adjustment committee members.

The training which we provided for the committee members incorporated the following areas:

- understanding the adjustment process
- establishing an effective adjustment committee
- defining roles and responsibilities of committee members
- setting goals and objectives
- establishing a plan of action
- evaluating success
- understanding and advocating on behalf of the members in the areas of retraining, U.I.C., counselling and job placement
- setting up a fully functioning Resource Centre for the members

The Resource, or Action Centre, was set up soon after the training. The purpose of the Centre was to provide ongoing information, assistance, advocacy and referrals. The Centre was staffed on a rotating basis by the four committee members.

While the initial training, ongoing support and consultation were to prove very helpful to the committee members, they were under great pressure to develop a multiplicity of skills and learn an enormous amount of information in a very short period of time. Angel Incorporated was not prepared to release the women from

their regular duties on a full time basis; hence they had limited exposure to the adjustment process in an ongoing, continuous way. However, the women were responsible for developing their own assessment forms to identify the needs of the workers. When needs were identified they were able to develop a plan of action to further assist these workers. As they developed more confidence in their own ability they became more comfortable in advocating on behalf of the workers in the areas of retraining, U.I.C., counselling and job placement.

In most cases, adjustment committee members are limited in what they can successfully achieve due to:

- lack of training
- lack of information and contacts. Committee members should not be expected to build a network of personal contacts with related organizations, i.e. community based and government, in a short space of time.

Our experience in working with this particular closure alerted us to the need for specific information and ongoing training in the above mentioned areas. This information should be available to all worker representatives on I.A.S.(Industrial Adjustment Services Branch of Employment and Immigration Canada) committees and workplace committees who are not necessarily involved with the I.A.S. These worker representatives should have an opportunity to learn about Labour Adjustment in order to effectively participate in the committee structure, i.e., so that they are able to negotiate programs which may facilitate a smoother transition for displaced workers.

In the case of Angel Incorporation, we saw that the immigrant workers who were capable of accessing skills retraining courses were those whose first language was English, or those who had a high level of English as a second language and had a high level of English communication skills. It is interesting to note that the women in the Pre-closure model who were able to get into a skills training program at the community college had this advantage. The majority of **immigrant** women **DO NOT** have this advantage.

3. SUMMARY

Our intervention at Angel Incorporated involved the following steps:

- a. Locating a suitable site. The Ontario government requires employers with fifty or more employees to notify the Ministry of Labour about impending

closures. Any organization who wishes to access information regarding plants under notice of closure must approach the Ministry of Labour. The information provided by the Ministry only includes the number of employees affected and their union/non-union status. (Approximately one week)

- b. Gaining access to company management and the union, as the case may be, or gaining access with the help of the I.A.S. (Two to four weeks)
- c. Negotiating access to workers in order to conduct needs assessments. This involves:
 - i) the company agreeing to release workers from their regular duties in order to be interviewed on company time
 - ii) providing the physical arrangements for the above process to be carried out by the counsellors(Three - five weeks to complete process and prepare report)
- d. Proposing a possible plan of action for the adjustment process, including job search programs, counselling, follow up, referrals, etc. (Two weeks)
- e. Obtaining the company's approval for the recommended programs. (Two weeks)
- f. Implementation of programs as identified in the needs assessment.

In short, our experiences at Angel Incorporated clearly identified that the 'sixteen' week notice of closure is insufficient time to significantly assist displaced workers. In the best possible circumstances, where all the parties are working cooperatively to reach the implementation stage, a minimum of eight to nine weeks is required - leaving only seven to eight weeks to deliver the programs. Depending on the size of the company and the number of workers affected, this is an impossibly short period of time to effectively provide meaningful assistance. It should be obvious that any organization interested in making early interventions should be aware of the time such intervention would/could take place.

4. **Recommendations:**

- i. *We recommend that a minimum of one year advance notice of closure be given to allow the time required to facilitate the adjustment process.*
- ii. *That when notice of closure is given, that a local adjustment committee be struck immediately, and that the committee be trained in all the issues involved in Labour Adjustment:*
- *understanding the adjustment process*
 - *establishing an effective adjustment committee*
 - *defining roles and responsibilities*
 - *setting goals and objectives*
 - *preparing a plan of action*
 - *preparing a method of evaluation*
 - *developing a bank of information and resources about unemployment insurance*
 - *information and resources on retraining, i.e. Community Colleges, W.I.T.T., apprenticeship programs, & School Boards*
 - *information and resources on job placement*
 - *information and resources on counselling i.e. financial & personal*
- iii. *We recommend that adjustment committees be provided with a minimum of one week's training and that additional support, consultation and training be available in specific areas throughout the adjustment process.*
- iv. *We recommend that government develop and provide assistance through community based centres that are accessible to all workers unionized and non-unionized. The purpose of these "Access Centres" would be to obtain current information on legislation, process and procedures involved in labour adjustment.*
- v. *We recommend that the public education system make allowances/ exceptions to address the needs of the displaced worker, such as,*
- *integrate ESL into job training*
 - *relax entrance criteria*
 - *provide flexible non-threatening assessment*
 - *provide more programs for displaced workers*
 - *provide counselling/life skills to assist displaced workers*

III. POST-CLOSURE

Objective: To recruit ten non-unionized immigrant women into a twenty week bridging program to facilitate their transition to a retraining program or a new job comparable to the one they lost.

Method involved the following:

1. Outreach - locating non-unionized women
2. Selection process for the pilot
3. Initial assessments
4. Program design

1. OUTREACH

Our research in Phase I had alerted us to the difficulties we might potentially encounter in finding workers who were laid-off from non-unionized companies. The difficulty is compounded in situations where a plant employs less than fifty workers, since no mandatory reporting of the layoff or closure is required by the province. We were, however, aware that immigrant women formed the bulk of such companies. In the absence of formal (i.e. governmental) mechanisms for gaining access to this constituency, we set out to devise an outreach plan.

After much discussion, we decided to do a public announcement on Multicultural Television (MTV, a local Toronto station). The project planned to target four language groups; Portuguese, Italian, Chinese and Vietnamese. Program directors of all the above languages were contacted simultaneously. This process, which took over six weeks, included numerous phone calls, letters and faxes to MTV.

The first announcement was aired on a Chinese Language Program. A bilingual staff member at the Metro Labour Education Centre was interviewed about plant closures and their effects on the community. The announcement stated that the program was looking for laid-off women and that they should call the MLEC. The women were asked to leave their names and telephone numbers when they called.

We also put a full page announcement in a Vietnamese weekly newspaper to reach Vietnamese speaking women. The results from this first outreach was overwhelming; we received a total of eighty-two phone calls, including some from men, although we had asked for women specifically. This overwhelming response compelled us to decide not to outreach the Italian and Portuguese communities at

that time.

A very skilled and empathetic interpreter contacted each person and arranged for them to attend information sessions. Three information sessions (three hours each) were set up in late September, including one on a Sunday.

A bilingual Chinese and English speaking (MLEC) staff person presented information on U.I. and retraining. Three other staff members were present to answer individual queries from the workers. They were also provided with written information on Unemployment Insurance.

We discovered that in at least three cases, they were not aware that they could apply for U.I. after losing their jobs. They had not yet received any direction from their employer. There were two workers who had been injured and were terminated from their jobs without any action on their behalf, and who had also not filed for Workers' Compensation.

Once again this experience in outreach confirmed our findings of Phase I: (a) that there was not much assistance for non-unionized displaced workers; (b) there was a pressing and urgent need for information on U.I., Workers' Compensation and retraining in the language of the workers; and (c) that workers who did not speak English had no access to existing services. Given that immigrant women are concentrated in workplaces with less than fifty employees and have limited access to information and services, we recommend:

that Adjustment Branch services are advertised extensively, i.e., through the ethnic media to inform displaced workers of the services that exist.

2. SELECTION PROCESS

The forty-six women who attended information sessions expressed a need and desire to enter the twenty week bridging program. Since we could admit only ten women, we were faced with a serious decision in developing criterion for selection of participants. The ideal basis for selection would have been to take the most disadvantaged women from the population, with the disadvantageous status being determined on the basis of our findings in Phase I. Namely, that older women and women with small children, laid-off from secondary manufacturing sectors (e.g., garment industry) with minimal transferable skills and without much prior notice face maximum difficulty in making a transition to either retraining or a new job.

