



Toronto **Community**
Benefits Network

2020

CBA Framework Recommendations



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Overview: Career Track in Construction Research Project

The overall goal of the project is to achieve standardized and coordinated industry recognized systems for preparing, recruiting, tracking, and retaining individuals from local communities in jobs made possible by Community Benefits Agreements. The Career Track Project has been developed to support the implementation of Community Benefits Agreements not only in GTA, but across Ontario wherever building projects with community benefits agreements are being implemented.

Four years into the implementation of four signed Community Benefits Agreements in Toronto, the Career Track Project arose from the realization that hiring targets for construction trades from underrepresented groups were not being met. Project partners realized that provisions within the agreements, and the recruitment systems within the construction sector and the community needed to be working better together for:

- groups targeted for CBA hiring to be well prepared to meet the requirements of employers and labour unions
- employers with community benefits agreements to find these construction workers prepared with the skills they need, and
- work ready individuals to find sustained employment with contractors with community benefits agreements and be supported to finish their apprenticeships.

The models proposed for improvements through this project are:

- an apprenticeship readiness curriculum to prepare individuals to succeed in unionized construction trades

- a coordinated promotion and marketing plan of these workers to CBA employers and unions
- a CBA identifier system to track candidates from pre-apprenticeship programs throughout their journey from recruitment on to CBA Projects to completion of trades certification

To develop and better coordinate the models, the project conducted research on CBAs in other jurisdictions and consulted with local and regional stakeholders to identify best practices, challenges, willingness and buy-in, and recommendations for new approaches to achieve the project's goals:

A coordinated system in place that refers, tracks, monitors and supports the timely progress of individuals through pre-apprenticeship, into employment and through apprenticeships.

Recommendations for successful CBAs

Based on the research for the project on best practices in CBAs and the learnings from CBA implementation activities in Toronto, along with feedback from stakeholders, TCBN is proposing some recommendations to facilitate implementation of CBAs on future projects.

Recommendations for key CBA elements

1. The foundation for a successful Community Benefits Agreement must be built into the Union Collective Agreements, Project Agreements, and Community Benefits Program Plans.

- Within the language of union collective agreements, include language (developed between employer and union) to allow unions to activate employment equity hiring provisions within the context of dispatch rules, to hire qualified candidates from target groups.

- Within the language of Project Agreements between the Client/Owner and General Contractor embed
 - Community benefits commitments for the General Contractor and sub-contractors including hiring goals (e.g., targets, demographics, geographical boundaries, etc.) with consideration to changing construction schedules and timelines for apprenticeships, employment and social procurement.

 - Language related to the accountability of labour and the supply chain (e.g., sub-contractors, unions, Intermediary etc.). Include language in case of default or conflict as well as remediation process and timelines.

- Language of the CBA and all documents pertaining to the CBA should include and specify the groups targeted for hiring and be signed by all CBA stakeholders.

- Target groups identified for community benefits should be based on the communities and geographic areas where CBAs are being implemented (e.g., Indigenous persons, traditional equity-seeking groups – women, black communities, persons of colour, immigrants, persons most distant from the labour market, veterans, etc.)

2. Owner/Clients, Contractors, Sub-contractors and Construction Unions and Community Intermediaries need to be signatories on the CBA and CBA Program Plans.

3. A Community Benefits Working Group (CBWG) needs to be established early in the process to guide the planning and implementation of the CBA. Members would include leadership representatives from the Owner/Client, Contractor, Sub-contractors, and all unions involved, along with designated Community Intermediaries responsible for employment and procurement pathways, government departments and funders, as applicable.

- The membership of the CBWG will vary depending on the size and complexity of the project(s) and communities involved.
- Trade contractors can join the CBWG on a phased basis as they become involved in the project(s).
- Apprenticeship targets and SME contractors – CBAs should recognise the differences between larger contractors and smaller contractors and their ability to hire new apprentices. CBAs' apprenticeship hiring targets should be applied where productivity and finances of SMEs are not impacted. Financial supports for lost productivity from training apprentices could be provided through the project funder, where necessary.

4. The Community Benefits Working Group has the responsibility to design the Community Benefits Program - the agreed upon approach used

by partners to fully realize the community benefits specified in the Community Benefits Agreement.

The agreed upon approach is laid out, as relevant to the CBA. At minimum, a Community Benefits Program should include

- an Employment and Labour Market Plan (with targets and how to recruit apprentices, journeypersons, and administrative, professional, technical and other workers from historically disadvantaged communities and equity seeking groups, and other disadvantaged groups);
- a Communications Plan (how the Contractor will promote and communicate the CBA program with all stakeholders),
- a Social Procurement Plan (how the Contractor will purchase from local and diverse owned businesses and social enterprises) and,
- a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (how the parties will track the implementation and support the outcomes of the CBA.)

