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Local Innovations in Skill-Building and Employment for Low-Skilled Workers in United States



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Local Innovations in Skill-Building and Employment for Low-Skilled Workers in United States

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Contents

Foreword

Introduction

I Framework Elements

I.1 Situation of Low-Skilled People and Workers in the US

I.1.1 Definition of Low-Skilled Jobs and People

I.1.2 Conditions of Employment

I.1.3 Main Characteristics of Low-Skilled People

I.2 Functioning of the US Employment and Training System

I.2.1 Who Are the Key Players ?

I.2.2 Structure of the Employment and Training System in the US

II. Case Studies : Primary Approaches and Principles for Helping Low-Skilled People and Workers

II.1 Comprehensive Programs for the Most in Need

II.1.1 Financial supports services to make work pay

II.1.2 Transitional Jobs : a Public Employment Program Combining Paid Work Experience with Training and Supports

II.2 Innovations in Skill-Building for Low-Skilled Workers

II.2.1 Funds providing job training for incumbent workers

II.2.2 Sectoral Training Initiatives

Conclusion

Appendix

Appendix 1 French and American Education System Comparison

Appendix 2 French Employment and Training System

Appendix 3 Workforce Development Programs and Fundings – The Example of Illinois

Appendix 4 Interviews list

Appendix 5 Bibliography

Foreword

Thanks to a partnership between IAU Ile-de-France and the Institute for Policy Studies at the Johns Hopkins University, I have had the opportunity to realize a study to identify interesting practices in the field of employment in the American context. This work is a continuation of an analysis on low-skilled workers in the Paris Region. The main goal of the study in the United States is to identify good practices and programs to help low skilled workers to find or keep their jobs and programs that can be good examples for the Paris Region.

The Institute for Urban Planning and Development of the Paris Region

- A semi-public agency set up in August 1960 mainly funded by the Regional Council of the Paris Region,
- Main Goals: to propose general or sector-based regional planning and development policies and to design tools in order to implement such policies ; to ensure the smooth running of the research and prospective study centre on regional development,
- 200 women and men working in five major technical areas : urban planning, mobility and transport, urban and rural environments, economy and employment, demographics, housing and amenities.

Even if the political and economic American environment is different from the French one¹, the difficulties for the low-skilled workers are mainly the same : how public or private programs can help people attain low skill jobs? How can they help them keep their jobs and advance? And how can programs help low-skilled workers face problems such as low wages, mobility, availability, flexibility, lack of training ? There are several options to help low-skilled people. I have chosen to focus on innovative programs for adult people taking place in metropolitan areas (central cities and inner-ring suburbs where a large number of working poors with low skills are concentrated). Consequently, the actions and principles detailed below are not representative of the entire American system. My criteria of choice are programs with :

- Long-term effects. That is, programs that do not only help people to get a job, but also programs that offer to people the possibility of pursuing a real career pathway. Low-skill individuals will not reach self-sufficiency through their first jobs so organizations will must plan to stay involved over the long term.
- Dual customer approach: this means having the involvement of employers and also serving the need of disadvantaged workers
- Connection between Economic and Workforce Development
- Multi-faceted approach because low skill is generally interwoven with others problems
- With some positive results or outcomes for people.

Work Method

I have learned a lot about the American employment system and programs by attending Dr Demetra Smith Nightingale's classes at the Johns Hopkins University (Social Policy Special Topics Seminar : Jobs, employment and Human Capital).

My work is based on reviews of the literature on workforce policies and actions. In addition to this documentary analysis I have interviewed about 30 people working in the field of employment (see Appendix 4) : local authorities, Workforce Investment Boards, foundations, researchers and analysts, evaluation organizations and organizations running programs. These interviews have taken place in 6 metropolitan areas : Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Montreal, New-York and San-Francisco.

Finally, this report was made possible with the help and expertise of the people I have interviewed and the reception of the IPS staff. I sincerely thank each person who have taken the time to talk to me about their programs and practices. I especially thank Marsha Schachtel for her advice at each step of my project.

I am indebted to many people who helped me to understand the American environment and to network with several key-informants. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Demetra Smith Nightingale and Bob Giloth at The Annie E.Casey Foundation and I thank them for their cooperation and time they took to share with me their expertise, advice and their numerous contacts.

¹ See Appendix 2 to know more about the French Employment and Training System

Introduction

It is a challenging time for the American economy: inequalities have grown during the 80's and 90's, less educated workers are seeing their wages stagnate or decline², the economy is losing numerous of jobs. Since the start of the recession, the number of unemployed has increased from 7.2 million to reach 14.7 million in June 2009. Low skilled workers have been strongly hit by the crisis and the difficulties are higher than before. One of the challenges that need to be addressed is that there are not enough good jobs. Therefore low-wage and low-skill jobs keep too many Americans poor and yield few opportunities for career advancement. There are also skill mismatches between new job created and the education level of some people. For city residents, there are also spatial mismatches, as many of the new low-skill jobs are being created in the suburbs difficult or impossible to reach by inadequate public transportation.

At the same time, the new federal government offers some opportunities. The Obama administration's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is going to infuse \$787 billion into state and local budgets. The aim of the Act is to inject spending into the economy, address major needs of the American system (health care, infrastructures, education and so on), create jobs and provide the training needed.

In a country where the public system is weak and where States and localities have a high flexibility in implementing programs, many places have developed experimental and alternative approaches. This situation leads to a huge variety of organization : basically we can say that each locality has its own workforce and employment system, though most use federal dollars to support them. Moreover a lot of actors are involved to deliver public services or to supplement them with private funds. When the local actors – public and/or private - are strong and concerned about low skilled and low-income people, localities can be seen as laboratories for policy experiments.

This context is a particularly interesting one in which to analyze local initiatives to help low skilled workers. There are a variety of approaches that can be used to increase employment by low wage workers, and the appropriate strategy depends on labor market conditions, policy goals, budget constraints, and the situation of the individual.

Before presenting the initiatives and operational principles, we begin with some framework elements on the situation of low skill workers in the United States and the functioning of the employment and workforce system. In the second part we examine some promising practices to transform the workforce and employment services and what lessons can be learned.

² The number of jobs paying below poverty level increased of 4.7 million from 2002 to 2006 (respectively 19% of jobs to 22%)

Key Figures - United States

Population	304 million
Civilian Labor Force	154 million
Percent of women in the labor force	47%
Percent of minorities ³ in the labor force	31%
Unemployment rate	9.5%
Percent of Persons below Poverty	13%
Employment	132 million
Percent of low skilled jobs	35%
Employment decline	6.5 million since the start of the recession (Dec 2007)
Wage and Conditions of Employment	
Average hourly earnings	\$18.50
Minimum wage	\$6.55 per hour at the Federal rate ⁴
Percent of low wage workers ⁵	22%
Percent of workers ages 18 to 64 without health insurance**	19%
Part time workers***	13%
Education	
Percent of people ages 18 to 64 with no high school diploma or equivalent*	14%
- Unemployment rate	15.5%
Percent of people ages 18 to 64 with only a high school diploma or equivalent*	30%
- Unemployment rate	10%
Percent of people ages 18 to 64 who speak English less than "Very well" ⁶ *	10%

Sources : U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts and Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009

* Population Reference Bureau, analysis of 2006 American Community Survey

** PRB analysis of 2007 March CPS Supplement

*** OCDE database 2004

³ Black, Asian, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

⁴ An employer of a tipped employee is only required to pay \$2.13 an hour in direct wages if that amount plus the tips received equals at least the federal minimum wage.

24 states have raised the minimum wage.

⁵ A low wage worker is defined as an individual who earns a wage below a state specific "low wage" figure (the national low wage figure x state cost of living index). The national low wage figure was based upon the preliminary weighted average poverty threshold for a family of four in 2007 (\$21,386). If a person works full time a year (i.e., 40 hours per week for 52 weeks per year) and earns \$21,386 per year, the hourly wage would be \$10.28 per hour.

