

# Getting Tough on Policy

## Investing in the Successful Reintegration of Aboriginal People Returning from Incarceration

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### Key Objectives

The objectives of this study were to provide a literature review and environmental scan of existing programs and support services available to Aboriginal people returning from incarceration in federal, provincial, and youth institutions. Phase I of the project was to identify programs and services, as well as gaps in services, to the target group. Phase II, to follow under a separate proposal, will include addressing program and service delivery gaps by promoting better co-ordination of existing initiatives and encouraging and developing new programs and services to fill the gaps found in Phase I.

### Activities towards Key Objectives

- mapping existing skills training initiatives within the Saskatchewan corrections system
- mapping groups, existing programs, and potential initiatives that may dovetail into skills training provision inside correction institutions
- mapping transitional programming back into community
- identifying potential industry groups and employers who have current and future labour needs, plus associate skill sets required
- identifying economic groups and employers who may be open to partnering on skills training and work placements
- identifying and recording best practices on skills training within the corrections system and transitional community based programs in Canada and Internationally
- generating recommendations on feasible skills training opportunities along with potential partners, processes, etc.

While the focus of the research was on education, training, and employment opportunities, it became obvious that success depended largely on stable shelter and the safety of those returning from incarceration. The current policies and mandates of organizations, institutions, and programs limit the capacity to address effectively the multiple needs and barriers faced by these individuals. This status quo style of program delivery is no longer acceptable. Best practices that demonstrate success in supporting and working with the Aboriginal target group should include partnerships that are creative and prepared to stretch beyond the limitations of what have become standard responses, such as “our policy states” or “our mandate is,” to complex and multiple issues.

**Community Partners:** Saskatchewan Economic Development Association / Urban Aboriginal Strategy

**Term of Project:** Summer 2007 – Spring 2008

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