While technical points are subject to change, generally speaking the policy for collecting U.I. while training falls into two broad categories under the Unemployment Insurance Act:

- i) Section 14 provides UI coverage for short term (usually no longer than sixteen weeks) for trainees, and the trainees must be available for work.
- ii) Section 26 provides UI coverage for long term (up to one hundred and fifty six weeks) and trainees are not required to be available for work. It is therefore most desirable to negotiate Section 26.

Our assumption based on Phase I was that women from plant closures would be collecting U.I., and hence have some income support while they pursue training. It was therefore important that the pilot have the ability to negotiate a stable form of long term income support like Section 26 in order to allow the participants to complete the ESL bridging program and then proceed to a retraining program. In addition, we would explore the possibility of supplementing their U.I. to facilitate their ability to participate without the pressure of looking for a job due to financial needs.

The final criterion established was that the women be collecting U.I. benefits, or be U.I. eligible at the time of our outreach.

3. INITIAL ASSESSMENTS

On the basis of the raw data we had collected in the general information sessions, twenty-four women were identified for the assessment. We were using three well thought out (albeit arbitrary) criterion⁴ to select women for the pilot. The three criterion were: 1) type of work; 2) union status; and 3) ESL level. We were aware that many programs have had to face similar moral dilemmas in the face of limited resources. We wanted women in the pilot who could be assumed to remain for the twenty week bridging period and whose circumstances were conducive enough to pursue retraining options. Our assumptions based on our research in Phase I, as well as collective experience and analysis, were that women without any support

⁴ *"Who to admit to the program?" and to develop a criterion for the same is a question faced by all community based training programs for immigrant women. The contradictions between the stated mandate and the practices of these programs have serious implications for the training possibilities for immigrant women. The programs receive funding on the basis of demonstrated rate of success per intake and the seats and entry requirements of the program are limited and restricted by funding. They are forced to reject women who need more time to finish training or who need more ESL to undertake training programs.*

would not be able to stay in the program even if they were to start it. To ensure some continuity in attendance we decided to admit only those who were collecting U.I.

Needs assessments were scheduled for the twenty-four women over three days. The project staff spent an average of one hour with each woman. Through the assessment process we hoped: 1) to collect base line data on the women; 2) to explain the pilot in greater detail and 3) to learn about their expectations of the pilot. We also hoped that these sessions would provide us with sufficient/more ideas for planning and prioritising classroom activities for the bridging program.

To ensure that we did not miss any vital piece of information, these personal interviews/meetings were conducted with the help of a questionnaire (Appendix B). At the time of the interviews only twelve of the twenty-two women were receiving U.I. The other ten had either exhausted their U.I. or had not met the conditions necessary for receiving it. Three of the twenty-two had a good command of the English language, while the others ranged from basic to intermediate. Their ability to read and write was better than their ability to speak or understand spoken English. We also learned their specific work and life histories prior to and since arriving in Canada. With a few exceptions, all of them were literate in their own languages and some were fluent in several languages. Their levels of formal education varied a great deal, and their occupations in their country of origin corresponded with their education levels. It was disturbing/interesting to note that they were now in very similar situations i.e., laid-off from very low paying jobs. They all experienced English as a major barrier. Furthermore, in selecting women who were functioning at a basic level of English at the time of entry into the program, we were taking a risk, i.e. these women were not likely to be accepted into retraining programs after only twenty weeks of ESL. Hence, we would not be able to demonstrate the 'success' of the bridging program. On the other hand, selecting women who would have had a higher chance of 'success' would not reflect the full magnitude of the problems faced by the majority of immigrant women. Therefore, we recommend:

that the present training programs be expanded and special programs be set up for displaced immigrant women.

4. PROGRAM DESIGN

Program Design had the following components:

- A. English as a Second Language
- B. Counselling
- C. Access to Skills Training Programs
- D. Computer Awareness
- E. Evaluation

A. English as a Second Language

*"Language is one of the most serious obstacles many immigrant women have to face in Canada. Not speaking one of the two official languages reduces a woman's ability to obtain information and services about human and civil rights, fair employment practices, health services, social welfare, Canadian law, etc. It also aggravates the problems of unemployment, underemployment and job ghettoization. It makes women easy victims for all types of exploitation and prevents them from making contributions to their new society."*⁵

The ESL Program had the following objectives:

- to provide and practice English as a Second Language (speaking, listening, reading, writing and grammar) that was learner centred, flexible, responsive and relevant to needs as identified by the learners;
- to provide information about the current job market as well as information and orientation to retraining
- to provide the above within a supportive environment that enhances self confidence and the skills necessary to enter retraining programs, including realistic information about the availability and accessibility of retraining

Our plan was to prepare and orient the women to the retraining system in order to facilitate their eventual entry into skills training courses. In addition, we hoped to provide information about the current job market, including skills shortages and how to get a job. (See Program Objectives and "What do you expect from this

⁵ Alma Estable, *Immigrant Women In Canada. Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. March, 1986 P.43.*

program? What would you like to learn?")

Our aim was to combine ESL with critical Job Search content (developed in the Skills Unit of the Metro Labour Education Centre), and expand the program to ensure flexibility in meeting both the women's individual and group needs. We wanted to introduce the women to the world of training in Toronto. We achieved this through arranging program visits, guest speakers, etc. We also planned to provide individual and group support to build confidence.

We set aside time for individual women to follow-up and/or supplement their classroom work. Often, classes ran beyond regular hours with individual women staying "just to talk" or request additional help. Such flexibility helped develop a close bond between the instructor and the women.

We were conscious of the need to ensure that the women felt comfortable, "safe" and respected. We achieved this by creating a learner centred program where decisions were made democratically. We were aware of the inherent power embodied in the "instructor" role and consciously tried to share power in the class. The women's own stories were used as the basis for reading and writing; this was crucial in validating both the work and life experiences of these women. Learning was maximized and made safe by the fact that we were all women. We talked about women's experiences, cultural expectations, rights and status and shared information about our own experiences.

Initially, the women were surprised that the instructor was interested in their culture (asked questions, asked women to write about it) and in their own experiences. The teacher made it "O.K.", for the women to use their first language - in translations to one another and in informal classroom discussions. Slowly, at around week seven, when we felt they were more comfortable, we began to ask them to speak to each other more frequently in English. (E.g., How do you say _____ in English?)

We had high expectations of the women and felt confident they could and would improve their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. For example, the writing process included: the group talking about an experience or the instructor suggesting a topic. The group talked about it together and the instructor discussed how to structure it. For example, the structure may have included what questions to ask themselves? Each woman would write a story, which then would be marked by the instructor and rewritten by the woman. Often the instructor would correct it with the individual woman before she rewrote it.

A Writing Project

To encourage the women to express and communicate their ideas in writing, the instructor suggested they collectively compile their writings in the form of a book. The women were very enthusiastic about this idea, but initially hoped that the instructor would choose the "best" stories to be included. When they learned that they would have full control of the book, they took the responsibility for the story selection (from the twenty-one topics they had written about), cover design and title choice. They called this anthology "Nine Chrysanthemums", with one chrysanthemum representing each woman. The women felt proud that their lives were important enough to be in a book. The experience was very positive and had an empowering effect.

The group made much progress in their English learning. There was also a demonstrable increase in their level of confidence. A clear example was provided by the group when they decided to write a formal letter to MLEC management to request that their program be extended. This experience occurred after they asked the instructor about the management structure at MLEC and discussed strategies about how to put forth their proposal.

Based on our experiences in the class, we recommend:

- i. that instructors be conscious of the power imbalance in their classrooms and make a serious attempt to address it*
- ii. that instructors learn about and appreciate the diverse cultural and historical backgrounds of the women in their classes*

Test Preparation

Given that both community colleges and community based training programs have some form of test for prospective trainees, we began preparing for the same. The group was given specially designed English (reading comprehension, spelling and vocabulary) and Math tests (about one half hour) weekly. The tests were then discussed. The instructor suggested ways in which speed and accuracy could be increased. This component of the bridging program helped us to identify areas of weakness and thereby introduce class activities to improve them. The feedback from the group was positive. They said they became more accustomed to the process of testing and were less nervous. Despite our own resistance and distaste for such methods of selection, the project staff learned how this major barrier faced by immigrant women to enter training programs may be overcome.