⁶ The percent of minority (Hispanic or non-white) people ages 18 to 64 who speak English less than "Very well" is 26%

I Framework Elements

I.1 Situation of Low-Skill People and Workers in the US

I.1.1 Definition of Low-Skilled Jobs and People

Qualification is a social construct meaning that the definition depends on the country and the economic and social context. Another important point is that low-skilled jobs require skills even if they require fewer skills than other jobs. The tasks workers are asked to perform can require a variety of skills : basic skills like English, math, problem-solving and communication. Moreover low-skilled jobs require physical and mechanical skills at higher levels than other jobs

The definition of low-skilled jobs is usually based on a classification of occupations. The Dictionary of Occupational Titles of the US Department of Labor characterizes occupations on 7 skills dimensions (intellectual, physical complexity, level of formal knowledge in math, language skills, vocational training required for the job...). The occupations under the median value on 7 skill dimensions are classified as low-skill occupations. Around 200 occupations among the 500 US occupations are considered low-skill jobs. Having the same goal, other classifications are possible at the state or local level. In brief, occupations that only require little on the job training, little related work experience and do not require formal requirement for post-secondary (high-school) education are classified as low skilled jobs⁷. With this kind of definition, researchers estimate that 35% of US jobs are low skilled.

Low-skilled jobs are concentrated in a few industries and occupations. Under the Occupation category, six types of jobs—office and administrative support, production, food preparation and serving, sales, building and grounds maintenance, and transportation and material moving—account for 75 percent of low-skilled jobs nationwide, but only 34.6 percent of all positions nationwide⁸.

Examples of low skill occupations : Cashiers , Waiters & Waitresses, Cleaners, & Maids, Clerks, Receptionists & Information Clerks, Food preparation workers, Food Counter, Fountain & Related, Truck Drivers, Maintenance Repairers, General Utility, Guards, Retail salespersons, Home health aides, Teacher aides and educational assistants, Nursing aides, Child care workers...

Most of the time, low skilled jobs are defined by the requirements needed to fill the jobs which is close to the definition of low skilled workers. Low skilled people are people with no more than a high school education and one year of work experience. In 2006, about 44 percent of the U.S. population aged 18–64 could be considered to be in the labor market for low-skilled jobs, because these people had a high school education or less.

The increased demand for skills explains a part of the deteriorating labor market for less-skilled individuals. There is a skill mismatch between a part of the population and new jobs opportunities. But even with a growth in demand for high skills, there is still high number of low-skilled jobs in the US economy. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that 22% of all new jobs over the next 10 years will require limited skills and education.

⁷ See Appendix 1 to have a comparison of American and French education levels

⁸ Source : Maxwell Nan L., 2006

I.1.2 Conditions of Employment

Low skill is one of the central barrier to self sufficiency. Low skilled jobs are generally low-wage jobs. On average, jobs with the low-wage profile pay an hourly wage of \$8.33, compared to an average of \$18.50 for the rest of the jobs in the labor market. This level of wage is not enough to assure economic self-sufficiency, which partially explains the weak retention and high turnover in low wage jobs. Among the main reasons of the huge amount of low wage jobs in the US economy are : few wage regulations, immigration, declining unionization and shift from manufacturing to services.

Nowadays and in these conditions, most agree that every job is not a good job. In the US, job quality refers generally to the wage level and employee benefits offered by the enterprise. Low skilled jobs are less likely than higher jobs to offer health insurance, pension benefits or paid leave. Low skilled workers generally have less access to training opportunities that would help them to move in the workforce.

Nevertheless there is a diversity of different low-skilled jobs and some of these jobs offer prospects for increased earnings and advancement. Most of the time, programs working on low skilled jobs distinguish entry-level jobs⁹ and next step jobs and focus their actions on the latter.

I.1.3 Main Characteristics of Low-Skilled People

Three groups generally hold low-skilled jobs : youth, minorities and immigrants because of discrimination, strong barriers to employment, also called the hard to employ. This last category includes people with physical or mental health problems, substance abuse problems, ex-offenders and non English speakers. With the development of the service industry, women are also more often in low skilled occupations. For some of them, like the hard to employ, it can be extremely difficult to access the labor market and low-skilled jobs can be seen as the only chance to get a job. For others, it can be a transition situation or a first step in the labor market. Moreover, more jobs are requiring higher skill levels. Even the simplest jobs in the services sector require literacy and many times the ability to manipulate simple electronic devices.

Because of low wage, low-skilled individuals are less likely to have a driving license, insurance or access to a car and often live in poor neighborhoods (like inner cities). This is also a strong barrier to access to jobs because in most of the American cities the public transportation system is weak and does not connect low-income neighborhoods and regional job centers (which are more often in suburbs, particularly for less skilled jobs and not accessible with public transportation). In other words, spatial mismatch particularly hurts low skilled workers.

⁹ According to a study of the Urban Institute, entry-level jobs are less likely to entail reading documents, filling out forms or other writing, using a computer, or speaking with customers daily (Acs Gregory, Loprest Pamela)

I.2 Functioning of the US Employment and Training System

I.2.1 Who Are the Key Players ?

The federal government is a major player in workforce development and employment policies and funding. It offers a minimal level of legislation which States can improve and gives the majority of public funds for employment and training programs for adults. The federal level gives some goals and target populations for programs. US is a highly decentralized country so the federal money is managed by states and local governments. The Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Education are the main federal agencies for workforce and employment programs.

But a lot of other federal agencies are involved : the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Justice and so on. All these organizations and funds are not always coordinated.

Key Players in the Workforce System

- Department of Labor and other federal agencies (Department of Education, Department of housing and Urban Development...)
- Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) at the local and state level
- States
- Cities
- Businesses
- Labor associations
- Neighborhood and Community Based Organizations (CBO)
- Educational institutions (kindergarten-grade 12, community colleges, universities and other higher education institutions)
- Foundations
- Evaluation firms

Workforce and employment policies benefit from **a strong public partnership between the federal government, states and localities (counties and cities)**. In these spheres, the Federal government allocates funding through block grants¹⁰ to the states which in turn allocate funding to localities. As United States give a high value to local governance, the local authorities enjoy a large degree of flexibility and autonomy. Some funds are available to states on a "formula" basis (block grants based on unemployment rates, poverty rates, population size, etc.), while others are provided through competitive grants to states that build more innovative systems. States allocate federal block grants by formula to localities and they can affix more requirements in the use of this money.

In the education field, there is no country level pre-kindergarten through grade twelve education system, standards or curriculum. Each of the fifty states has its own guidelines and design for the schools. Public schools receive significant funding from the state but much from local property taxes. At the post-secondary level, tuition paid by students are also a high source of funding¹¹. **Community colleges** are the central education actor for our study. Community colleges can offer lots of different programs in post-secondary education and training : two-year college academic programs (for students who then transfer to four-year institutions), technical programs, job training programs, customized skills upgrade programs for employers and basic skills programs. These institutions serve local communities and have a lot of autonomy to define their programs.

¹⁰ Block grant : A consolidated grant of federal funds, formerly allocated for specific programs, that a state or local government may use at its discretion to support programs

¹¹ Students in kindergarten do not pay tuition in public schools, it begins for college and university. See Appendix 1 to have a comparison between French and American education system.

In the policy arenas that affect low skill workers, **state policies** define the time limits and level of minimum wage, unemployment benefit, taxes, financial aid for education, health care and paid family leave and fund community colleges and vocational education and so on. One data point can illustrate how different the state or local public services can be : eight states account for about half of all state spending on job training : California, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Texas (Holzer Harry J, Nightingale, Demetra Smith, 2007)

States and **local governments** combine funding from multiple federal sources and use their own policies. Programs are designed and implemented at the local level, states, counties and municipalities. When DOL, or another federal agency, sees an interesting action, it tries to replicate it or to strengthen it through competitive grants. In most of the states and localities, there are frequently multi-local but rarely multi-state regional¹² organizations or strategies on workforce or skills issues.

