



Photo: CP Picture Archive (Fred Chartrand)

The Future of Public Sector Labour Relations

A defining characteristic of the last decade of the 20th century has been a rocky relationship between Canada's public service workers and their government employers. How this relationship has played out in different jurisdictions under different political regimes is the subject of a set of detailed case studies reported in *Public Service Labour Relations in an Era of Restraint and Restructuring*.

This report will be published by the Canadian Policy Research Networks and Oxford University Press in the summer of the year 2000.

Edited by Carleton University professor Gene Swimmer, the book focuses on labour relations during the 1990s in the federal govern-

ment and five provincial governments - Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia.

Governments differed with respect to the routes they took to reduce expenditures. While all made use of wage concessions and employment cuts to achieve cost reductions, political ideology influenced how these tools were applied. In the process, some chose to respect the collective bargaining rights of their employees. Others did not.

According to Swimmer, parties on the right of the political spectrum were much harder on their employees than parties on the left. For example, the NDP in several provinces and the PQ in Quebec relied on the collective bargaining

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process, whereas three of five Conservative governments took a "hard" approach by applying high or medium-to-high employment and salary reductions. Liberal governments staked out a middle ground.

"Never have so many governments been so harsh in doing away with the collective bargaining process," says Swimmer. "This could not have happened 20 years ago without the government having to face much bigger political ramifications. The political cost associated with interfering in the bargaining process fell dramatically in the last decade."

Interestingly, governments that respected their employees' collective bargaining rights were just as effective in achieving their fiscal goals as were those who removed them. In

fact, by 1997, a majority of governments had balanced budgets - regardless of their labour relations strategy. (Two of the three jurisdictions that could not balance their budgets were represented by governments that used legislation, and a medium-to-hard approach to employment and, or, wage cuts.)

So what are the implications for future public sector labour relations?

Other researchers have advanced two competing scenarios. One views the extensive use of legislation in the 1990s as marking the end of over 30 years of free public sector collective bargaining. The other views the 1990s as an anomaly, resulting from unusual fiscal pressures.

Swimmer adds a third scenario, one that emphasizes the role of choice in how goals like cost reduction and restructuring are achieved. This study shows that respect for fundamental collective bargaining principles is no less compatible with cost containment goals than are strategies that violate these principles.

And, in the end, by preserving employee rights and the quality of work life, it is likely that the former will also result in increased employee morale and productivity.

The public service is heading into an era of renewal. The choices that government employers - and their employees' unions - make regarding labour relations and collective bargaining most certainly will shape the future of public administration.



CPRN's **Best Policy Mix for Children** blueprint received considerable media coverage in the Fall. **Jane Jenson**, Director of the Family Network, was featured in a Winnipeg talk show, the **CBC's Radio Noon** program from Montreal, **CPAC's** Speech from the Throne coverage, and on **Radio Canada - Saskatchewan**. She also did a Commentary for **CBC Radio** on a Children's Agenda. It ran on local morning shows all across the country.

Gender and Self-employment's Karen Hughes generated dozens of newspaper and radio headlines

across the country through **Canadian Press** and **Broadcast News**. She was also interviewed on **CBC Radio Calgary's Business Report**, on the Ontario CBC Radio program "**Ontario Today**," and for the **Home Business Report** from Victoria, British Columbia.

Judith Maxwell was featured in a **CBC National Television News** report following the Speech from the Throne. She developed her opinion on taxes and social re-investment in an interview at the Ottawa station **CJPH**, with Don Newman on his CBC television

program "**Politics**," and with Mark Kelly on the CBC program "**Today**."

A commentary on child care, co-authored by **Judith Maxwell** and **Jane Jenson**, appeared in **The Globe and Mail** in September.

Graham Lowe, Director of the Work Network, appeared in an eight-part series, entitled "**Business in the New Millenium**," aired on the new **Canadian Learning Channel**. He was also featured on an **Alberta CBC Television News** item on work stress.



Closing the Loop

In October, practitioners, clinicians, policymakers and health services experts gathered in Toronto for the 3rd International Conference on the Scientific Basis of Health Services. They grappled with the question: What evidence is appropriate to incorporate into the organization, management and practice of health care?

Judith Maxwell led the session on *Evidence and the Social Policy Debate*. "Our purpose is to present the perspective of the researcher and the user on social policy research focussed on health," she explained as she introduced a case study of CPRN's current project entitled **Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy**.

Linking back to the previous session of the conference, she pointed out that CPRN has adopted the model described by Michael Huberman as follows: "Interpersonal links, spread through the life of a given study, are the key to research use. . . We are no longer in a conventional research-to-practice paradigm, but in more of a conversation among professionals bringing different expertise to bear on the same topic."