Summary of the Program Content

- information about Unemployment Insurance (e.g., filling in a U.I. Report Card, how to appeal disentitlement/disqualification, changes to the U.I. Act, November 18th, etc.)
- retraining information (e.g., what is it, who provides it, what are skills shortages, what support is available, how to get a course and how to prepare Transition forms etc.)
- information regarding job market (e.g., how it has changed, how to fill out application forms, human rights of applicants etc.)
- individual strategies for learning
- Listening/speaking/reading/writing and grammar:
 - writing My Life Story, My Hopes/Expectations, writing about their families, expectations/hopes of Canada, learning as a child and learning as an adult, daily routines, resumes, covering letters, what is success and dialogues for example phoning the Canada Employment Centre, training programs etc.
 - reading their own stories, regarding new technology, immigration history, Ontario Times and various other publications, etc.
 - discussions regarding cultures (both their own and Canadian), wife abuse, federal, provincial and municipal government responsibilities, songs, Christmas Carols, etc. (Appendix D)

B. Counselling

We saw counselling as one of the key components of the program design. Providing opportunities for the women and the project staff to meet at regular intervals contributed to building an atmosphere of trust, and fostered better understandings of the complexity of the women's lives. The specific objectives of counselling were:

- to assist with defining and setting up of their own learning objectives and priorities
- to assist with the development of training plans

- to provide specific information and assistance with Unemployment Insurance, childcare subsidies etc.

Process

Each woman met privately with the project staff for an hour either before or after ESL classes. A total of four to five meetings took place within the twenty weeks of the bridging program.

The first session was devoted to listening to the women's histories, the circumstances which made them come to Canada, their families, and their experiences of being immigrants. In the subsequent meeting, we began working on setting up learning objectives and discussing the areas of work they would be interested in pursuing, and the types of training that would be required. These individual sessions served as an adjunct to training information that was being given simultaneously in the class. These classroom discussions were beginning to expand the possible options available to the women. The project staff helped with sifting and sorting the information they would hear and read about with in terms of relevance to their interests and previous work experiences.

Setting up Learning Objectives

The learning objectives were defined by each woman, and varied according to both their present levels of English proficiency and their other social needs. For example, a woman who had come to Canada after being in England for many years wanted to improve her writing skills more than her speaking skills, whereas the majority of the group felt that speaking and being understood by others was the most important language skill for them at that time. Some were more familiar with dealing with public institutions such as banks, schools or the C.E.C., while others depended on family and friends. Identifying the learning objectives was an important process for both the project staff and the learners. The exercise helped the learners to articulate their areas of strengths and weaknesses, while the staff were continually reminded to consciously incorporate individual needs within the classroom activities. This process also helped in charting the progress the group made towards their learning objectives.

Developing Training Plans

To facilitate a better understanding of the available training programs, we combined general information with field trips to the programs themselves. We arranged these with training program coordinators, and had the coordinators explain the various requirements and components to the women.

We encouraged each woman to give full range to her imagination vis a vis retraining. This was quite difficult as it was not possible to ignore the real constraints which they experienced as women (gender) and as immigrants (race). Nevertheless, it was an exercise which gave them their first opportunity since coming to Canada to entertain retraining possibilities. All had begun working soon upon arrival in Canada, with most employed in jobs unrelated to the training and experiences in their country of origin.

Previous attempts on their part to attend publicly funded/subsidized ESL classes were limited by their shift work and family responsibilities. Despite these obstacles, five of them had tried to learn English while they worked. They found evening classes (six hours per week) both very tiring and inadequate. They also had no access to information about retraining, nor could they afford to quit work to pursue training.

In the course of exploring training programs, it became increasingly clear that all of them would have liked to move into different areas of work. They expressed serious dissatisfaction with the kind of jobs they had been forced to do by their circumstances. Through this process, they were also becoming aware that in order to pursue skills training programs, they would have needed to upgrade their English proficiency. They would say, "our English and education levels do not qualify us to get into training programs. We would like to take training but we don't qualify. We need another chance to learn again and to reach the level that we need to qualify."

Halfway into the bridging program, each woman had two or three training ideas to pursue. The staff arranged for more specific information on these ideas and arranged for interviews for admission to these programs. We discovered that each skills training program had specific requirements. For example, the Computer Assisted Design (CAD) requires familiarity with technical terminology. Both the participants and the CAD instructors expressed urgent need to compile a dictionary of terms used in various languages, to facilitate understanding of special usages.

Recommendation: *That funds be made available to skills training programs for developing dictionaries of key occupational terms in various languages*

The CAD instructors and participants identified another major barrier in pursuing training, namely the lack of integration between the ESL and skills (or job) training components of the program. The skills training instructors expressed their inability to address the language needs of the women in the program while trying to simultaneously cover the course content. This difficulty is particularly acute since there is little training available to teach skills training instructors ESL methodology.

Recommendations:

- i) *That ESL be incorporated into skills training programs*
- ii) *That skills training instructors receive training in delivering skills training through ESL methodology*

Assistance with U.I.

During the interviews conducted with displaced immigrant women in Phase 1 of the project, dealing with bureaucracies such as unemployment insurance had been identified as a major area of difficulty. These women experienced difficulties in regard to their: 1) inability to access timely, clear and direct information; 2) the steps involved in filing U.I. claims; 3) arguing their case for ESL or training with counsellors in English; and most important of all, 4) to access assistance when they had problems with their U.I. claims. These difficulties were to be well demonstrated in the pilot.

It was necessary for the project staff to be prepared to deal with these situations as we faced them from the very onset. We had identified Section 26 as the most appropriate form of income support for the women. However, we were not able to obtain approval from CEIC despite repeated requests to have Section 26 authorized. This left us with no alternative but to seek other informal arrangements. We were able to 'borrow' nine spaces from an already established (Direct Private Purchase) training program at MLEC in order to finally achieve Section 26 coverage for the nine women. Further, due to the inflexibility and lack of support by CEIC for this pilot, we were confronted with innumerable delays in the women receiving their U.I. cheques. MLEC staff helped greatly in reducing the delays through their contacts. The women left to their own resources would have had to spend a lot of time and energy in sorting through their own cases. Two of many

such examples below demonstrate the nature of these constant problems:

In one case, a woman in the pilot stopped receiving U.I. cheques. After the woman (encouraged and assisted by the project staff) had made numerous enquiries, it was finally discovered that her Section 26 documentation had not been entered into the Unemployment Insurance computer system. We found our numerous interventions in the form of advice and direct assistance fostered confidence in the woman, reduced her stress level for better learning and also taught her a few skills.

In another example, another woman had recently moved to Toronto and had not received any money for six weeks, and was not given any rationale or warning about the delay at the time she applied for benefits. It was only after she called CEC with the help of the staff that she found that the delay was due her move.

According to MLEC staff, such examples are not uncommon. In fact, many displaced workers experience an interruption of benefits when they transfer to Section 26 coverage. In the example of this pilot, it took four to eight weeks to process Section 26 documentation -- in a pilot lasting merely twenty weeks! The delays and interruption of benefits posed great financial hardships.

- Recommendations:**
- i. that the Canada Employment Centres ensure immediate and stable income support (such as that provide by Section 26) to all displaced workers***
 - ii. that the ESL and training programs integrate into their content specific information and assistance in dealing with the Unemployment Insurance bureaucracy***

C. Access to Skills Training Program

Immigrant women's lack of access to skills training programs has been well documented in many research studies over the last decade.⁶ The innumerable steps taken to place these ten women into training, and the frankly disappointing results, have indisputably reinforced this view. We had begun the pilot with the assumption that:

- a) once the women had working knowledge of English
- b) if they had relevant information about a program and followed the correct process, i.e., time to call/register
- c) were prepared for personal interviews, they would then have reasonable opportunities of gaining access to skills training programs

We set out to facilitate this process by first contacting the program coordinators of skills training programs specially targeted towards immigrant women. We discovered very quickly, in all but two programs, that either the admission requirements were too high, i.e., required grade/level 10 to 12 English and Math and/or there were no places for recipients of Unemployment Insurance. We also explored training programs run by community colleges and school boards. Once again, similar barriers were encountered. There are only about three skills training programs in Toronto which admit people with grade '8' level into Community Colleges. Such programs expect prospective trainees to be able to understand all instructions in English, and have not integrated ESL instruction into their course content. In our experience with other women, we found that the chances of success for women not fully fluent in listening and speaking English, were few.

Susan Wismer
Women's Education & Training in Canada
 CCLOW, 1988.

Shelley Gordon
Operation Access,
 ACTEW, 1989.

Cathy Livingstone & Karen Richardson
The Needs of Community-Based Training Programs for Women.
 ACTEW, 1985.