The local organization is extremely diverse : in some places the City is very involved in workforce issues, in others places it will be the County or both or none. In most of places major cities are part of a county but this organization is also variable. Baltimore City, for example is not part of the Baltimore County. At the end, the service delivery is also extremely diverse. The local level can choose the quantity, quality and actors delivering the services : it can be the City, private businesses or community based organizations. The interesting part is that the system is flexible and can really be adapted to the local environment. On the other hand, understanding the system is not easy and as there are no strong federal policies, services can be weak. For example, before the Bloomberg administration, New York City had only one One Stop Center to serve all the people looking for a job in the five boroughs.

Increase the Link between Economic Development and Workforce Development

A lot of localities have merged their employment and business agencies to unite economic and workforce development. For example in New-York, Mayor Bloomberg consolidated the Department of Employment and the Department of Small Business Services (DSBS). The result is a single agency responding to the needs of both businesses and their employees and jobseekers. The idea was to make the public workforce system more employer responsive. DSBS is focused on small businesses because there are over 200,000 located in the City, they are a major source of employment opportunities and need help to hire new workers. For example DSBS works like a placement agency for small businesses and helps them to hire people without spending too much time (with Business Solution pre-screening, businesses meet with one to three people for a new job openings, without it, it was an average of 12-13 interviews).

In Boston, the Jobs and Community Services (JCS) administers and allocates federal, state and city workforce and employment funds. JCS is a division of the Boston Redevelopment Authority / Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (BRA/EDIC) which is the Boston's planning and economic development agency. The idea was to better link the new urban developments and workforce strategies, to better integrate training and employment services in the neighborhood revitalization programs. Workforce strategies are seen as economic development tools to promote territories or to help businesses

As the public employment and workforce system has small funding sources, private actors are involved to deliver public employment and workforce services. **Businesses** are the first place. The Workforce Investment Act (see below) gives them a central place to choose the orientation of workforce and training public services. Employers are also important partners in implementing programs.

Two types of actors, that are not strongly present in France, are also key players : **foundations and Community Based Organizations** (CBO)¹³. A lot of foundations¹⁴ develop actions to strengthen

¹² Except in cases where metropolitan areas spread over state boundaries.

¹³ Private non profit organization that works within a community to improve some aspect of it. Some CBO are faith based, others minority based or targeted on a specific population. Most of the time their actions take place in a specific neighbourhood.

local, state and national policies to assist low income workers. With the CBO, they can advocate for the people most in need and realize studies to promote promising practices. Foundations can create program frameworks, finance their implementation and also provide technical assistance to local organizations. Most of the time, they provide funds to local community programs. According to a lot of practitioners, CBO and foundations are filling a public service gap and serving some of the neediest populations. As CBO are generally established in specific neighborhood and offer a large range of services, they can be better positioned to serve people who do not use the public system.

The most interesting localities in which to study workforce and employment programs have developed a **strong public and private partnership** to provide universal service integrating the several needs of people looking for a job or a training. An example is given by some foundations joining their funds together and also with public funds. The idea is to have a stronger impact and a large scale¹⁵.

In this kind of system, there is generally a lead organization overseeing the work called a **workforce intermediary**. The advantage of workforce intermediary organization is that it works with employers so they do not need to navigate through the multiple partners in the workforce development system. A lot of actors can play the role of workforce intermediary : in some places the major workforce intermediary will be the Chamber of Commerce, in another the City, a social enterprise, a CBO, a community college. Workforce intermediaries generally merge public and private funding. The existing political context of the local area and civic participation play a critical role into the emergence and form of workforce intermediaries. Most of the actions detailed in the second part of this paper are being carried out by workforce intermediaries.

I.2.2 Structure of the Employment and Training System in the US

As mentioned above, even though the public system is not extremely developed and coordinated, the federal level provides the framework for local actions. But federal expenditures on employment and training have dramatically decreased. Spending levels in 2004 were under \$8.5 billion, compared with a peak of \$22 billion in 1980 (King Christopher, 2004). Appropriations have dropped further, to \$5.2 billion in 2006 and \$3.5 billion in 2008¹⁶. Some states or cities have had to make strong efforts to maintain program levels as federal funds declined.

Two major federal policies govern the public training and employment system and have organized it to give a great deal of autonomy to states and local governments : the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) for welfare recipients and the 1998 Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Both of these statutes were enacted when economic growth was very strong and the unemployment rate very low. That is one of the explanations for the adoption of the work first approach promoted by both of these acts and the lower priority given to training programs. The main goal was to put people into jobs, with an emphasis on job readiness programs. Compared to former legislation, adult services were no longer targeted only to the disadvantaged. Both acts give a lot of importance to the inclusion of performance standards in policy design. Outcomes such as job placement, employment retention rates, and wages and benefits at placement must be measured.

¹⁴ To only named the Foundations I have interviewed : the Annie E Casey Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, Walter and Elise Haas Fund, The Boston Foundation, The New York Community Trust... There are private, corporate or community foundations. Some of them have a national actions, others are local foundations.

¹⁵ One example of this collaboration on workforce field is the National Funds for Workforce Solution, www.nfwsolutions.org. See the example of Skillworks on part two.

¹⁶ U.S Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration online budgets for FY2007-2009. www.dol.gov/dol/aboutdol/main.htm

The PRWORA changed the nature of welfare funding, placed limits on the amount of time welfare could be received - five years at most over a lifetime - and created work requirements for recipients receiving TANF¹⁷. It comprises also actions on training, childcare and transportation. There has been a dramatic decrease in the number of welfare recipients since the PRWORA went into effect, but most of them found jobs with very low wages and swelled the ranks of the working poor. Now a lot of practitioners promote long term approaches like real training programs leading to good jobs and retention in the labor market.

Common Strategies for Promoting Employment

Direct Employment Strategies

Job search assistance, either in a group setting or through one-on-one counseling or coaching, sometimes through “job clubs” with workshops, access to phone banks, and peer support.

Self-directed job search, where individuals search and apply for jobs on their own. Sometimes individuals must submit a log of their job contacts to the welfare agency.

Job development and placement, where program staff identify or develop job openings for participants. Counselors refer individuals to openings, often using computerized job banks. In more intensive models, staff develop relationships with specific firms, gaining knowledge of potential job openings or commitments to hire through the program.

Job Training Strategies

Classroom occupational training developed by training or education institutions such as community colleges or vocational schools, community-based organizations, or nonprofit or for-profit training centers. Training may include formal post-secondary programs leading to certification or licensing in a particular occupation.

On-the-job training (OJT), with public or private sector employers, who usually receive a subsidy to cover a portion of the wages paid during the training period. The employer subsidy may be drawn from welfare or food stamp payments that would be paid to the individual recipient.

Many initiatives combine the two approaches

Education Strategies

Remedial education, such as preparation for the GED¹⁸, basic skills instruction in reading and mathematics, English-language classes for persons whose primary language is not English.

Post-secondary degree programs (e.g., associate or bachelor degrees), generally financed by grants, federal loans, or scholarships.

Subsidized Public Employment Strategies

Work experience, which can include unpaid workfare assignments, where recipients work in exchange for welfare benefits, or short-term unpaid work experience designed as basic exposure to the work environment. Stipends are sometimes provided to the workers.

Community or public service jobs, where individuals receive wages, typically minimum wage or slightly below, for the hours they work.

Mixed Strategies

Vocational training plus basic skills, either in the workplace or in instructional centers/classes.

Supported work experience, with pre-employment preparation, assignment to public job assignments, and gradually increasing hours and work responsibility, combined with ongoing counseling, education, and peer support.

Extract from Alternative Strategies for Increasing Employment, Demetra Smith Nightingale, Pamela A. Holcomb

¹⁷ Temporary Assistance for Needy families

¹⁸ General Education Development (GED) is the equivalent of a high school diploma

The WIA is the primary national funding stream for workforce development and includes employment services through One-Stop Centers and skill training funds. WIA designates three categories of customers : adults (individual job seekers age 19 and older, including TANF recipients and people with disabilities), dislocated workers and young people (age 14-21). The legislation formally expired in 2003 and has not been reauthorized since then, but it continues to operate.