What follows are highlights from presentations made by Alan

Nymark, then Associate Deputy Minister of Health Canada, which has partnered with CPRN and others on the project, Judith



Alan Nymark

Maxwell, President of CPRN, and Sholom Glouberman, Director of CPRN's Health Network and of the project.

Alan Nymark: In the last budget, the federal government made a \$900 million investment into the research and information areas of the health sector. Evidence must be provided to show how to reform the system to better deliver services when people need them.

There are five ingredients involved in connecting evidence to decision making. First is the need for an external and policy-relevant research capacity. Second,

governments need to generate their own research, and to receive, process and disseminate research to the public. Third is



Sholom Glouberman

greater integration across organizational structures, between external and internal capacities, and across disciplines.

Balancing short-term policy requirements along with long-term promises of research is the fourth requirement. And, lastly, is the need to develop the information systems and technology (data and standards) to connect these building blocks so that information flows easily, readily, and understandably among them.

CPRN understands the nature of the policy and decision-making process, and what evidence means to those in government. That is

why Health Canada has engaged with them in the **Towards a New Perspective on Health Policy** project.

Judith Maxwell: In the period 1995-98, we contracted with 29 academics based in 16 universities, and with 30 independent consultants, so we really are networked. Research is done primarily outside our walls; we coordinate the synthesis, lead the policy analysis, and generate ideas. All CPRN projects are funded by a mix of partners, but we take responsibility for the output.



Judith Maxwell

"We created a kind of neutral space where people with very different perspectives could come together for a day to be involved in that creative process of debating ideas and, sometimes, generating conflict. That's how learning results."

When we began, we had no idea of the power of "shared learning," but we learned through the way the research unfolded. Having the

users, federal and provincial government policy advisers, social advocates (health advocates in the case of the Health Network), providers, and front-line workers around a table talking about early research results created an incredible ability to interpret and synthesize. This wouldn't have been possible if we researchers had functioned independently.

We created a kind of neutral space, where people with very different perspectives on the issue could come together for a day to be involved in that creative process of debating ideas and, sometimes, generating conflict. That's how learning results.

Sholom Glouberman: While there is a lot of information coming in, there is a log-jam in developing health policy at the population level. This project is designed to break the log-jam by finding the coherence in the blur of data and perspectives on that data.

The research design focuses on:

- a) how policy has evolved in Ottawa and several provinces since medicare was introduced in the 1960s;
- b) how our understanding of the concept of health has changed;

- c) how the indicators of lifestyle and health have changed over the 25 years since the Lalonde report was published in 1974; and
- d) what the new empirical research on inequalities in health is beginning to show.

From this wealth of data we have established a hypothesis, which is being clarified and developed as we talk to more people and learn more from the evidence. The next big hurdle will be to look at short-, medium- and long-term policy directions.

We also organize and facilitate shared learning from the results, and we broker the results into the policy context because we're connected to policy advisers. We retain a long-term perspective, while recognizing short-term policy needs.

Speaking to Alan Nymark's five ingredients, CPRN is providing external research capacity, it is integrating the thinking of the four main building blocks of health policy - public health, health promotion, inequalities in health, and health care, and it is "closing the loop" between research evidence and policy requirements.



Tracking the Voluntary Sector

At a time when public confidence in the legitimacy of institutions such as government is at an all-time low, everyone is open to scrutiny - including the voluntary sector.

A linchpin of civil society, Canada's 78,000 voluntary organizations find themselves operating in a brand new era. As demand for their services is increasing, so is the need to prove that they actually deliver them efficiently.

"Much of the funding that goes to the voluntary sector goes on trust - through donations or from government contracts," says Judith Maxwell. "Voluntary organizations are very good at showing what they plan to do with the money. They are not so skilled at showing what was actually done with it."

Judith Maxwell "unpacked" the concept of accountability for the third sector in a presentation to the third Canadian Leaders' Forum organized by the Public Policy Forum last summer to examine key issues raised by the relationship between the voluntary and business sectors. She described how CPRN helped Family Service Canada expand its process to measure the results, or "outcomes," of its work. (See Boxes 1 and 2.)

This process is not prohibitively expensive. In fact, Judith Maxwell maintains that funders should foot the bill because "with only an

extra, small amount of money, they can keep track of how well a job is being done. Government needs that information," she adds. "The voluntary sector needs that information. In fact, everyone needs it."

As with any tool, however, this one has its limitations. While "outcomes measurement" can tell an organization what is happening, it cannot explain why things improved - or worsened. Also, many services, such as those deliv-

ering early childhood interventions, involve long lead times and results can take years to surface.

Judith Maxwell hopes that organizations now embarked on measuring outcomes will share what they have learned with those just beginning to think about it.

"After all," she says, "the voluntary sector continues to have a high level of legitimacy with the public. It must be sure to hang on to that."