It was in this climate of skills training that we began working with the women in the pilot to maximize their access. The instructor brought all the information about the programs, and used it as course content, enabling the women to follow the directions given therein. They were encouraged to do the actual phone contacts and to follow up on their own. They first practised the phone conversation in the class and then made the calls, for setting up appointments for orientation/interviews/tests.

Although the women in the pilot practised interviews and role played dialogues, they clearly understood the difficulties/inaccessibilities of getting information concerning retraining programs. Many were rebuffed in their attempts at the organizational level to get initial or follow-up information. In one example, a woman called a community college to ask about the Baking Techniques course. The woman had some difficulty pronouncing 'techniques' and was asked by the college staff person "what are you saying? I can't understand you." The college employee hung up on the learner. It was only with much encouragement that she attempted to phone again to get the information. A second example concerns a woman calling a program to inquire about the results of an interview for training. The woman not understanding a question put to her subsequently answered inappropriately. She was told she did not understand the question, and was asked "Do you have a problem hearing?" and was then told, "You don't listen." In another instance, when one woman expressed concern about not being accepted into a program, she was told, "You don't listen, I just told you that you can/may get into the June program." A recent incident concerned three women who went for a training program interview at a local college. They reported feeling 'unwelcome.' The staff person at the college spoke to the group and then individually interviewed the women. (There were seven women in total - three from our program.) The women reported that the college staff person said that he "didn't have much time" and that he "usually didn't work that late." Also, "he didn't want to call our names" - and even with one woman's name (Alice). Other comments included "He was not patient", "He wanted us out", "He was rude,". The women contrasted this treatment with what they observed when the same staff person interviewed two young 'Canadian' women - he spent a lot of time with them, and then rushed the immigrant women through their interviews.

These incidents demonstrate a complete insensitivity and lack of respect for immigrant women trying to better their lives.

These institutional barriers make retraining an unattainable option.

- Recommendations:**
- i. accessible government sponsored skills training programs with an ESL component*
 - ii. systemic and attitudinal changes in public education institutions in order for immigrant women displaced by plant closures to access their fundamental rights to retraining*

D. Computer Awareness

Women in the pilot expressed an interest in developing computer knowledge during their initial interviews, and again four weeks into the Bridging Program. We were able to arrange for one day per week of Computer Awareness for the women. This program developed through the Adult Basic Education Unit of MLEC strives to demystify computers. The learners are taught not to be intimidated by technology.

The specific objectives of the Computer Awareness were:

- (a) to teach basic computer language
- (b) to teach keyboarding skills
- (c) to teach basic word processing

They received fifty hours of Computer Awareness and became familiar with Word Perfect Executive. The instructor worked with the ESL instructor on language items which posed problems. The women used their own writings to input into the computer for word processing. They would then use different functions, such as Spell Check, to check for errors.

The Computer Awareness instructor was an ESL instructor familiar with ESL methodology. As the women had no previous experience of using the English alphabet keyboard, the instructor spent considerable time teaching them its usage, including correct posture and finger placement. In addition, she introduced them to a typing tutor program.

The instructor and the women were all pleased with the progress made. They all felt that the program was too short and if there had been more time for additional sessions they would have received an introduction to "Spreadsheet" and "Newsmaster." They believed that improving their typing skills would be an asset.

At the end of the course they could independently perform the basic functions of the computer program.

The instructor found using ESL methodology very effective with this group. For example, the 'present tense' was utilized and 'conditionals' were avoided. Instructions were kept short and the instructor spent time with each woman on an individual basis.

E. Evaluation

We were aware that Evaluation was an integral component in most ESL Programs offered by community based groups or community college programs. However, in our discussions we found that evaluations were not being carried out systematically or regularly. The usual reasons included a lack of time, and a lack of real need or resources. There was a general agreement, however, that evaluations could be very useful. If structured carefully they would not require too much time, and the gains would more than compensate for the resources expended. Therefore, we planned an Evaluation process which would be both manageable and effective.

The specific objectives of the evaluation were:

- a. to provide opportunity to the women to both critique and determine the course content
- b. to reflect and evaluate what they had learned
- c. for the project team to evaluate the success of the bridging program in terms of its flexibility, cultural and linguistic sensitivity

Structure of Evaluation

A successful learner centred program was fostered by conducting weekly evaluations. The women reviewed the previous week's work and completed an evaluation of the activities. This allowed the women to have regular input into program development. It also provided the women a regular forum to reflect on what they had learned and on their own progress. (Appendix C)

The project staff and women discussed evaluation and the learning of the English language. Speaking, reading, writing and listening continuum were used to reflect on the progress each woman felt she had made between October 1990 and March 1991.

<i>Woman</i>	<i>How much English did you speak in October 1990?</i>	<i>How much English do you speak now?</i>
#1	10%	20%
#2	20%	35%
#3	10%	20%
#4	30%	35%
#5	30%	55%
#6	20%	35%
#7	10%	40%

We deemed it important that each woman be able to fully express her evaluation of the program without being limited by language. A Chinese bilingual (MLEC) staff person was therefore requested to facilitate these discussions, which focused around the following three questions.

1. **What will you remember?** (This question was asked in order to determine the most important/useful elements)

To which the women replied " everything was useful including application forms, worker's rights - I didn't know these before". One woman expressed that, she, " can comprehend and feel more confident speaking - expressing ideas and communicating with other people ". Another woman said " she didn't know how to express herself, grammar, vocabulary, and lots of opportunity to speak".

2. **What would help other immigrant women who lost their jobs?**

When asked this question, one women said " more English to feel more confident ", another woman said " help women to upgrade their English so they can communicate ", " there will be more racial harmony if there is more communication ". One of the women stated that " it is important for them to learn English so that they are not dependent on their children ", another said, " there are lots of people out of work, its a good time to learn English ".

3. **What would you like to tell the Ontario Womens' Directorate?**

When asked this question the women responded by saying, " we need more community based training programs ", " there are long lists for programs ", " more ESL/Job Search programs so other immigrant women would have a chance ", " I worked nine years - I had to work; at night school couldn't learn very much".

When reflecting on what they saw as problems in retraining programs their comments included [direct quotes]:

- I felt sceptical in the beginning about retraining
- age and English are problems in getting retraining and a job
- it's hard to remember everything, hard to find jobs at my age
- its like winning a lottery
- I worked three years in Canada in an electronics factory. At night school I didn't learn any workplace English
- I felt like an instrument, dumb, I didn't understand, and I felt frustrated
- I tried to get a personal leave at work, but couldn't even do that
- I felt very lost and scared when I lost my job

In evaluating the pilot project and how they felt about the bridging program their comments included [direct quotes]:

- I learned a lot of things that I couldn't learn from the community centre
- I was given a lot of ideas.
- before I had to bring my relatives whenever I went to C.E.C. - but now I " dare to go " to C.E.C or library alone
- the instructors are patient and creative
- there were supportive conditions - a lot of encouragement
- I felt useless before but now at least I have the courage to try
- I started to understand Canada a bit more - there is not so much distance between me and the Canadian Society

The women underestimated their progress and were more readily willing to attribute it to the instructor than to themselves. This modesty was coupled with an increasing confidence and awareness that (in the OWD project anyway) they could determine their program. For example, they told us what days they would not be able to attend classes due to individual training program visits, the Chinese New Year, etc. It was in response to their pressure that a request was put forth for an extension of their program. (They inquired first about the organizational structure at MLEC, and about the process of channelling such a request. This resulted in a letter addressed to MLEC management and subsequent meetings with CEIC representatives, and resulted in an extension until October 1991.)

Instructor's Evaluation/Comments

The following considerations by the Instructors facilitated both the acquisition of language skills and the building of confidence amongst the women in the pilot:

1. **Individual attention and flexibility with regards to time available to the women.** The project staff were available whenever a woman had a specific problem or difficulty. For example if she wanted to write a letter to a training program or help with telephone calls to a training program, the staff was available. As well, the women received help with extra work, with review if they had missed a day, etc. It was important that the instructor was available before and after class in case the women "just wanted to talk". As well, the class often continued until 4:00 p.m., or later. This flexibility fostered a relaxed and comfortable environment where the women felt 'safe' to learn.
2. **Validation and acceptance of the women's experiences of racism, sexism and ageism.** As a group, the women shared information/talked about the process involved, questions encountered and any other relevant information about training. They spoke about the many women interested in retraining, as well as their levels of English. As discussed on Page 20, three women were devastated when they went to a community college to inquire about retraining. They compared their ill-treatment as opposed to that of two young, white Canadian women.