Workforce Investment Boards (WIB) at the state and local level conduct labor market demand and supply analysis and make plans that define guidelines for allocating public training and employment funds (service eligibility, standards for training providers, job placements etc.). One of the major goals of WIA is to better associate and meet the needs of employers. So it promotes employer and industry involvement : WIBs have a minimum of 51 percent business representatives. Other members of WIBs are representatives of unions, educational institutions, community-based organizations and representatives from various other federal programs. WIBs can be located in the offices of elected officials (e.g., mayor or county commissioner), local government agencies or in private partner organizations.

The **One Stop Centers** are the central access points for all public workforce programs. State and local agencies choose how they distribute and structure services. They can directly provide services or contract with private actors within guidelines elaborated by the WIB. In some cities, CBO run One Stop Centers. One Stop Centers deliver three categories of employment services :

- Core services (like job search, counselling, labor market exchange...) are universal and open to all job seekers
- Intensive services are offered to job seekers unable to find employment after receiving core services
- Training is targeted to the most difficult to reemploy (Job seekers are eligible to receive training services only after the first two categories of services are exhausted). Individuals receive individual training accounts which are like vouchers and they choose the training they want. The law requires that job-training candidates have the qualifications to be successful in order to receive skills training. This requirement penalizes low skilled people¹⁹.

As highlighted above, training programs can vary from state to state depending on the skills that are needed to compete for jobs in the local area. Even in the more innovative place, a strong criticism is that public employment and training system are underfunded and highly fragmented²⁰. In addition to PRWORA and WIA programs, there are more than 40 federal programs providing some funding for employment and training. Most of the time these programs are run independently in their silos. The delivery of workforce services is also fragmented geographically. Within any large metropolitan level, several WIBs (at the county or municipal level) are providing different services to their respective populations and possibly may not provide services related jobs or training opportunities across these boundaries.

In the recent years, efforts have focused on partnerships between businesses, the workforce system and non government entities. In some places, WIBs have formed such partnerships, in other, they also work with workforce intermediaries. The main goal is to increase public funds with private ones through partnerships. Sometimes the line between workforce intermediary and WIB programs can be blurred. One of the main difference is that WIBs must provide universal access to jobseekers and employers whereas non government entities can be more focused on specific population and employers.

¹⁹ To have a global analyse and description of training actions for less-skilled adults (initiated by DOL, Department of Education, Community Colleges or States and Localities), see *Employment and Training Policies : New Directions for Less-Skilled Adults*, Paul Osterman in *Reshaping the American Workforce in a Changing Economy* edited by Harry J.Holzer and Demetra Smith Nightingale.

²⁰ See Appendix 3 to have an idea of this fragmented organization in the state of Illinois

II. Case Studies : Primary Approaches and Principles for Helping Low-Skilled People and Workers

As the legal framework is minimal, there are a lot of places that only do what is required by law and not more. In other places, workforce practitioners have developed different approaches that cut down on some of the fragmentation described above and recognize that short-term training programs do not address the difficulties of low-skilled adults. The main goal of the programs detailed below is to catalyze improvements in public systems and business employment practices. Most of the time, part of the action includes advocacy for state and federal policy change and a push for a system-wide reform. These innovative programs are not the common context of action in the US and must be seen as the best practices in the workforce field.

Program designs varies to serve the specific needs of people and low skilled people are extremely diverse. The main distinction in the program designs is whether they are for adults with skill deficits or for adults with both skill deficits and other barriers to employment (eg. a criminal background, health problems, child care, transportation and so on). For the first, the idea is to assist them with specific training that can lead to better jobs, but most of them may also benefit from services such as child-care subsidies, wage supplements, transportation services and so on. The segmentation is not so clear and most of the programs I have considered are global programs, mixing actions of training and other kinds of supports. The point is to always recruit, train, and support job seekers for real jobs that offer decent wages. There are also benefits for businesses, including a lower turnover and an increase in the workers' capabilities.

There is a variety of approaches that can be used to increase employment by low wage workers, and the appropriate strategy depends on labor market conditions, policy goals, budget constraints, and situation of the individual. But all of the innovative programs share a goal : to help workers to gain access to a job that will offer a career ladder and a reasonable wage to become self sufficient. In the American context, work alone is not sufficient to ensure that individuals have incomes high enough to keep them out of poverty.

I have not focused on neighborhood strategies but some of the employment and training programs are integrated in place-based strategies to strengthen specific neighborhoods and address community needs. For example, employment and training programs are designed when there are new developments in an area, like sports stadiums, retail outlets projects etc. The goal is that these developments must benefit residents. But good jobs are often located far away of poor neighborhoods so a central point is that programs must be linked with other programs and associated with other areas where the jobs are located. In this second case, the weakness of the transportation system for poor neighborhood is a strong barrier to employment.

Outcomes and evaluation

All the programs I have considered integrate an evaluation to measure their outcomes. Evaluation is most of the time designed at the beginning or before the action, and is realized by an evaluation firm or research laboratories.

Several methods are used. The most common are "before-and-after" comparisons of peoples' prospects before and after program or comparisons measuring the achievements of participants against those of other low-income adults who did not receive services included in the program, or who received another kind of services. Impacts on employment and wage levels after the program are assessed and also one, two or five years later to measure long term impacts.

Most of the evaluations have shown that the higher long term impact for low skilled adults came from programs that used a mix of activities (work-focused education or training and job search and other kind of support services). But it is difficult to isolate the effects of each component of the programs.

II.1 Comprehensive Programs for the Most in Need

II.1.1 Financial support services to make work pay

There is a strong need to provide work support as many jobs do not pay enough.

A first way to increase worker earnings is to encourage companies to pay better wages. Public institutions can target development subsidies to businesses that create high-quality jobs. In 2005, 89 jurisdictions²¹ - 43 states, 41 cities, and 5 counties - attached job quality standards to at least one development subsidy : living wage laws, standards that mandate employer-provided full time jobs, healthcare benefits etc. Living wage ordinances have been adopted in many places : they require employers under contract to a state or local government or receiving a subsidy to pay wages based on a multiple of the official federally-defined poverty level, which is very low, or on some other standard of need calculated for the covered area. The first ordinance was adopted in Baltimore in 1994 (current living wage is about \$9.30/hour). Today more than 140 local ordinances exist but most of the time the living wage, even if it is higher than the federal level²², is just a first step and is not enough to enable an individual or family to live above poverty.

A second way to increase worker earnings is to offer them financial help. During the 1990s', there has been an expansion by the federal government and some states, of a variety of financial assistance for low-income working families, provided to workers to increase their interest in finding an occupation.

The most common financial work supports are the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)²³; subsidized child-care; food stamps; publicly funded health insurance; cash assistance; child support; transportation assistance²⁴ and housing subsidies. Post-employment assistance programs that assist workers in accessing these publicly funded financial supports are extremely important. Financial counselling is generally provided to individuals when they are working. All these benefits help workers retain jobs. As a result, work supports also benefit employers as they reduce turnover.

These work supports have very different characteristics. Some are uniformly operated across all states; some have a basic federal level with some state variation; some are mostly determined by states, but allow local variation; and so on.

Many individuals who qualify for such supports do not receive them mainly because of a lack of knowledge about public assistance, the cost and complexity of the application process, administrative requirements for retaining eligibility etc. For example, studies have highlighted that in 2003 the EITC reached 82 to 87 percent of eligible people, state child care subsidies reached only 28 percent of eligible children and food stamps were accessed by 46 percent of eligible working households in 2005²⁵.

In many cases, intermediaries help people to gain access to public and private financial support and provide additional services in a single place.

²¹ Purinton Anna with Arant Kristen, Davis Kate, Jilani Nasreen, November 2003, The Policy Shift to Good Jobs, Cities, States and Counties Attaching Job Quality Standards to Development Subsidies, Good Job First

²² Living wage levels vary from \$8 to more than \$12 per hour as the national minimum wage is at \$6.55 per hour.