BOX 1 Not a simple process, accountability comprises such components as:

Transparency ("This is who we are, what we do, and how we spend our money.");

Performance measurement ("This is what we've accomplished, how we did it, and what it cost.");

Outcomes measurement ("This is how our work made a difference.");

Evaluation ("This is what you got for your money.").

BOX 2 Outcomes measurement: a management tool that can be used to show service providers and financial backers precisely what their money is buying:

Who is accessing the services (a demographic profile);

What their problems are (self-reported);

What personal resources are available to help (family, friends, etc.);

What impact the services had (were the problems addressed?);

What are the implications for service planning?



The Next Generation Moves Forward

Increasingly, Canadians want to have a voice on public policy issues that matter to them and that have an impact on their lives - a sentiment that is shared by governments. They, too, are interested in working more effectively with citizens.

Eighteen federal government departments and agencies are participating with CPRN in Phase

One of **The Next Generation Public Dialogue** project. This includes writing a generic public dialogue manual for a pilot series, and a development plan for an Internet version.

The project is a way of putting into broader practice what CPRN learned through its public dialogue work and **The Society We Want**. It is a concrete recognition

of the fact that getting citizen input informs overall policy work in a particularly unique and valuable way.

"In the manual, we are taking **The Society We Want** learnings and turning them into a tool that can be used by government departments in their work," says

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Suzanne Peters Award for Citizen Engagement

Recognizing that an enriched relationship between gov-

ernment and citizens could foster a mutual learning process and lead to better decision making, the federal Policy Research Secretariat has created the *Suzanne Peters Citizen Engagement Award*.

One of seven new "Canadian Policy Research Awards" created by the Secretariat, the award is not only named after Suzanne Peters, but she is its first recipient.

Suzanne Peters, who died earlier this year of ovarian cancer, trusted the voice of citizens. A strong personality, with a vibrant zest for life, she worked tirelessly to promote scholarly research in which citizens could become actively engaged, and that could contribute to making a difference in their lives.

Her 1995 study, *Exploring Canadian Values*, and an ongoing, national

public dialogue project called **The Society We Want** are part of the rich contribution she made to the process of citizen engagement. For the last five years of her life, Suzanne was the founding Director of the Family Network of the Canadian Policy Research Networks.

"Suzanne's commitment and enthusiasm were infectious," says Laura Chapman, Executive Director of the Policy Research Secretariat. "Her example convinced us of the importance and the value of a more inclusive approach to defining public policy issues. She has certainly influenced how we approach our work at the Policy Research Secretariat."

Those eligible to apply for the award in future years include individuals and groups in the public, private, voluntary, academic, not-for-profit, and non-governmental sectors. Criteria include:

- understanding of citizen engagement principles and practices; or
- Creating opportunities for Canadians: to identify, deliberate and reflect on important issues; to work collectively to find common ground; and to communicate their views and values to decision makers; or
- Championing citizen engagement as an important part of the policy development process.

By creating this award in her memory, the Policy Research Secretariat is ensuring that the legacy of Suzanne Peters will survive through a celebration of those who help to give citizens a greater voice in shaping public policy.

More information about the Canadian Policy Research Awards is available on the Policy Research Web Site (<http://policyresearch.gc.ca>).

- Contributing to the overall awareness, knowledge and



Everybody Has to Help Put the Right Tools in Families' Hands

Mapping a societal strategy to support young children and their parents was a primary focus of the Canadian Policy Research Networks' project, *What Is the Best Policy Mix for Canada's Children?* In the *REFLEXION* entitled *A Policy Blueprint for Canada's Children*, the complex challenge of building a societal strategy is distilled into a diagrammatic format. This diagram, mapping the feedback loop that can contribute to improved child outcomes, has several distinct parts to it. These components must be "mixed together" to form the complete package that will lead to better outcomes for Canada's children.

A societal strategy will require the sustained commitment of stakeholders across Canada, ranging from parents and employers to communities and governments. Each must actively foster the three "enabling conditions" that, together, lead to good child outcomes; adequate income, effective parenting, and supportive community environments.