In order to analyze and examine this, and to situate it in a context, the instructor asked why this had happened; the women replied that it occurred because they were Chinese and older. Also, when asked regarding the availability of training; the women responded that there is not enough training for all those displaced workers who would like it. This discussion was crucial in terms of women not personalizing the experience. The instructor asked if they thought other immigrant women had experienced this and they replied "yes".

It is imperative to situate the individual woman's experience within the larger context - where racist, sexist and ageist selection criteria is used to admit participants into the program.

If experiences such as these are "brushed aside," and not addressed or rationalized, this then sends a clear message to the women that organizations, classes and instructors do not care to challenge and question

the system, and that the women's experiences are not considered seriously.

The instructor should provide guidance and work with the learners in questioning and challenging racism, sexism and ageism.

3. **Important to the program's success, was the integration of retraining and job search content into the ESL Bridging class (e.g., the use of training program questions and application forms etc. used). This integration made the program relevant to the women and their evaluations reflected this.**

Recommendations:

- i. ***We recommend that Adjustment Branch services are advertised extensively, i.e., through the ethnic media to inform displaced workers of the services that exist***
- ii. ***We recommend that the present training programs be expanded and special programs be set up for displaced immigrant women***
- iii. ***We recommend that instructors:***
 - ***be conscious of the power imbalance in their classrooms and make a serious attempt to address it***
 - ***learn about and appreciate the diverse cultural and historical backgrounds of the women in her class***
- iv. ***That funds be made available to skills training programs for developing dictionaries of key occupational terms in various languages***
- v. ***That ESL be incorporated into skills training programs***
- vi. ***That skills training instructors receive training in delivering skills training through ESL methodology***
- vii. ***That the Canada Employment Centres ensure immediate and stable income support (such as that provided by Section 26) to all displaced workers***
- viii. ***That the ESL and training programs integrate into their content specific information and assistance in dealing with the Unemployment Insurance bureaucracy***
- ix. ***We recommend:***
 - ***accessible government sponsored skills training programs with an ESL component***
 - ***systemic and attitudinal changes in public education institutions occur in order for immigrant women displaced by plant closures to access their fundamental rights to retraining***

IV. POST CLOSURE OUT-OF-TOWN

The rationale for selection of Healthy Baby Foods⁷ located in the Niagara region, was to choose a site that was relatively representative of other areas in Ontario where employment and retraining opportunities were limited. The local economy in the Niagara region is based largely on seasonal employment, primarily in the hospitality and tourism industry.

There is a general dearth of skills training programs in the community. The nearest community college is in St. Catharines. Although there is a campus in Niagara Falls, it has only one direct purchase course in hospitality and tourism training. To quote one C.E.C. officer, "there are no training opportunities around here and even if there were, it won't make sense since there are no good jobs anyway."

Objective: **To recruit ten unionized women into a twenty week bridging program to facilitate their transition to retraining programs or a jobs comparable to the ones they lost.**

1. IDENTIFICATION OF SITE

MLEC was informed about Healthy Baby Foods through an adjustment program offered by the local union in March of 1990. There were approximately one hundred unionized workers and twenty salaried employees. MLEC was invited specifically to facilitate a three day workshop for a group of twenty-five immigrant workers who had very basic reading and writing skills. The women in this group were primarily Italian speaking. During this workshop, MLEC staff asked the women if they would be interested in participating in the pilot project.

In late July of 1990, these women were contacted by telephone and invited to an information meeting. In August, a meeting was set up and attended by ten women who had participated in the workshop. The project staff presented an overview of the pilot and answered questions and queries. The women were informed about the ESL course that was being negotiated. We assured them that we would arrange for Section 26 authority for all those who were on U.I. at that time. We were aware that some of the women had received severance payments which for U.I. purposes had been allocated as earnings. This meant that the women would become eligible for U.I. at different times during the program.

⁷

The organizations name has been changed to protect its identity.

2. INITIAL ASSESSMENT

The project staff conducted assessments with each participant (about 45 minutes). Our impression of the group was that they were very keen to begin the program and were excited about the prospect of improving their language skills - an opportunity not available to them in the many years they had been in Canada.

The assessment process revealed the following:

- they had been wage workers since they came to Canada
- most of them had lived in and/or around Niagara Falls since they first arrived in Canada
- none of them (except one who had tried to take ESL through C.E.C., but did not get in) had ever been in an education program since their arrival in Canada
- at least four of them had, or were suffering from bad backs due to injuries incurred through the course of their work
- their English writing skills

However, the most disturbing findings were that three of the ten women did not qualify for Unemployment Insurance and therefore would not be able to attend the full time day program.

3. SETTING UP THE ESL PROGRAM

An ESL Program was negotiated with the Separate School Board as they offered both a convenient location and maximum flexibility. A certified ESL instructor was hired by the board specifically for this group of women, and a room in the school was arranged for the class.

While the arrangements were being finalized, we were informed that Section 26 was to be no longer available⁸. This piece of information had serious implications for the women and the pilot. It meant only those women who were on allocations of earnings could attend the full time ESL program, and the others could only attend evening classes (four hours per week).

This unforeseen development resulted in only two women being able to come to the day program, although there were five who originally could have. The other three depended on rides with the ones who could not attend.

We had to advise four of the women to start ESL in the evening. This new arrangement (a) split the group, (b) spaces created had to be filled with other learners, and (c) drastically reduced the hours of ESL.

A number of letters were written to various levels of the government to obtain income support under Section 26, but these requests were repeatedly turned down.

We kept in touch with the women in the pilot, their instructors and the Principal of Continuing Education, and arranged monthly visits. Each time we met with the women (both day and evening programs) they expressed great satisfaction with their progress. They found that they were learning to write a little and read much better. They were not getting any information about retraining or Job Search techniques in their ESL classes, as these were regular ESL classes and not designed to meet the specific needs of displaced workers. The instructors also expressed satisfaction with the women's progress, and expressed regret for having so few teaching resources available to them. We provided the women with information about utilizing Transitions Programs. We also shared whatever teaching materials we had with the instructors.

The Principal of Continuing Education not only accommodated the various changes in the plan, but also suggested new options.

⁸ *Governments' overall, and policies emanating from their standpoint, take precedence and succeed in rendering the most well thought out plan, unworkable.*

The freeze on Section 26 of the U.I. Act, during the bill C-21 debate in 1989/90, changed the nature of the Pilot. The presence of the women from the Healthy Baby Food in the English language class, solely depended on this pre-condition. Of the ten (10) women, five (5) needed approval under Section 26. The regional area office was supportive of the program and went as far as to agree to forward a "Letter of Appeal" to the Regional office. The project team spent considerable time and effort lobbying different government personnel (including those on the Steering Committee of the project), only to discover that there was going to be no wavering in the freeze. During this time, it became obvious that people's personal drive and motivation have very little to do with their success, especially for those who have to depend on the whims of the government regulations.

The women in the pilot have not been successful in finding new jobs or any training programs in the region to date.

V. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. We recommend that a minimum of one year advance notice of closure be given to allow the time required to facilitate the adjustment process.*
- ii. When notice of closure is given, that a local adjustment committee be struck immediately and that the committee be trained in all the issues involved in Labour Adjustment:*
 - understanding the adjustment process*
 - establishing an effective adjustment committee*
 - defining roles and responsibilities*
 - setting goals and objectives*
 - preparing a plan of action*
 - preparing a method of evaluation*
 - developing a bank of information and resources about unemployment insurance*
 - information and resources on retraining i.e., Community Colleges, W.I.T.T., apprenticeship programs, & School Boards*
 - information and resources on job placement*
 - information and resources on counselling i.e. financial & personal*
- iii. We recommend that adjustment committees be provided with a minimum of one week's training and that additional support, consultation and training be available in specific areas throughout the adjustment process.*
- iv. We recommend that government develop and provide assistance through community based centres that are accessible to all workers unionized and non-unionized. The purpose of these "Access Centres" would be to obtain current information on legislation, process and procedures involved in labour adjustment.*
- v. We recommend that the public education system make allowances/ exceptions to address the needs of the displaced worker, such as,*
 - integrate ESL into job training*
 - relax entrance criteria*
 - provide flexible non-threatening assessment*
 - provide more programs for displaced workers*
 - provide counselling/life skills to assist displaced workers*

- vi. *We recommend that Adjustment Branch services be advertised extensively, i.e., through the ethnic media to inform displaced workers of the services that exist.*
- vii. *We recommend that the present training programs be expanded and special programs be set up for displaced immigrant women.*
- viii. *We recommend that instructors:*
 - *be conscious of the power imbalance in their classrooms and make a serious attempt to address it.*
 - *learn about and appreciate the diverse cultural and historical backgrounds of the women in her class.*
- ix. *That funds be made available to skills training programs for developing dictionaries of key occupational terms in various languages.*
- x. *That ESL be incorporated into skills training programs components*
- xi. *That skills training instructors receive training in delivering skills training through ESL methodology.*
- xii. *That the Canada Employment Centres ensure immediate and stable income support (such as that provided by Section 26) to all displaced workers.*
- xiii. *That the ESL and training programs integrate into their content specific information and assistance in dealing with the Unemployment Insurance bureaucracy.*
- xiv. *We recommend:*
 - *accessible government sponsored skills training programs with an ESL component.*
 - *systemic and attitudinal changes in public education institutions occur in order for immigrant women displaced by plant closures to access their fundamental rights to retraining.*

VI. CONCLUSIONS

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS/REMARKS

Our findings in this pilot project are not surprising. In addition to the areas outlined in the Phase I Report, the issues and barriers have been well documented and reported previously by both community organizations and government agencies. However, this pilot has the distinction of actually having as its primary objective the removing these well stated barriers.