²³ The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a national wage subsidy program, the largest cash transfer program for non elderly low income families. Each locality (at the state or local level) can improve the EITC.

²⁴ Transportation assistance can be used in a variety of ways : for example, to pay for bus passes and other forms of public transportation; to buy or repair cars; or to establish van service in areas without public transit.

²⁵ Frank Abbey, Greenberg Mark, Zdenek Robert, May 2006, *Getting Connected: Employer Engagement in Work Supports*. Center for Law and Social Policy, Policy Paper N°1

The EarnMore and EarnBenefits Models of Seedco²⁶

About the Lead Agency : Seedco is a national non profit organization founded in 1987 as a community development intermediary. Seedco connects small CBOs²⁷ to large employers, federal, state and local agencies. Seedco works with its local partners to implementing programs and create economic opportunity for low income residents. This organization is not only interested in implementing best practices but also in system wide reform. Seedco provides management, blends public money with private resources and secures funding. Seedco has active programs in several cities in the US and has a lot of programs in New-York. Moreover since 2004 Seedco has operated the Upper Manhattan Workforce Career Center for jobseekers and connects them to its own program range.

Target Population : disadvantaged job seekers, workers and neighborhood entrepreneurs. With the EarnMore programs, 14 000 workers have been placed in new jobs. With EarnBenefits, Seedco has provided over 50,000 individuals with information and connected more than 8 000 workers to benefits and work supports to which they are entitled that, on average, increased recipients' household income by over \$2,000.

Main Components of the Action : EarnMore : established in 2000, the program works through a network of 16 CBO and the Upper Manhattan Career Center. All members are multi-service organizations like housing groups, childcare centers, mental health agencies, Community Development Corporations etc. CBOs provide intensive career coaching, training and education, financial incentives and access to public benefits (see below). CBOs make sure their public and training is adapted to each participants' career goals.

EarnBenefits : launched in 2004 in New York City²⁸, Seedco's EarnBenefits initiative uses a web-based technology tool and application assistance services to facilitate access to more than 25 different public and private benefits²⁹. As income is central to stay employed and move up, organizations facilitate access to benefits and work supports and follow the applications they help people prepare. Access to other services like pharmacies, telephone service or a bank that provides a no cost checking account are also part of the program. This service is provided at the Upper Manhattan Career Center and at a dozen CBOs and at firms where low income workers are employed.

Main Partners³⁰: CBOs, foundations, New York City and other public agencies, employers, community colleges...

II.1.2 Transitional Jobs: a Public Employment Program Combining Paid Work Experience with Training and Supports

Transitional Jobs (TJ) are short-term, publicly subsidized jobs that combine work, skill development, and support services. The main objective can be to increase the work skills of the person or TJ can be used in a countercyclical way where the goal is to provide work when there are insufficient jobs available in the economy. Transitional Jobs are targeted to people who have serious difficulties in accessing jobs.

TJs programs operate everywhere in the nation but there is no framework and local organizations are free to implement transitional jobs in a specific way. Work placements are typically in public, non-profit organizations or businesses. People remain in the program from three months to a year, and the majority of participants go on to find unsubsidized employment.

²⁶ see www.seedco.org

²⁷ CBO have most of the time a geographic attachment and/or serve a specific population (as ex-offender, gay and transgender...).

²⁸ Over the past two years, Seedco has replicated the initiative in Memphis, TN ; Atlanta, GA and Baltimore, MD.

²⁹ Supports such as Federal Earned Income Tax Credit, State and City Earned Income Tax Credit, Food Stamps, Free checking accounts, Community on homeownership, credit, legal help, School Lunch Program, Transitional Childcare, Childcare vouchers, Medicaid, Child Health Plus, NYS Home Energy Assistance...

³⁰ For example, funding sources for EarnBenefits include : Abell Foundation MD); Annie E. Casey Foundation; Arthur M. Blank Foundation (GA); Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Citigroup Foundation; Community Foundation of Greater Memphis; Fan Fox Samuels Foundation (NY); Ford Foundation; Robin Hood Foundation (NY); Strauss Foundation (MD); Thalheimer Foundation (MD); United Way of New York City; United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta; Verizon Foundation; and the Wachovia Foundation New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance; United States Department of Agriculture;

As people must overcome serious barriers to employment, less than a year duration seems to be a very short period. In many places, TJ programs need to be improved because there has not been enough training and people are pushed into jobs too fast. The main components of TJ programs are :

- an employment preparation approach focused on strategies to improve the employability of individuals through addressing special needs (e.g. substance abuse treatment, mental health services, compliance with parole and probation requirements, and family services interventions etc.) in combination with employment services.
- Support and supervision by job coaches including case management and job-search assistance.
- The most interesting Transitional Jobs programs often include a skill-building component, offering classes and training in areas such as GED preparation, vocational English, and computer training.
- Post-placement support. Some programs continue to offer support for up to a year after a participant obtains permanent employment.

Community Jobs Program in San Francisco : a public program operated by Goodwill Industries

About the Lead Agency: Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties is a local agency of Goodwill Industries, a non profit charitable corporation founded by Reverend Edgar J. Helms in Boston in 1902. It now operates a total of 2,300 retail stores, which resell donated clothing and household goods at discounted prices³¹. Goodwill uses the revenue generated from retail sales and contracted services to fund a variety of employment programs targeted to disadvantaged individuals. When Goodwill operates publicly funded programs, it can adapt or reinforce the programs thanks to its private activity. Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties provides several employment and training programs and try to link them to have a stronger action for low-income people :

- Placement of training participants into temporary, wage-paying jobs at a Goodwill retail store, in an other company or in subsidized jobs (see below),
- Supports : career counselor, case manager, vouchers to buy in Goodwill shops ...
- On the job training, ESL³² programs and GED training customized for disadvantaged people. Training is provided for such careers as financial services, computer programming, and health care.
- Goodwill also operates one of the six One Stop Career Centers of San Francisco City.

Target population³³ : disadvantaged unemployed individuals. Transitional Jobs program (Community Jobs Program) is targeted to TANF and General Assistance recipients who have not recently been employed and/or have been unsuccessful at finding or keeping a job. The program has the capacity to serve approximately 80 participants.

Main Components of the Action : Participants gain transferable skills and develop a recent work history and work closely with worksite trainers. Individuals who are less job-ready undergo a two-month workplace assessment in one of Goodwill's retail stores, while those who are more job-ready are placed in a subsidized job. Those who are more job-ready begin a work experience internship. Based on their work history and goals, these participants are placed in a job at a non-profit agency where they work for 25 hours a week for six to nine months. While working, participants choose whether they want to remain on their TANF grant or receive a wage of \$8.82 an hour. For the first four months, participants attend professional development classes for seven hours a week in addition to working. Training is provided at Goodwill and includes computer applications, pre-GED skills, workplace literacy and business practices. Participants are assisted by the San Francisco Department of Human Services to transition from Community Job to unsubsidized employment, and receive 12 months of retention services.

Main Partners : Cities, Counties, big companies, training providers, CBOs ; in conjunction with the Human Services Agency (HSA) of San Francisco and the Private Industry Council of San Francisco. There are over sixty participating non-profit community-based organizations that provide work locations for the CJP participants. Numerous private non-profit and public agencies also participate as work experience sites.

³¹ see www.goodwill.org and www.sfgoodwill.org; In 2008, the network of local Goodwill stores generated \$3.28 of revenue billion mainly coming from retail sales. Goodwill stores also received government grants (\$392.5 million), charitable contributions and other revenue sources. In total, 84 percent of funds available were spent directly on wages, employment and training programs.

³² English as a Second Language

³³ In 2008, Goodwill Industries served a total of 1,525,451 people through employment and training programs. 172,317 people successfully found permanent employment.