Policy instruments must be combined and coordinated across the

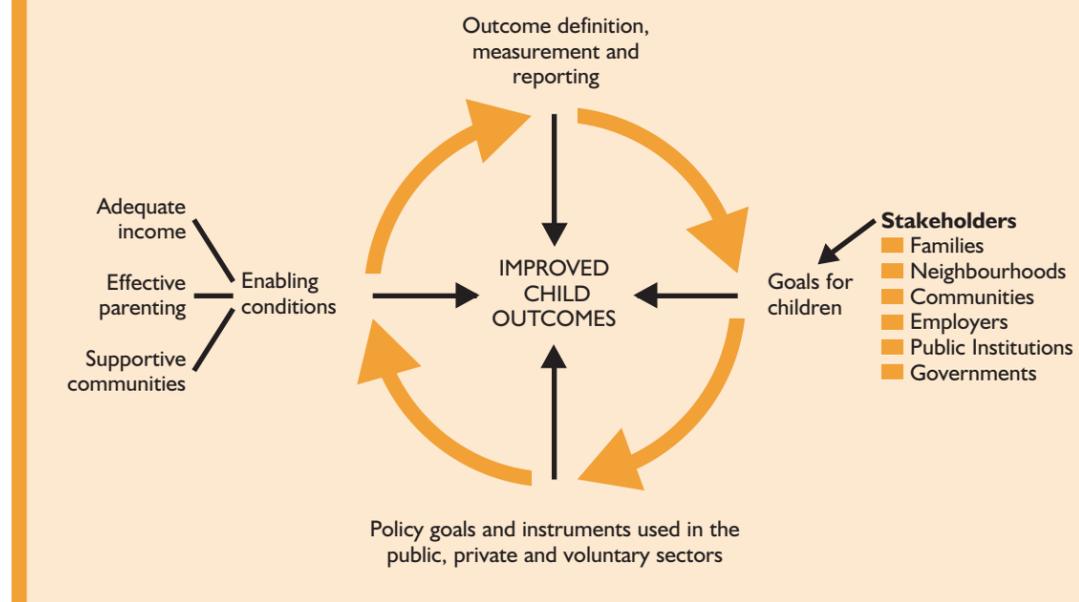
public, private and voluntary sectors to achieve policy goals that lead to improved child outcomes.

And how will we know whether children's life chances are improving? In the end, any intervention, by governments or others, has to

the family together with support for the family so we can do our best for Canada's children.

"A step in any direction will succeed only if it is taken in conjunction with others," says Jane Jenson, Director of the

Components of a Societal Strategy for Children



be judged on the difference it will make to children. Outcomes must be regularly measured and analyzed in order for policies to be adjusted. In this way, the learning process will continue, ensuring that child outcomes keep improving.

Everybody's participation is essential. Building a societal strategy requires joint action by a variety of persons and institutions *outside*

Family Network and co-author of the *REFLEXION* with Sharon Stroick.

Readings: *A Policy Blueprint for Canada's Children*, by Jane Jenson and Sharon M. Stroick. *REFLEXION* Number 3, October 1999.

For further information, contact: Sharon Stroick, sstroick@cprn.org



Surviving, Definitely Not Thriving

Self-employment, explains Karen Hughes, is the dream many Canadians would love to pursue. Women, in particular, are attracted to the flexibility and freedom self-employment provides.

Attempting to balance work and family demands, many women are turning to self-employment, concludes Hughes in *Gender and Self-employment in Canada: Assessing Trends and Policy Implications*, the report she authored for the Canadian Policy Research Networks.

So we should not be surprised to learn that a record number of women are working for themselves. The number of self-employed Canadian women nearly tripled in the last two decades, while men's numbers have not quite doubled. By 1997, one in six Canadians was self-employed - for a total of 2.5 million, of whom 870,000 are women. But are they living the "Canadian dream?"

The picture, states Hughes, "is not uniformly rosy." The University of Alberta social scientist breaks new ground in her study by examining several elements of that picture and revealing significant differences among various groups of self-employed women. One group (approximately 25 percent of self-employed women) is doing quite well in income terms. They have moved into new occupations and industries and their income is on par with that of women in paid employment. But the other

75 percent are struggling to get by on low incomes, clustered in traditional "pink collar" areas of sales and service.

Hughes further focuses the picture by splitting self-employment into two categories - employers and "own-account" workers who labour alone, often at home, and usually provide contract service. The disparity between these two groups is large with employers perched at the top of the pay scale and own-account workers at the bottom. Finally, nearly half of own-account women work part-time, often due to work and family issues. "This

finer gradation of the overall picture reveals significant polarization within female self-employment," says Hughes.

The study, which draws on evidence from Statistics Canada's *Labour Force Survey* and the *Survey of Consumer Finances*, details the fact that an increasing number of women are finding themselves in the lowest paying corners of self-employment. In 1997, three-quarters of self-employed women were own-account workers. Further, 45.7 percent of those own-account self-employed women worked part-time. In 1995, over

What Self-employed Women Are Saying about Their Incomes.

"Better income? Absolutely not because I'm making a lot less money now than I was."

Former government employee, now working full-time and employing others in her gift shop

"Level of personal income? I am very dissatisfied. For my education and so many years and money I spent on education, and the time I spent here, the amount I invested, I am very dissatisfied. Telling the truth, from month to month, I don't know if I will have the business."

Professional consultant working alone in a downtown office

"It takes money to make money so if a business makes income and you put it back in the business I don't see that as a loss, I see that as growth."