These plans describe how the responsibilities are carried out among the Industry and Community Stakeholders.

5. To facilitate implementation of the Community Benefits Agreement, the working group needs to select and support an agreed upon Intermediary that will implement the pathway to jobs and opportunities through agreed upon referral processes. The General Contractor should designate the Community Benefits Liaison Person/s to support the work of the designated Intermediary.

6. Clear pathways related to the hiring of Labour should be determined and defined within the Community Benefits Plan and stakeholders notified as early as possible:

- a. for service providers to prepare and refer job seekers
- b. for employers/unions to recruit members from target groups
- c. for members of target groups to access employment opportunities.

7. Wraparound support for new hires - Governments should allocate funding to employment services providers for wraparound supports to apprentices after they have been placed into an apprenticeship, based on the needs of individuals from targets groups (e.g., daycare, mental health supports, transportation allowance, etc.)

Recommendations for a Coordinated Marketing Plan of Qualified Candidates to CBA Employers/Unions (informed by the Community Benefits Plan and refined by Community Benefits Working Group)

1. Clear pathways to be pre-determined and defined as described above in the Community Benefits Plan and stakeholders notified as early as possible:

- a. for service providers to prepare and refer job seekers
- b. for employers/unions to recruit members of target groups
- c. for members of target groups to access employment opportunities

2. Community Intermediary, Contractor, Sub-contractors, and Construction Unions to collaborate to promote community benefits employment in construction trades to community service providers and community members through numerous channels, including various media and in-person activities.

3. Outreach, promotion and hiring strategies to be refined and customized to reach each target group.

The CBWG should provide detailed knowledge of jobs (inside or outside) being created, required skills, and supports needed to stakeholders before starting outreach to allow for precision and customization in matching jobs to qualified candidates.

4. Review good practices on outreach including: TCBNs Ready to Build, Community Host and Professional Development Sessions for Service Providers; L183/Scarborough Storefront collaboration, TCHC and Carpenters' Union, Carpenters Local 27 Open House for Service Providers and Guerilla Marketing in local communities; LiUNA 506's Labour Fest; George Brown College's Women in Trades Program; Women in Trades Forum, Labour Champions from several unions

5. A centralized process – web-based - for each community with CBA Projects to promote the current and projected jobs and contract opportunities available through Community Benefits Agreements, with links to listings of all projects with CBAs across Ontario. This system should be

designed to provide portals containing information relevant to different stakeholders, for example

- a. A ready to recruit/hire portal where eligible candidates can be listed and from where employers and unions can recruit.
- b. Upcoming recruitment opportunities from contractors or unions
- c. Listings and links to contractors, subcontractors and unions that are hiring
- d. The business case for hiring diverse workers/cost benefit analysis
- e. Opportunities to build/showcase best practices in welcoming diversity
- f. Sources of financial support for contractors and apprentices.

The portal will not replace personal relationships built with community providers who know the capabilities, roles, type of jobs. It will be a complementary resource and help candidates, who do not have the existing social networks to access jobs by becoming visible to the sector

Recommendations for Community Benefits Identifier System to Track and Monitor Progress of hires

1. Establish monitoring and tracking plan and system, with input points from all stakeholders, including the community intermediary organization, referral partner, employment services and/ or pre-apprenticeship training delivery provider, unions, general contractor, trade contractors and client/owner.
2. Address costs and funding for tracking and reporting on CBA goals.

3. The evaluation plan should address measurement of all Signatories' progress in implementing the Community Benefits program and achieving hiring targets.
4. The evaluation plan should also track and monitor the socio-economic impact of the CBA on individuals hired onto the project for construction trades, from intake to apprenticeship certification (such as sustained employment, progression in apprenticeship, better income, reduction in dependence on State support, greater personal and/or family financial stability).
5. Disaggregated demographic data should be collected on individuals hired, based on target groups identified for the CBA project. This data will allow for tracking and aggregate reporting of numbers of each target group hired for the project.
6. Communicate early to all stakeholders including future hires, the policy rationale for tracking and collection of disaggregated demographic data.
7. Contact information of those tracked should be filtered to appropriate community intermediaries to enable follow up and supports as needed, based on a framework of privacy and confidentiality, with appropriate data-sharing protocols established.
8. Identify responsibilities - who will host a tracking system; who will own data; and who will be responsible for final reporting on meeting hiring targets.

Community Benefits without CBAs

Community benefits clauses have been integrated into contracts in various ways in projects without a formal CBA. The recommendations above can be a guide for stakeholders implementing projects that do not have a formal CBA but wish to implement community benefit elements, including projects in smaller jurisdictions who do not have the same complexity as Toronto.