A number of pre-conditions which had been set in order to meet this objective " to help immigrant women by removing the barriers to retraining " were not able to be met, mainly due to deeply entrenched systemic barriers in both the provincial and federal training and income support system. It is difficult not to view these systemic barriers as containing elements of institutionalized racism and sexism, based on our finding in Phase I and the conclusions of Phase II.

Nowhere are these systemic barriers more clearly demonstrated than in the issue of income support. All the evidence based on the findings in Phase I and Phase II, indicate that one of the critical elements required to assist immigrant women was stable income support through approval of Section 26 of the U.I. Act. Such an arrangement would allow women to pursue full time training while maintaining Unemployment Insurance benefits. However, even when this arrangement was finally able to be made, it remained totally vulnerable to government policy changes. For example, the unforeseen development of the federal government's freeze on Section 26 authority negatively changed the nature of the Post-closure out-of-town pilot.

We were confident that because the project was supported by a combination of governmental departments including representatives on the Steering Committee that this obstacle would be overcome. The process of trying to negotiate " special consideration " of Section 26 approval for the women in the pilot involved a great deal of time consuming and (in our view) irrelevant work. The many attempts to procure intervention from various levels of the federal government was a waste of time and resources (financially and emotionally). Given this seeming absence of assistance that was key to the successful testing of our model, we felt at times that the project was less than worthwhile. It was a harsh realization that despite all the human resources at our disposal, we were still powerless to bring about conditions that were significantly different from those faced by the majority of displaced immigrant women.

Still, we knew that the conditions we were able to create given the good staff-to-student ratio, intensive counselling, MLEC support, etc. were an improvement over those faced by most. This led us to wonder about the fate of most unorganized workers who have no access to at least minimal resources?

This question concerning the typical conditions facing displaced immigrant women was answered in part by the out-of-town pilot. The success of the out-of-town model was in some ways almost entirely dependent on Section 26 approval, enabling them to be formed in a group that could then be provided with the limited resources available through the project. We were not able to establish this minimum pre-requisite for success due to CEIC's lack of cooperation. Once again, we came to feel that as a project team we had minimal control over what viable options existed for these women in terms of jobs or retraining. This did not result from our lack of planning or forethought. Indeed, we had exhaustively explored all possible avenues prior to the ESL program. In our discussions with C.E.C., the women, and labour, we were cognisant of the total lack of such opportunities for these particular women. The least we could do was to arrange for a full time ESL program for the out-of-town pilot.

While we were unable to negotiate Section 26 for the women in the out-of-town model, we were fortunate to be able to arrange for Section 26 approval for the women in the in-house program. This was achieved only through the cooperation of MLEC who allowed the project to have ten spaces from their direct private purchase agreement with Employment and Immigration Canada. Without permanent organizations like MLEC, workers and their communities will need to negotiate training on a case by case basis. Had we not had access to such an organization, other less satisfactory arrangements would have been possible, but the access for the women would be significantly decreased. Womens' involvement would have been totally dependant on their own personal/financial circumstances.

INCOME SUPPORT

The issue of income support supplement is **critical**. We believe, along with others who have direct involvement with immigrant women, that the initial major barrier which immigrant women face in accessing training is lack of financial resources. The women we have talked with from different closure situations uniformly expressed the scarcity of funds as a barrier to training. We had hoped to supplement U.I. for the women in the pilot, for the duration of their stay in the ESL program and then in a skills training program. We saw this as a basic need for the women primarily because U.I. benefits are based on earnings in the last twenty weeks worked, and that most of the women worked in job ghettos or lower

paying jobs. Consequently 60% of their last twenty weeks earnings would not be sufficient income support. We wanted to ensure that the women would not be forced to accept the first job offer available because of family commitments. We tried various routes to procure such monies including possibilities of bursaries, or a slush fund in ministries. We drew a blank. The women were forced to incur expenses making it harder for them to contemplate long term training.

CHILDCARE & TRANSPORTATION COSTS

The maximum allowable for childcare costs while attending a full time training course is approximately \$80.00 per week. There is also a transportation allowance available depending on how far you have to travel to the school. There is an inherent lack of affordable daycare. It is a recognized fact that more subsidized daycare centres are urgently needed. Immigrant women with children cannot sustain long term retraining without a childcare allowance that will reflect the cost of such care. For example, one woman in the pilot received U.I. benefits of \$63.00 per week, plus a childcare allowance of \$80.00 per week for a total amount of \$143.00 per week. Out of this income she was paying transportation costs of \$2.50 per day for five days (\$12.50) and a minimum of \$100.00 per week for childcare. She had applied for a daycare subsidy, but would be unable to get one for at least a year. Her total cost for childcare and transportation for a week was \$112.50, which left her \$30.50 per week to live on. In another case, two of the women were commuting from Mississauga and therefore had a double fare (Mississauga and Toronto transit) each way, which meant they spent approximately \$5.50 per day, resulting in transportation costs alone of about \$27.00 per week.

SEATS IN APPROPRIATE SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

If, for a moment, we assume that training is a critical aspect of Labour Adjustment, the option of training itself was largely inaccessible to the women. As we were exploring 'skills' training programs for women in the pilot in terms of: 1) eligibility criterion (i.e. status); 2) minimum qualification; and 3) location and length of program, we soon found that the women were going to face a real uphill task of accessing skills training programs regardless of whether these programs were offered by a community college or a community based organization. With the exception of four programs in the community college, all others required more than a grade 8 level school equivalency. The four programs were all in the areas of baking and health assistance and required fluency in English. The community based programs, even those designated for immigrant women, required grade 10 to 12 levels of English and Math. In addition, there were no seats for U.I. recipients. The two programs which were 'open' to this group had a year long waiting list.

We discovered that what are stated as minimum qualifications are not necessarily the case, in fact, most programs prefer women with higher qualifications to improve the 'programs' chance of success. (Government funding depends on demonstration of success). In February of 1991, some skills training programs available through the Boards of Education were putting prospective trainee's on waiting lists for courses starting in September 1991.

INCREASED DEMAND FOR TRAINING

The economic conditions that have prevailed since early 1990 have had a dramatic impact on the success of this pilot. The fact that there were more plant closures and personal bankruptcies in the early months of 1990 provide clear evidence of less permanent job opportunities. The number of unemployed workers in Toronto has been increasing monthly since mid-1990. With no jobs or even 'hopes' of jobs, displaced workers are desperate to upgrade their skills as a viable alternative to improve their employment opportunities. This has put an additional strain on an already critical shortage of available training seats. Most of the C.E.C. sponsored seats at the community colleges have extremely long waiting lists. In some cases there are one hundred and fifty applicants for ten seats in a community based training program. Our attempts to remove the stated barriers to retraining for immigrant women as outlined in the Introduction of this report (pages 1 & 2), were not totally achieved. We felt that had the economic conditions been better, we may have achieved better results. However, we also felt the worsening economy should have been responded to by programs, services, and training for displaced workers by all levels of government.

POST-CLOSURE MODEL

We feel this twenty week ESL Bridging Program is essential for all displaced workers. We have seen though that for 'basic level' learners twenty weeks is insufficient to acquire the language proficiency necessary to enter skills training courses. The women themselves have suggested that they minimally need one year of ESL before they begin skills training. It is important that workers begin this ESL training immediately so that they can get the relevant information about retraining needed to make their choices. This is especially important when women are basic level speakers and/or they have literacy needs.