Mother working part-time from home in holistic health business

"If you're a single person, solely dependent on income from self-employment, I wouldn't advise (self-employment) unless you've got backup."

Registered nurse working full-time in her own health practice

55.7 percent of own-account workers made less than \$20,000 (compared to 31.4 percent of employers), and 8.6 percent of employers made over \$80,000 (compared to just 2.2 percent of own-account workers).

This reporting - in detail - of the trends in gender and self-employment is what makes the study significant, explains Graham Lowe, Director of the Work Network. "Examining self-employment through the lens of gender reveals that many new forms of employment relations have different impacts for men and women," he explains.

Lowe points to equity issues. As women shift to self-employment, they find themselves placed outside of pay and employment equity initiatives. Because equity policies do not apply to the self-employed, equity gains are being effectively rolled back for this group. "It's important to have flexibility in the labour market but those choices should not come with economic penalties and many women are penalized for choosing their own paths," Lowe states.

Both Hughes and Lowe agree - if current trends continue, the implications of polarization will become painfully evident as some self-employed workers thrive while

another, much larger group will find themselves facing difficulties.



Photo: CP Picture Archive

"More and more Canadians will be on their own when it comes to pensions, benefits, training, skill developments and assembling all the tools they need to do their work," explains Lowe. "This means that self-employed women, particularly those who are own-account workers, will

have difficulty accessing resources they need to survive, let alone thrive, in the new economy."

This presents a public policy challenge. "If we want flexibility and choice in our workplace," states Lowe, "we need government policies that can enable people to do much better as self-employed workers." Governments tend to present self-employment as entrepreneurship. "It's clearly not that," he continues. "It's many people heading out on their own to gain independence and flexibility, especially around work and family issues. Would there be as many self-employed, if government and workplace policies were more supportive to work and family? If policies changed to accommodate these needs, this could change one of the key drivers in the trend toward self-employment."

On the other hand, Lowe acknowledges the importance of flexibility in the labour market. This

What Self-employed Women Are Saying about the Possibility of Retirement.

"Saving for retirement? What retirement?"

Freelance editorial writer, working part-time from home

"In business, you're constantly making an investment. At the end of the day, I'm sure I've got the equity and all that, but saving for retirement to me is not tangible. It's intangible."

Employer in computer consulting firm

"Ability to save for retirement? I don't think I can. I'm just dreading it. I'm 42 now. I spent to open the business, I spent my RRSP money because I could not get any loans from the bank."

Professional consultant, working alone in a downtown office

"I'm not saving for retirement because I'm not going to retire. And I haven't had the money to save for retirement. I'm just, I'm just getting by at this point."

Employer in a manufacturing business with 15 staff

presents a different set of challenges to governments. By facilitating inexpensive, high-quality training for the self-employed, for example, the government could better the future of the self-employed worker. Local communities, for example, could help self-employed workers with children by facilitating community-based, not-for-profit daycare, Lowe explains.

With its detailed examination of one of the major changes in Canada's world of work - the rise in self-employment - *Gender and Self-employment in Canada* is one more piece in the picture that the Work Network is developing in its **Changing Employment Relationships** project.

Readings: *Gender and Self-employment in Canada: Assessing Trends and Policy Implications*, by Karen D. Hughes. CPRN Study No. W|04. Changing Employments Relationship Series. 1999.

What Self-employed Women Are Saying about Job Satisfaction.

"For me, it's never having to work for anyone else. That's something I never want to do again."

Employer in her own human resources firm

"I don't think financially you could term us a great success, but (there's) the satisfaction I get from getting up in the morning and coming to work. I'm doing what I love to do."

Owner of retail store and bookkeeping business, working alone

"When I worked for somebody else, they didn't understand. 'It's Christmas time, we need you to work, we don't care if you want to be with your family. Tough. You either work or you find another job.' I haven't reached the financial achievement yet where I have what I want and need, but I do have time with my family, and to me, that has value."

Mother working part-time from home in holistic health care business

"I'm still finding it hard to keep the evenings and weekends to my family, but I'm working on it."

Mother of young children, working at home as a graphic designer

Karen Hughes collected these quotations from in-depth interviews she conducted with self-employed women working in Edmonton, Alberta. This research is supported by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada grant.

CHANGING EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS



CER Update

The Changing Employment Relationships (CER) Advisory Committee met September 20, 1999. The revised discussion paper, "Re-Thinking Employment Relationships," is now available (see the publications section).