II.2 Innovations in Skill-Building for the Low-skilled Workers

Training is not always the solution because some people need quick access to work to earn money but real training with financial supports are generally part of programs with long term positive outcomes. Training is a central component to link low-income individuals with quality jobs. Recent studies of training programs serving low-income adults have shown annual earnings impacts from 10 percent to 156 percent beyond what similar job seekers had been able to gain without training or with job search services only³⁴. Many of these increases were the result of access to jobs with higher hourly wages as well as increases in the number of work hours. Skills training can also improve access to jobs with employer-paid benefits.

The active involvement of the business community is researched for each program. In other words, employment and training programs are market driven : training is offered in only the fields where an unmet demand exists and where there are jobs at the end. One of the goals of these employer-based strategies is also to make changes within industry in terms of hiring, training, promotion, and compensation practices.

Several kinds of training are offered to low-skilled workers - primarily ESL, basic education, on the job training, technical training adapted to a specific industry, GED programs (equivalency of high school diploma) and education programs. Many low-wage workers require basic skills or ESL before they can benefit from more technical training.

One of the goals is to provide transferable training skills to offer a real career pathway.

Another element is to make training accessible to low-skilled, low-income people. Most of the time programs must be adapted to the specific situation of low-skilled people. Without adaptation, entering and remaining in training will be very difficult for them. The main barriers are : high academic requirements for entry, long training programs, the lack of evening and part-time enrolment options, high tuition costs etc... Some answers to improve the access to training course can be offering modular curriculum that breaks certificate and degree programs into smaller sets of courses or offering training programs that occur during working hours with paid time. These approaches allow students, particularly working parents, to work while pursuing their education. Some community colleges have created bridge programs to help low-skilled people prepare for education or skill training. The programs also aim to make transitions easier, from one training programs to another one or from training to job and from multiple entry, exit, and re-entry points so that low-skilled workers can enter or exit education as their situation permits. Financial and support services (such as career counseling, tutoring, child care, transportation and job placement) are critical to increase access and persistence in training.

³⁴ Smith Whitney, Spence Robin, Van Kleunen Andy, Wittner Jenny, September 2002, *Skills Training Works : Examining the Evidence*. The Workforce Alliance

II.2.1 Funds providing job training for incumbent workers

Sector-based employers' organization at national or regional level do not exist in the United States. It is not like in France where firms in each industry work together in federations and take part in the decision-making on vocational training. Another huge difference is that there is no legal obligation of firms in the United States to provide training for their workforce³⁵. Without a collective framework, the involvement of businesses is a real concern, especially for training low-skilled workers.

One answer is given by some cities, counties or states that create collaborative funding with employers for the training of incumbent workers. Incumbent worker training programs provide grants to businesses that share the cost of partnering with training providers to offer job training at the workplace for incumbent workers or new hires. In this time of economic crisis, several localities have increased the use of this kind of programs. The training funds for low skilled workers generally include required employer behavior changes like paying training time or realizing training inside of work hours etc.

Some of the programs target low-wage workers in order to effectively serve them. The risk without a clear target is to overlook those most in need. The initiatives generally focus on job quality with opportunities for wage progression.

Training funds promote career advancement for incumbent workers, which creates entry-level openings for others as these workers advance. States and localities are increasingly encouraging the use of funds to support training projects that can benefit more than one employer, a way to ensure workers are gaining portable skills.

<p style="text-align: center;">New-York City Training Funds : Upgrading and Upskilling Workers through Employer Based Grants</p> <p>Lead Agency : New York City (NYC) Department of Small Business Services (see p.11)</p> <p>Target Population : low-skill, low wage workers (full time) or unemployed, employers of NYC</p> <p>Main Components of the Action : The program is overseen by NYC and helps to upskill employees and create new jobs. It focuses on upgrading low wage workers by directly working with employers. Employers must pay between 30 to 50% of the training costs and contract with a training provider. Training must benefit two or more businesses with similar training needs. Funding is available for training that is on-the-job or off-site for occupational skills and also for English as a Second Language, adult literacy, and math training. Training must lead to wage increases for workers. Retention and promotion are also expected . One of the goals is also to increase the number of new hires and then place new low skill people in jobs.</p> <p>Main Partners : businesses, Workforce Investment Board, businesses associations, unions; Funding : State and City tax dollars</p>

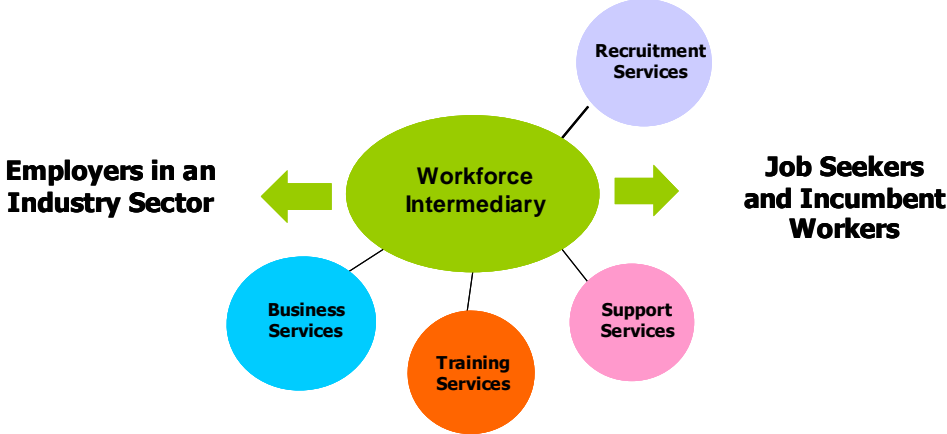
³⁵ In France, firms are required to spend at least between 0.5% to 1.6% of their wage bill on continuing training. They can do it directly through their training plan or by giving the money to institutions that collect funds. These funds are managed by unions and representatives of employers in each economic sector. See Appendix 2 to know more about the French Employment and Training System.

II.2.2 Sectoral Training Initiatives

Most of the people I have interviewed have told me about the success of sectoral training programs and many places have developed this kind of programs. The idea is to create industry change that strengthens the largest industry and improves job quality and job access for low-skilled and low income people³⁶. These initiatives are targeting the firms of an industry or a specific occupational category. They are large in scope, sometimes regional like in Massachusetts where the Commonwealth Corporation, has designed regional sector based strategies at a state level which provide a framework for local actions.

Sectoral initiatives are long term efforts that attempt to improve the functioning of labor markets, benefiting both workers and employers. Most of the time workforce intermediaries carry out these initiatives and develop a dual customer approach - trying to respond the needs of employers and workers at the same time. As underlined above, services are vast, adapted to the need of low-skilled people so workforce intermediaries must also organize multiple institutions and funding streams around common goals. Sectoral approaches to training bring together employers, community colleges, training providers and workers to ensure that any training provided prepares workers for jobs in key sectors in the local area. A CBO can play the workforce intermediary role and generally takes part in sectoral initiatives to offer support services as they use a global approach working on several issues simultaneously (socialization, housing, local development and services, economic activity etc.).

Workforce Intermediary role



³⁶ There are also many sectoral training strategies targeted on high skilled occupations. But to effectively serve the most in need or low-skilled people, some of them have clearly targeted this population.

Helping people to achieve self-sufficiency is a long-term effort that often requires multiple services and interventions—usually more than one organization can provide.

By working with several employers and others partners, the goal is to try to offer a real career pathway to low-skilled, low income people for example through a progression of jobs within one or more companies.

Low-income individuals generally will not reach self-sufficiency in their first low-wage jobs; it will take a series of steps before they will reach this point. Organizations need to plan to stay involved over the long term.

Sectoral initiatives are also a good example of how to merge workforce and economic development issues

Two Systems with Two Perspectives

	Workforce Development	Economic Development
Origins	Prepare people for jobs through skills development and education, help disadvantaged individuals	Attract, retain and expand businesses and industries in order to create jobs
Funding	Federal	State / Local
Culture	Human Services	Business
Objectives	Access and Equity	Economic Growth
Accountability	Highly Regulated	Loose Regulation
Programming	Case Management Model	Sales Model
Measurement	Job Placement	Job Creation

Source : Adapted from Seedco, A Tale of Two System, linking Economic Development and Workforce Development

Sectoral initiatives focus on sectors or employers offering high wages, good working conditions and opportunities to advance for low-skilled workers. The construction, manufacturing, and healthcare sectors are some good examples. In this case, the goal is to give low-skilled people access to the jobs with training programs and actions to build career pathways with wage advancement.