This intensive program provided all of the necessary components to facilitate and assist immigrant women during 'adjustment'. It provided language training, with realistic retraining options explorations, within an environment that was supportive and that encouraged the women to pursue their learning and their goals.

In the Post-closure model, we felt that the following were key elements in making it a success:

- positive learning environment (democratic, learner-centred, group support)
- low instructor/learner ratio
- regular opportunities to provide feedback, evaluation and give input into the program
- relevant content (retraining, job search, the women's own experiences)
- integrated nature of the program which included individual counselling and, at the women's request, basic computer training
- flexibility regarding content (eg. to integrate immediate concerns etc.)
- demonstrated respect for the learners
- opportunities for female learners to take charge (eg. book)
- group learning
- sharing of information, retraining programs etc.

The women in the ESL bridging program significantly improved their English skills. With the extension of their ESL classes they are continuing to upgrade their English, and are currently working towards various skills training programs. At this time one woman has found a job, one woman is enrolled in a skills training program, and the other women are attempting to access community based skills training programs, or skills training through the Board of Education.

PRE-CLOSURE MODEL

Our experience in the Pre-closure model accentuated the importance of advance notice of closure. Time constraints became the major barrier to the implementation of various programs to assist these workers. Precious time was lost due to the change in sites from ABC Warehouse to Angel Incorporated. Our ability to set up an ESL bridging program became an impossibility. We however felt that the 'key' to effectively assisting workers in a Pre-closure situation meant setting up an adjustment committee, and subsequently training that committee to be able to participate in the adjustment process.

After the committee members at Angel Incorporated received training on the adjustment process they were able to better assist the workers affected by this partial closure. Through the Action Centre, committee members referred workers interested in either upgrading their literacy or language needs to the Boards of Education. Others, interested in specific retraining goals, were referred to their C.E.C. office, and in some cases workers are currently on waiting lists for skills

training programs. The committee were able to assist some workers in job placement. Classes were arranged for career counselling, and workers were encouraged to continue upgrading their skills to improve their employment opportunities. Two women were able to access an apprenticeship program at a community college, and another is on a waiting list for a community college course. Nine other workers have since written functional level tests to determine if they meet the eligibility requirements for specific college courses.

OUT-OF-TOWN MODEL

The inability to exercise any control over the region's economic situation and training climate limited our intervention in this model. We were also physically not there. We were aware of these constraints before we set out, but not the degree to which we were to later realize. Specifically, our inability to: 1) build a network; 2) be in constant everyday touch with the participants; 3) have any control over the course content and the teaching method; and 4) provide ongoing counselling as part of the bridging program, meant the stated objectives for this model were not met. However, since the freeze on Section 26 authority was lifted in December 1990 we currently have three women attending full time ESL classes. These classes will continue until June 1991. Because the women in this pilot are predominately older workers, we have since investigated along with their previous employer the possibility of these workers being eligible for P.O.W.A. (Program for Older Worker Adjustment).

SUMMARY

The findings in the Phase I Report have been reinforced in the three models studied by this pilot project. The existence of deeply entrenched, systemic barriers to successful adjustment meant that the ideal conditions hoped for by the project, were largely unrealizable. The fact that an ideal set of conditions could not be created even for a one time pilot project affecting no more than thirty women, is a bleak outcome indeed. Rigidly held perceptions concerning the training and employment possibilities for immigrant women shape the policies and procedures of bureaucracies like Canada Employment and Immigration, leaving little opportunity for immigrant women to pursue their interests and aspirations. Racism, sexism and ageism are the daily experience of displaced immigrant women. While we attempted to blunt the effects of this discrimination, beyond providing a supportive environment within the pilot there was little we were able to do.

Further, the worsening economy through the life of this project deepened structural and systemic barriers. The freezing of Section 26 Feepayer status due to

"heightened demand" is an example of the contradictions inherent within government programs. In short, an already poor training and adjustment system was eroded during a time when increased access and options was desperately needed.

While small modifications and improvements can be made, there is little hope for successful adjustment measures without radically rethinking the current federal and provincial training and employment strategies. A broad based employment strategy that places greatest emphasis on labour market equity, and which views training as a vehicle for broadly based skills (including social and political skills and awareness) cannot be replaced by short term measures and small reforms.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: SENG KEO

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Laos

LANGUAGES: Laotian, Chinese and Thai

AGE: 45

YEARS IN CANADA: 9

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Homemaker

Canada: General help and Sewing machine operator

EDUCATION: 6 years

FAMILY: 2 sons and husband

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: Costi, 3 months

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: English upgrading

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Basic

English Oral Competency Low intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILENAME: XUE HUA LIUCOUNTRY OF ORIGIN: ChinaLANGUAGES: ChineseAGE: 31YEARS IN CANADA: 3**WORK EXPERIENCE:****Country of Origin:** Bookkeeper**Canada:** Restaurant workerEDUCATION: 13 yearsFAMILY: 1 sons and husbandPREVIOUS ESL STUDY: in ChinaRETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Bookkeeping**LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT**English Literacy IntermediateEnglish Oral Competency Intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILENAME: XUE HUA LIUCOUNTRY OF ORIGIN: ChinaLANGUAGES: ChineseAGE: 31YEARS IN CANADA: 3**WORK EXPERIENCE:****Country of Origin:** Bookkeeper**Canada:** Restaurant workerEDUCATION: 13 yearsFAMILY: 1 sons and husbandPREVIOUS ESL STUDY: in ChinaRETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Bookkeeping**LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT**English Literacy IntermediateEnglish Oral Competency Intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILENAME: TO NHUCOUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Vietnam (Ho Chin Min City)LANGUAGES: Chinese, VietnameseAGE: 42YEARS IN CANADA: 8**WORK EXPERIENCE:**Country of Origin: helped in family businessCanada: Sewing machine operator and Bingo card inspectorEDUCATION: 10 yearsFAMILY: 2 sons and husbandPREVIOUS ESL STUDY: 1983, Costi night schoolRETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Office skills**LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT**English Literacy IntermediateEnglish Oral Competency Low Intermediate

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PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: ALICE

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Hong Kong

LANGUAGES: Chinese

AGE: 59

YEARS IN CANADA: 7

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Homemaker

Canada: Packer

EDUCATION: 9 years

FAMILY: husband (three adult children)

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: A little in Winnipeg

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: to improve English

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Basic

English Oral Competency Basic

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PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: YUAN

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: China

LANGUAGES: Chinese

AGE: 51

YEARS IN CANADA: 3

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Science Teacher

Canada: Electronic Assembler

EDUCATION: 14 years

FAMILY: 1 child in grade 10 and husband

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: very little, in Chinatown on Sundays

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Baking/Cooking

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Low intermediate

English Oral Competency Basic

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PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: CHUL WA

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Hong Kong

LANGUAGES: Chinese and dialects

AGE: 52

YEARS IN CANADA: 2

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Accountant (16 years)

Canada: Sewing machine operator and hospitality

EDUCATION: 14 years

FAMILY: lives with daughters family

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: night school in Mississauga

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Accounting

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Intermediate

English Oral Competency Low Intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: TRAN

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: Vietnam (Saigon)

LANGUAGES: Vietnamese, Chinese

AGE: 38

YEARS IN CANADA: 7

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Home worker, (Dress maker)

Canada: Condom Tester

EDUCATION: 8 years

FAMILY: Live with sister's family

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: 1985, Public School night classes for 6 months, 6-8 hours/week

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Computer, Office Skills

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Low Intermediate

English Oral Competency Low Intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILENAME: SAL-YINGCOUNTRY OF ORIGIN: England and ChinaLANGUAGES: ChineseAGE: 44YEARS IN CANADA: 17**WORK EXPERIENCE:****Country of Origin:** Sewing machine operator in England and China**Canada:** Sewing machine operator and restaurant worker**EDUCATION:** 9 years**FAMILY:** 3 daughters and husband**PREVIOUS ESL STUDY:** attending night school for ESL**RETRAINING INTEREST AREA:** to work in either school, hospital or mailroom**LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT****English Literacy** Intermediate**English Oral Competency** Intermediate

PARTICIPANT PROFILE

NAME: LIU

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: China

LANGUAGES: Chinese

AGE: 36

YEARS IN CANADA: 5

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Country of Origin: Daycare worker, 5 years and Adult Literacy China 2 years

Canada: Sewing machine operator, 1 year

EDUCATION: 12 years

FAMILY: Daughter and husband

PREVIOUS ESL STUDY: Brampton Day School - 6 months

RETRAINING INTEREST AREA: Daycare worker

LANGUAGE SKILLS ASSESSMENT

English Literacy Low Intermediate

English Oral Competency Low Intermediate

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APPENDIX B
TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT
E.S.L./SKILLS

PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **POSTAL CODE:** _____

PHONE NUMBER: () _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ **AGE:** _____

WHERE ARE YOU FROM: _____

WHEN DID YOU COME TO CANADA: _____

FIRST LANGUAGE: _____

SECOND LANGUAGE: _____

THIRD LANGUAGE: _____

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER (S.I.N.): _____

UNION/PLANT: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE: _____

MALE: _____ **FEMALE:** _____

LANGUAGE OF INTERVIEW: _____

EDUCATION

1 Where did you go to school?

2 a) How many years of education (schooling) do you have?