The project team, managed by Katie Davidman, is working towards the following milestones:

Winter 2000	National survey of 2,500 Canadian workers.
Winter 2000	Eight focus groups in major Canadian city centres to help interpret survey results.
Spring 2000	Roundtable to solicit input from the Advisory Committee and broader project stakeholders on the implications of the findings for workers, employers, and public policy. To be co-sponsored by the Institute for Work Health, Toronto.
Summer 2000	A report synthesizing the findings of the survey, focus groups and roundtable input, outlining implications for workers, employers, and public policy.
Summer 2000	A brief <i>Research Highlights</i> report, which will facilitate communications and dissemination of results through the media, Internet, and CPRN networks.



Self-employment Snapshots

Self-employed Show Wider Earnings Gap

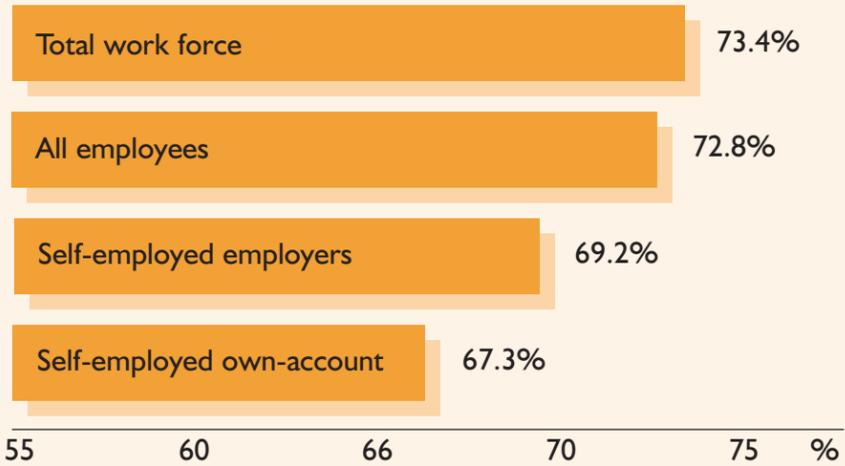
While these patterns suggest that certain avenues of self-employment - namely, employer status - may enhance earning potential, it is also evident that self-employment does little to reduce gender-based earning disparities, even among employers. Comparing women and men who worked full-time, full-year, we can see that while the earnings gap for paid employees was 72.8 percent in 1996, it was greater within both types of self-employment.

While earnings trends suggest the possibility of above average earnings in some types of self-employment - this is only the case for *employers*, and even here this does not include female employers who earned 98.1 percent of their female peers' earnings in paid employment.

Sponsor Corner

Syncrude Canada operates the largest oil sands crude production facility in the world and is the largest, single source of crude oil in Canada. The company is participating in the **Changing Employment Relationships** project. Syncrude has an interest in creating a more diverse workforce, and in developing better techniques to encourage workers to contribute to the maximum of their ability.

Women's Earnings as a Percentage of Men's (full-time, full-year)



Source: Based on Survey of Consumer Finances, adapted from Hughes, 1999, *Gender and Self-employment in Canada*, Table 5.

Self-employed Earnings

Men



Women



Source: Based on Survey of Consumer Finances, adapted from Hughes, 1999, *Gender and Self-employment in Canada*, Table 5.



Engaging Citizens Online

The pace and sheer volume of change are sweeping the public sector. Arthur Kroeger, Chair of the Roundtable on New Models for Online Engagement, underlined this point to the 27 people

and policy officials, communications, consultations and program officials) gathered to discuss a common framework for using the Internet as a two-way communication tool with citizens. They also

government mechanisms needed to facilitate a larger participation of citizens through online technology.

Elisabeth Richard, Director of Corporate and Public Affairs for CPRN and the author of the background paper for the roundtable, says the discussion was very revealing of the new roles public servants face.

"It showed that correspondence officers face policy development issues, that policy officials face marketing issues, and that communications officers wonder whether online communications create conflicts with the parliamentary process," she said.

"In addition," she added, "representatives of the IT community wonder about supporting community building and outreach, and information management officials



David Myer, Director General of Procurement Services, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Arthur Kroeger, Chair of the Board of CPRN, and Elisabeth Richard, Director of CPRN's Corporate and Public Affairs.

attending the October roundtable sponsored by Public Works and Government Services and CPRN.

"I've seen more change in the past seven years than in the previous 34 when I was a public servant," he said.

Technological change presents representative democracy with important new challenges. The public - through the Internet - has a unique means to be heard; a new channel to influence decision making.

Participants (representing line departments and central agencies, information management and information technology (IM/IT)

examined its implications for government departments and officials, and worked to identify the



Lyn Elliot Sherwood, Director General, Canadian Heritage Information Network, Canadian Heritage, and Ian Sinclair, Director, Information Policy, Treasury Board Secretariat.

ask how to connect correspondence from citizens to the policy development process."

Questions about relationships with elected officials surfaced in many aspects of the discussion. Issues included concerns about subverting the parliamentary process with Internet consultations; potentially empowering front-line officers to "spare the minister"; MPs describing themselves as front-line information officers and wanting to know how to use the information infrastructure.