Some initiatives try to alter the behaviour of employers in low-wage industries, focused on hiring, training, promotion, and compensation practices. If they are more efficient in using their workforce, they can pay better wages or benefits, create career pathway so low-skilled people can progress. For example, the retail industry has a business model with high turnover and low wage jobs. Some employers offer better conditions so the programs will target them. For the other retail occupations, the idea is that these kinds of jobs are not a final goal. They can be transitional if some institutions (intermediaries) help workers access jobs in other industries where good customer service is also required.

Even if they target a specific industry, long term sectoral initiatives must have a global approach and think about transferable and transversal skills.

The outcomes for employers are a higher retention, less turnover, less absenteeism and a support when they experience labor shortages.

Boston SkillWorks : a Career Ladder Initiative in Boston

Before the launch of Skill-Works in Boston, local philanthropy was spending more on workforce programs than the training money available to the city through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). However, the foundations' programs were largely invisible and fragmented. SkillWorks has become a national model inspiring other cities and states³⁷

Organization and lead agency : Initiated in 2003, SkillWorks is a five-year initiative that provides funding to partnerships in Boston that bring together employers and community based organizations with the goal of providing career advancement opportunities for low-income workers. SkillWorks recently launched a second phase for the next five years. The focus is on systemic change and bringing to scale various approaches that expand education, training and career coaching for low-income workers.

SkillWorks is a collaborative effort of sixteen funders— ten local and four national foundations, the City of Boston (Jobs and Community Services), and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The funders—both private and public—pool their resources into a single fund and The Boston Foundation manages it. Through this joint venture, workforce efforts in Boston have significantly expanded.

Target Population : low income, low-skilled workers, unemployed, under-employed individuals and entry-level workers. The idea is to serve jobseekers and incumbent workers within the same partnership. The majority of participants are residents of the city of Boston. Each of the partnerships serves approximately 200-400 individuals per year. In 5 years, 3,000 employees received education, career coaching and more than 250 employees received promotions.

Main components of the action : the main goals are to increase the resources targeted to education and training for low-skilled, entry-level employees and to create a continuum of workforce development programs and services with multiple points of entry. SkillWorks also try to change practices and strengthen partnerships. It has three components: support for workforce partnerships, advocacy for public policies, and capacity building for organizations delivering workforce development. Participants can enter into the programs from multiple points of entry that can include any of the community-based organizations, employers, or unions involved with the partnership. Skillworks targets Massachusetts industries with high growth potential that are more likely to hire low-income, low-skilled or immigrant workers. More than 40 employers and 30 CBOs are involved in six partnerships in four sectors : health, automotive, hospitality, and building services industries. Each partnership has a lead organization and provide several education and training services (assessment, basic education, vocational skills, career coaching, financial literacy etc.). Among the changes in the industry, there has been an increased employer-paid release time for training, employer-supported career coaching, college course offered at work sites... For example :

- the Boston Health Care and Research Training Institute (HCRTI) is a partnership of eleven health care employers, one union, and several community colleges and community organizations. HCRTI focuses on building career advancement with multiple levels of training, education, and supports.

- The Hotel Career Center (HCC) is a partnership between the International Institute of Boston , the Vietnamese American Civic Association, and the Hilton Hotel Corporation; it provides pre-employment training, as well as career coaching, ESL and computer skills to entry-level hotel employees who do not have the skills needed to participate in in-house staff advancement programs.

Main partners : Employers, CBOs, Community Colleges, Unions; Funders : Boston Foundation and 11 other philanthropic actors, Boston City, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Workforce Development. The partnership has injected \$15 million over the first five years. Each investor has made multiyear commitments to the initiative. Abt Associates and Mount Auburn Associates conduct a five-year outcomes evaluation

³⁷ There are around 20 of these collaborative fund in the Country, see www.nfwsolutions.org

CityBuild Program : Technical skills and supportive services in San Francisco

Lead Agency : The Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) of San Francisco City provides city-wide leadership for workforce development, business attraction and retention, neighborhood commercial revitalization, international business and development planning. OEWD identifies key cluster sectors to target for workforce training and economic growth and create a system that integrates both economic and workforce programs and services.

Target population : San Francisco incumbent workers and job seekers. There are approximately 300 placements in jobs per year. The graduation rate average is 70%. To qualify, applicants must have a high school diploma or GED, a driver's license, the ability to pass drug tests, and the ability to communicate in English. Given the economic slowdown, CityBuild will begin providing skills upgrade training to help past graduates improve their skills.

Main components of the action : The CityBuild Program is a global model. It provides recruiting, training and placement services to job seekers, employers and contractors working in San Francisco's construction industry. The program gives workers the training they need to qualify for higher-skill, higher-paying jobs, for employers and contractors, CityBuild helps businesses to meet their local hiring obligations by recruiting, training and placing qualified economically disadvantaged San Francisco residents who can meet their workforce needs. The CityBuild Academy is a structured twelve-week pre-apprenticeship program designed to prepare students for employment (classroom and hands-on training). Training can be provided by community colleges, CBOs, and unions. The City also funds CBO to offer support in childcare and transportation.

Some aspects of the program are going to be improved : to meet language needs of San Francisco's diverse residents and increase CityBuild's student diversity, Vocational ESL will be incorporated. CityBuild also intends to incorporate "green" construction.

Main partners : City and County of San Francisco, Construction Trade Unions, City College of San Francisco, Community Based Organizations, Northern California Carpenters Regional Council, Transportation Authority, Unions, Building contractors

GoSolarSF Workforce Development Incentive Program

Lead Agency : San Francisco (SF) OEWD (see above), which directs the City's overall workforce development efforts, has designed an incentive program GoSolar which launched in August 2008. It is the initial step of San Francisco City to address the needs of the green economy.

Target Population : SF construction businesses, SF residents who are low income and/or have barriers to employment. 30 people have been hired during the first year. Since the beginning of the economic crisis incumbent workers also have access to the training portion of the program.

Main Components of the Action : There are four level of incentives given to San Francisco homeowners to install solar panels. The highest one is \$6,000 for systems installed by companies that employ low income residents trained under the City workforce development program. The main goals are to develop the green economy and at the same time increase the hiring of local residents with barriers to employment. To be eligible to the highest incentive, businesses must meet a number of requirements : all referred workers perform skilled work and/or receive OJT from the City to perform skilled work through the duration of their employment ; are employed no less than 80% of full time as calculated by a 40 hour week ; receive a wage of no less than \$15.00 per hour. Businesses must submit a monthly performance report to maintain certification for this incentive. A total of 21 contractors are participating in the program. The city is going to add a stronger training model with a Green Collar Jobs Academy that will provide training for weatherization, solar panel installation and energy efficiency.

Main Partners : OEWD funds the program and partners with seven referral agencies for community outreach and job readiness : Asian Neighborhood Design, Charity Cultural Service Center, Chinese for Affirmative Action, SF Conservation Corp, Vis Valley Community Developers Center, and Young Community Developers.

Conclusion

Supporting low-skilled people for real jobs that offer decent wages and opportunities for advancement is a challenge. Developing training programs that effectively reach them is another one.

Low skilled workers and people are a diverse population : some of them have a lack of education, some have been unemployed for a while, some have strong barriers to getting and keeping a job, some are immigrants with a lack of language skill etc. If they have jobs, most have very low wages. Therefore organizations must stay involved over the long term to offer real career pathways. One-time training may not be enough and individuals need to be able access education at the right point, tailored to their skill levels and life situations.