Total _____

b) If possible, how many:

Primary _____

Secondary _____

Post Secondary _____

c) What did you study (i.e. course, program, subjects)?

3 Have you studied English before? _____

Where: _____

When: _____

How long was the course: _____

**4. Did you take any other training course
(e.g. skill or trades training - full or part time)?**

5. Do you have any licenses or certificates?

WORK EXPERIENCE**6. In Canada:****Start with your job now:**

Where have you worked (name of co.)	Type of Work	How Long	Wage (Hourly)

Outside Canada:

Where have you worked (name of co.)	Type of Work	How Long	Wage (Hourly)

- 7. What else are you good at, or like to do?**
(examples: handy-work at home, repair work, crafts, community work, etc.)

JOB SEARCH

8. When are you being laid off?

9. Do you have any health problems that might affect you getting a job?

10. Are you collecting W.C.B., or Sick benefits, or a disability pension?

11. It's difficult for you to know what you are going to do next. You have worked here for many years - you might want to get another job or go back to school.

What are your plans or ideas now? You can change these later if you like.

12. What kind of job are you going to be looking for?

(If worker has job lined up, then ask:)

13. What job are you going to? What is the name of the company?
-

RE-TRAINING

14. Re-training is learning another skill so that workers can do another kind of work.

Are you interested in re-training? What kind?

15. If workers have been out of school for many years, sometimes they need to brush up on reading and writing.

Do you think that you need to improve your:

Reading _____

Writing _____

Math _____

16. Our Centre (MLEC) offers basic courses in computers and blueprint reading.

Are you interested in learning about:

Basic computers _____

Basic Blueprint reading _____

SKILLS PROGRAM INFORMATION

17. We hope to come back to give you information to help you plan when you lose your job. Our program gives information about many things. Please say yes or no if you think that these will help you:
1. **How and where to look for a job:** What jobs there are or are opening up; how to use Trade Directories (books that list company, address, product, number of employees) _____
 2. **Resumes:** like an application form, where you write about your work experience, many companies are asking for them today. _____
 3. **Re-training Information:** how to go to school to learn a new skill to get a different job and receive Unemployment Insurance at the same time. _____
 4. **Information about Job Interviews:** What questions employers will ask and how to answer them. _____
 5. **Information about Your Rights:** What questions employers can/cannot ask. _____
18. Are you interested in:
1. **Financial Planning** - how to invest your Severance Pay. _____
 2. **Pension Information**
 - C.P.P. - Canada Pension Plan
 - Company Pension Plan _____

19. Do you have anything else you need to know or want to ask me?

OTHER:

20. Any additional comments from interviewer:

READING COMPREHENSION AND WRITING EXERCISES.

- **Preface the Exercises with something like this:**

In order to plan the programme, we would like to ask you how much English you speak, understand and write.

We are going to ask you to read and write. Is that O.K. with you?

- **Refer to notes at front of assessment if you want more directions on this Exercise.**

YUNG YING'S STORY

My name is Yung Ying. I came from Hong Kong. I was a housewife in Hong Kong. In 1980, I came to Canada. I have seven children. My grandfather came to Canada when he was 15 years old. My daughter came in 1969.

My first job was as an Assembler/Packer. After 6 years the factory closed. I applied for Unemployment Insurance and I received benefits for one month. My friend told me about another job. I started to work at Canadian Coleman Ltd., in January 1988. I worked there for 18 months as an assembler and then that company closed too. Now I'm receiving Unemployment Insurance and I'm learning English at the Metro Labour Education Centre. I would like to find the same kind of job after the course finishes.

1. Where is Yung Ying from?

2. How many children does she have?

3. What does Yung Ying do? What job?

4. How many jobs has she had?

5. (If appropriate) Why is Yung Ying not working anymore?

NHO'S STORY

My name is Nho. I came from Vietnam in 1984. In my country I was a student. We went to Edmonton, Alberta. We stayed there only one month because that place had no factories, only restaurants or stores. So my family moved to Toronto. After that I started to look for work everyday. I had to work because my family is a big family.

My first job was at Digital Security Controls (DSC), an electronics company. I worked there for a long time, about two years. I was a stuffer. I also worked as an assembler at Neosid Canada for three months. Because my skin felt sensitive I quit the job and stayed home for about two months. The company sent me a separation slip, and I took it to apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits.

Now I am learning English at the Metro Labour Education Centre because I want to study more English or take other courses. After that I don't want to work in a factory again. I would like to work in a department store or with computers or in accounting.

1. Why did Nho leave Alberta?

2. Why did Nho have to work?

3. How many companies did Nho work for?

4. What work does Nho want to do after she finishes her English classes?

SUE'S STORY

I came to Canada in 1971.

I stayed at home the first three years to take care of my children. After my parents came, I started looking for a job. I got my first job in 1974. It was in a garment factory. We sewed night gowns. I worked there for three months. I left when I got approved by Canada Employment Centre to take a 6 month English course at George Brown College. After I finished the course, I found my second job at Family Fair, another garment factory. They made pants there. I worked on a single needle sewing machine. I set pockets, made loops. I worked there for six months. I left because I wanted a job with better working conditions.

In 1976, after I got my Canadian Citizenship, I applied for a job with Canada Post as a letter sorter. I got the job but I was put on the night shift. The work hours were terrible. After five months, I couldn't stand it anymore so I quit.

Since then, I have worked at six different garment factories. The last factory was Pegasus. I made collars and cuffs. The people were friendly, and the working conditions were a bit better than other places. I stayed there for six years until I got laid off in October 1989. I'm sick and tired of it.

over

1. Why did Sue stay at home when she first came to Canada?

2. How long did Sue study English at George Brown College?

3. Why did Sue quit her job at Canada Post?

4. Did Sue like her last job at Pegasus garment factory?

5. Does Sue plan to find another sewing job?

Please write about:

1. Your family

2. Your job here

20. Do you have anything else you need to know or want to ask me?

21. Other

LEVELS

	<u>Low Basic</u>	<u>Basic</u>	<u>Low Intermediate</u>	<u>Intermediate</u>	<u>Advanced</u>
Reading	—	—	—	—	—
Writing	—	—	—	—	—
Speaking	—	—	—	—	—
Listening	—	—	—	—	—
Pronunciation	—	—	—	—	—
Illiterate	<u> </u> (Cannot read and write in first language)				

APPENDIX C

E.S.L. CLASS

WEEK 6 - EVALUATION

1. What did you learn?

2. What did you like the best?

3. What didn't you like?

4. How did you feel?

5. Suggestion for our programme:

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APPENDIX D

Program Content - List of Topics

- My Story
- My Job
- My Expectations of Canada
- My Daily Routine
- Learning as a Child and Learning as an Adult
- My Family
- Resumes
- Covering Letters
- My Christmas Holiday
- When My First Child was Born
- Chinese New Year
- How I Feel About Our Program Being Extended

As well, the group wrote the following stories using the Language Experience Approach:

- Our Class
- No World War III - War has Begun
- Our Christmas Party
- A Winter Storm
- Seng Keo got a Job/Lin got a Training Course
- Nine Chrysanthemums
- We Would Like to Get Training
- Our Graduation

The length of the stories varied and one woman in particular wrote many more stories including:

- Looking at Canada
- Remembering a Demonstration
- What do You Like?
- How to Stop Wife Abuse (A Letter)
- My Education at High School
- Short Discussion of the Education System
- Canadian Women are Lucky
- My Feelings After I Read a Novel
- Home is What We Love the Best!
- Even We are not as Useful as Garbage?
- Funny Stories
- Oh, She was Waiting for Eight Years