Lastly, they wondered about how to keep elected representatives and/or government departments

involved in the responses and concerns received through the Canada Site and the Prime Minister's mail.

However divergent their views and experience, participants acknowledged that a steep learning curve lies ahead - even for seasoned practitioners. Direction and support are needed to continue the work of the roundtable. This work involves defining the new framework, sharing experiences, and redefining affected functions.

"Online public opinion research, its use and management, is one example of a vehicle that will require study over the coming months," said David Myer, representing Public Works and

Government Services Deputy Minister Ran Quail.

"From the perspective of Public Works and Government Services, it's also important to consider developing a global Internet gateway for consultation and the public's general comments."

Everyone agreed that there is an urgent need to develop new tools.

Readings: "Tools of Governance," in *Digital Democracy: Discourse and Decision-making in the Information Age*, Barry N. Hague and Brian D. Loader, Editors, Routledge, 1998.

OFFICE NEWS

A new computer network is being built for CPRN from the ground up. New system software and network servers are being bought, and secure, fireproof systems capable of providing good, solid back-up are being installed.

This mammoth project is being coordinated by **Joe Peters**, Manager of Infrastructure Services, with **Paul MacNeil**, Systems Administrator, and **Kevin Timms**, Database Administrator.

"The bottom line is that we are building a new network that will allow people to tie in from across the country," says Peters.

PEOPLE

Caroline Beauvais joined CPRN in September as research assistant to the Family Network Director, Jane Jenson. With a B.A. in Political Science from the Université de Montréal, she is currently finishing a post-graduate program at the same university. The main focus of her studies has been social policy in Western nations in support of the unemployed.

In September, the Health Network welcomed **Philip Groff** to the team as researcher. Currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto in human neuropsychology, Philip has extensive experience with statistical procedures and research methods, and has taught courses on both at the graduate and undergraduate levels.

The move from Ottawa to Toronto is now completed for **Sharon Stroick**, Family Network Manager.

In October, **Sandra Zagon** joined CPRN as senior researcher, **Quality of Life** project. Sandra has a B.A. in French and Russian and a master's degree of Education-Educational Psychology from the University of Ottawa. She has considerable experience in project management and consultation.

Rhonda Ferderber, manager of **The Society We Want** project has gone back to Health Canada where she is now Director Special Projects, Health Policy. She will be managing the reproductive and genetic technologies file.

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Rhonda Ferderber, co-director with Peter Middleton of The Next Generation Public Dialogue project.

“We will lay out in the manual what's involved in undertaking a good public dialogue on a specific issue through an A-Z application of a protocol. It will include an overview of what citizen engagement and public dialogue are. It will detail how to develop the public dialogue materials, describe how to conduct the dialogue process, how to capture participant input, analyse it and, finally, ensure feedback to participants.”

And it will be versatile. Recognizing the wide diversity of issues requiring public dialogue, the manual is being written in a generic way, capable of being adapted to suit the issue and department using it. It will allow them to get what Ferderber calls “a creative synthesis of views.”

But how would it play out when used by government departments? Ferderber says answering that question is why “we have also developed, with a number of departments, a series of issue-specific pilots that will take up the tool and see how it can work in a government context. It's a way of taking the core material and showing its applicability.”

The final piece of Phase One - developing the capacity to conduct public dialogue using the Internet - will provide yet another way to reach citizens hungry for a healthy and productive exchange with government on issues that matter.

PUBLICATIONS

These reports are also available free of charge on the Internet at <http://www.cprn.org>

A Policy Blueprint for Canada's Children, by Jane Jenson and Sharon M. Stroick. *REFLEXION* Number 3, October 1999. 36 pp. \$6.00.

A concern for child outcomes prompted the Canadian Policy Research Networks to undertake a three-year, multi-stage project, which asked, What Is the Best Policy Mix for Canada's Children? This *REFLEXION* provides some answers based on research that examined policy practices, policy thinking, public values, and the outcomes achieved by children in Canada and a number of comparable countries. Research and dialogue identified three enabling conditions that underpin good child outcomes: adequate income, effective parenting and supportive community environments. By contributing to all three enabling conditions, policies for children and families form an important part of the blueprint for a coherent societal strategy for children.

Project Funders:

The Atkinson Charitable Foundation
Health Canada
Hospital for Sick Children Foundation
Human Resources Development Canada
Laidlaw Foundation
Lawson Foundation
The provincial governments of British Columbia, Ontario and Saskatchewan

Gender and Self-employment in Canada: Assessing Trends and Policy Implications, by Karen D. Hughes. CPRN Study No. W|04. Changing Employment Relationships Series. 1999. 55 pp. \$9.95.

