

Bridging the Gaps

Gender Equity & Economic Security

A Series of Tools for Employers in Restigouche (New Brunswick) and Avignon (Quebec)

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Women and Gender
Equality Canada

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Listuguj Mi'gmaq Development Center
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Finally, we wish to thank all the employers and individuals who participated in our data collection process. Your experience and knowledge were invaluable and helped shape the content of these tools.

What is CBDC Restigouche?

CBDC Restigouche supports the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and the development of the workforce.

Our main activities focus on assisting aspiring and existing entrepreneurs in accessing business resources by delivering a variety of small business loans and consulting services. We also implement various innovative projects in response to identified needs and gaps in the community, particularly those relating to small business environments, employment, gender equality, and skills development.

Our experience in promoting economic prosperity for women and gender minorities.

Over the years we have delivered various projects on which our work has focused on addressing intersecting issues in entrepreneurship and community economic development, utilizing a gender lens to bring systemic changes. In our economic development efforts, we collaborate and maintain strong partnerships with the private sector. While working in this field, we've frequently observed gender-related challenges.

One of our objectives is to explore ways to help businesses discover innovative solutions to bridge gaps, ultimately enhancing community growth and prosperity. Actively tackling gender issues and supporting the progress of women and gender minorities not only enhances their well-being but also enriches the local economy.

About the Project

This project was created to help advance the economic recovery of women and gender minorities in the communities of Restigouche, NB and Avignon, Qc, including the First Nations of Listuguj, Gesgapegiag and Ugpi’Ganjig as we rebuild from the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective of the project was to develop inclusive tools and resources for employers of these regions.

During the pandemic, Border restrictions were imposed on the J.C. Van Horne and Matapedia Interprovincial bridges (which connects both regions) between March 25, 2020, and June 16, 2021. The effects of the border restrictions impacted our region and added many challenges for both residents and businesses.

Our communities now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine how our interdependent economies and societies will be rebuilt. It is crucial that we learn from the pandemic’s impacts and prepare for other unexpected events. We must do so in a way that also ensures inclusion and equity, thus creating a more prosperous economy for all.

In this series of tools, you will learn about:

- **The gendered economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic** in small businesses in rural communities, particularly those in Restigouche and Avignon.
- How the impacts of the pandemic **exacerbated gender equity divides and disproportionately affected women and gender diverse people.**
- **Why as an employer you should pay attention to this important topic and what you can do in your own workplace** to ensure gender equity and inclusion for all employees.
- **How planning for future unexpected events or emergencies and inclusive and equitable workplace practices** centered around employees’ mental health and well-being are critical as we rebuild sustainably and equitably.

Tools in this series:

- Tool #1** The Gendered Impacts of the Pandemic and Economic Security
- Tool #2** Inclusive and Equitable Workplace Culture
- Tool #3** Inclusive and Equitable Recruitment Strategies
- Tool #4** Inclusive and Equitable Retention Strategies
- Tool #5** Building resilience: Planning for future adverse events

Note: The terminology in these tools is sometimes inconsistent due to the use of differing terminology by various data sources to describe gender-related issues. We aim to use the terms “women and gender-diverse people” as an inclusive way of encapsulating the challenges faced by gender minorities in Canada. However, some data sources use the terms “female” or “male” and are not necessarily inclusive of diverse experiences or of all women-identifying persons who are not cisgender-female-identifying.