A record number of women are working for themselves, and in most cases they are finding they have lost ground in the struggle for wage parity and equal opportunity with men, this report shows. *Gender and Self-employment in Canada* examines the growing role of self-employment in the Canadian labour market, focussing particularly on the gender patterns within self-employment and the policy implications raised by this form of work. The study breaks new ground by splitting self-employment into two categories - employers and "own-account" workers, who labour alone, often at home and usually provide a contract service. It reveals that there is a disparity in earning potential between the two groups, with employers clustered at the top of the pay scale and own-account workers at the bottom.

Re-thinking Employment Relationships, by Graham Lowe, Grant Schellenberg and Katie Davidman. Discussion Paper No. W|05. Changing Employment Relationships Series. 1999. 68 pp. Free of charge.

The goal of this discussion paper is twofold:

- to lay the conceptual groundwork for research on changing employment relationships, and
- to stimulate discussion within and across the policy, academic and practitioner communities about appropriate responses to changes in employment relationships.

The paper is divided into three main sections. Section I lays out the case for studying changing employment relationships. Section II identifies key themes and issues that emerge in existing literature on employment relationships. Section III considers the implications that changing employment relationships have for workers, employers and other labour market stakeholders at the individual, organizational and institutional levels.

Project Funders:

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Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian Union of Public Employees
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Human Resources Development Canada
The Law Commission of Canada
Noranda Inc.
Parks Canada
Syncrude Canada
Treasury Board Secretariat

Partners:

DataQuest
Ekos Research Associates
Institute for Work and Health
Ontario Federation of Labour

Population Health, Sustainable Development and Policy Future, by Michael Hayes and Sholom Glouberman. CPRN Discussion Paper No. H|01. 1999. 33 pp. Free of charge.

The labels "population health" and "sustainable development" describe two related "big picture" analyses of broad social relations that involve economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions. Analysing them contributes to a better understanding of the human experience, and provides the capability of influencing public policy so as to maintain or improve human health and well-being. This paper considers conceptual linkages between sustainable development and population health and reflects on what these areas of joint concern suggest for public policy.

Project Funder
Health Canada

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A Little Help for a Friend

Every once in a while, we get a chance to do research and help a friend at the same time.

One of the friends of CPRN, since its earliest days, has been Maggie Fietz, President and CEO of Family Service Canada, a national voluntary organization of a network of family-serving agencies that provides services to people in distress. We helped her and her colleagues to develop a client research survey and national outcome measurement system.

Many voluntary sector leaders - stretched to their limits to keep programs going - are intimidated by the growing pressures for accountability. Lacking tools, experience, and time, they want to avoid being caught up in long, academic, and potentially expensive studies to measure the "outcomes" from what they do.

How, they ask, can we measure outcomes from human services, when so many of our clients present such a confusing array of health, social, and economic problems?

The Panel on Accountability and Governance in the Voluntary Sector, Chaired by Ed Broadbent, gave the sector some good advice on this in its report last February. The Panel pointed out that "merely being well intentioned is no longer sufficient," but it also recognized both the "value and the limitation of outcome-based measurement." The report recommended that agencies focus more on desired results, determine benchmarks or other indicators, and evaluate progress annually. It also recommended that funders ensure that grants or contracts cover the cost of evaluation.

In 1997, CPRN did a small project with Family Service Canada, which was funded by Human Resources Development Canada. The article on page 5 gives more background.

To get at least a rough approximation of outcomes, agencies need to



get more information about their clients - who is using the service, what are their problems, and what impact did the services have for the clients?

To get that information, agencies need to do a survey of a group of clients at a point in time, and then, over time, collect entry and exit information on a cross-section of the clients.

Designing the survey and the information system does take time and money, as does the analysis. But the cost is small in relation to total program costs for a national network of agencies like Family Services, and the payoffs from the effort are clear in the following area.

The results give a big boost to efficiency, because services can be planned and delivered better as the managers learn more about what works for clients.

The message from the Family Service Canada experience is that voluntary agencies need not be intimidated by these calls for more concrete measures of performance. They can make a clear case to their funders that extra money is required to get the work done.

At the same time, the voluntary sector needs to organize a clearing house of experiences with outcome measurement, along with a list of potential consultants to help with design and analysis. This would help the agencies who are ready to take on this challenge.

The experience of working on this study with Family Service Canada gave us new insights into the needs of Canadians in distress (reported in the study *The Assets of Canadian Families, 1997* by Joseph H. Michalski). It also gave Family Service Canada some useful management tools.

And as voluntary organizations take on a greater role in providing essential human services to Canadians, we hope this early demonstration project will help to build their capacity not only to "do good," but also to clearly demonstrate the "good" they are doing!

Judith Maxwell

President
Canadian Policy Research Networks