Many innovative initiatives combine elements from multiple models and are relatively comprehensive in the range of the services they provide. The idea is to address needs interdependently. Most of the people I have interviewed have highlighted the importance of support services and case management. This includes access to services such as career counselling, tutoring, childcare, health and mental health services, financial aid, job placement, transportation, adaptation of training courses... Most of the successful programs I have learned about are global programs, mixing actions of training and others kind of help.

Innovative programs involve many partners and are often financed through a number of public and private funding streams. In many of them, foundations play a pivotal role and their resources are essential to create and maintain the initiatives. The big difference with the French context is the critical role of the non-profit sector in the US combined with less public resources. It creates a dynamic diversity of actors involved in workforce development. Non-profit sector is involved in funding (through foundations), service delivery (training providers, CBOs...) and coordination (foundations, CBOs as workforce intermediaries...). A key of success is the existence of an intermediary organization to operate the coordination of all partners (to offer a global program) and work with businesses collectively. The diversity of the programs I have examined shows that the role of workforce intermediary can be taken by diverse actors, public or private. Many sectoral and career ladder initiatives require the involvement of multiple systems, including workforce development, community colleges, the business community, unions, and community groups. It is also a challenge to gain the cooperation of all parties. Another key of success is the active businesses involvement in training and employment programs. Some of the partnerships try to support industry competitiveness improvements because the problem is not only providing enough education and training to move people into well-paying jobs but also the lack of enough good-paying jobs.

One of the main limits is that many promising examples remain very small, and most of them are too small to affect the average earning levels or working conditions in a state or localities. Two central issues are the lack of a national or regional framework and the lack of funding. Innovative practitioners try to scale up training and employment programs and replicate promising models so that they are adopted more widely and also work on state and federal reforms (advocacy for low-skilled and low income people). A big challenge is to keep businesses involved in training and employment programs as there is no mandatory system and they have no legal incentive to do so.

The United States have been called an experimenter in many fields. Most of programs are pragmatic as they try to respond to local issues. Another indication of how pragmatic programs are is the fact that most are designed to meet the needs of existing industries and people. The ability to respond locally to address local issues is also a central point. Local control over training and economic development programs leads to increased flexibility and a greater variety of programs. While many of the programs I have studied have similar components, each has a unique approach based, in part, on the involvement of local actors. French practitioners in the field of employment could learn a lot from the American context about how to build pragmatic and global programs and how to implement new programs adapted to the specific needs of employers or people.

Appendix 1. French and American Education System Comparison

Comparaison entre le système éducatif français et américain

Système Français		Système américain
Ancien système	Nouveau système	
Crèche/Maternelle		Day care/Pre-school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0-3 ans crèche 3-4 ans petite section de maternelle (PS) 4-5 ans moyenne section de maternelle (MS) 5-6 ans grande section de maternelle (GS) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2-3 ans nursery school/day care 3-4 ans preschool 4-5 ans pre-kindergarten 5-6 ans kindergarten
Ecole Primaire		Elementary School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-7 ans = onzième ou CP 7-8 ans = dixième ou CE1 8-9 ans = neuvième ou CE2 9-10 ans = huitième (CM1) 10-11 ans = septième ou CM2 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-7 ans = 1st grade 7-8 ans = 2nd grade 8-9 ans = 3rd grade 9-10 ans = 4th grade 10-11 ans = 5th grade
Collège		Junior High School /Middle school
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11-12 ans = sixième 12-13 ans = cinquième 13-14 ans = quatrième 14-15 ans = troisième 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11-12 ans = 6th grade 12-13 ans = 7th grade 13-14 ans = 8th grade 14-15 ans = 9th grade
Lycée		Senior High School <small>(selon l'école, certaines Senior high school commencent au 9th grade)</small>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-16 ans = seconde 16-17 ans = première 17-18 ans = terminale 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15-16 ans = 10th grade 16-17 ans = 11th grade 17-18 ans = 12th grade
Université <small>(Ancien système)</small>	Université <small>(Nouveau système issu de l'harmonisation européenne LMD=Licence ; Master ; Doctorat)</small>	College/University
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-20 ans = Deug (2 ans) 20-21 ans = Licence (1 an) 21-22 ans = Maîtrise (1 an) 22-23 ans = DESS/DEA (1 an) 23-27 ans = Doctorat (3-5 ans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-21 ans = Licence (3 ans) 21-22 ans = Master I (1 an) 22-23 ans = Master II (1 an) 23-27 ans = Doctorat (3-5 ans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18-20 ans = Associates of Arts (A.A.) 20-22 ans = Bachelor of arts/Science (B.A., B.S.) 22-24 ans = Master's (MBA, MA, MS) 24-27 ans = PhD.

Source : Centre International d'Etudes Pédagogiques

Appendix 2. French Employment and Training System

Actors	Main Responsibilities
Central State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Definition, control and evaluation of the employment and the initial education policy -Offer employment services through a one stop system -Fiscal Exemptions for companies : mainly for low wage workers or in disadvantaged places -Subsidized employment and training for target groups (for example youth, disables, social benefit recipient...)
Regions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Develop and implement the Apprenticeship system for youth, Vocational training for youth, adult and jobseekers : establish multiyear training programs and define the list of specializations available in the region ; Develop employment programs in partnership with departments, municipalities and local organizations
Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manage and operate the system of social benefit and help this specific population
Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Coordinate public resources at the local level with local organizations funded by public money (the Local Missions for Employment to deal with social inclusion of young people ; the Local Plan for Inclusion to find employment opportunities for the hard to employ...)
Companies, Social Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Manage the unemployment benefit system in coordination with the central State -Manage the funds collected through the legal obligation of training (between 0.55% to 1.6% of the firm's gross annual wage bill depending on the size of the firm)

Appendix 3. Workforce Development Programs and Fundings – The Case of Illinois

A SUMMARY OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

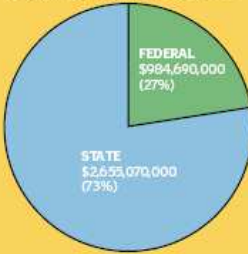
Federal Agency	LABOR (USDOL) www.doleta.gov										HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) www.hud.gov	AGRICULTURE www.usda.gov	EDUCATION www.ed.gov			
State Agency	ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (IDES) www.ides.state.il.us										ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (IDHS) www.dhs.state.il.us			ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION www.isbe.state.il.us		
Program Name	Senior Community Service Employment Program	Job Training (Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title I)	Employment Services (Wagner-Peyser 7A/Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title III) ²	Re-employment Services	Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER)	Disabled Veterans Outreach Program	Wagner Peyser 7B ¹	Labor Market & Career Information (LMI)	Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)	IL Career Services Network & Horizons Career Information System (CIS)	Youth Build ³	Food Stamp Employment and Training (Earnfare) ²	TANF Employment and Training ⁴	Vocational Rehabilitation (Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title IV)	Career and Technical Education (Perkins)	Education to Careers ⁵
Funding (in millions):																
Federal	\$313	\$200.5	\$28.7*	\$1.3*	\$3.6	\$4.3	\$3.1*	\$4.2	\$4.4	0	\$4.6	\$3.9	0	\$90.5	\$41.3	\$11.3
State	.27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	\$0.6	\$0.22	\$10.6	\$21.9	\$13.9	\$41.3	0
TOTAL	\$34	\$200.5/¹\$366.6²	\$28.7	\$1.3	\$3.6	\$4.3	\$3.1	\$4.2	\$4.4	\$0.6	\$4.8	\$14.5	\$21.9	\$104.4/¹\$32²	\$82.6	\$11.3
Service Providers	Local Agencies in 13 Planning and Service Areas	One Stop Delivery System in 26 Local Workforce Areas including Contracted Youth Agencies, One Stop Centers, and Community Based Affiliate Sites. State-certified Trainers include Community Colleges, Community Based Organizations, Proprietary Schools	State Employees at One Stop Centers and IDES Offices	One-Stop Centers	State Employees	Veteran Organizations, Veteran Administration Dept. and Community Based Organizations	State Employees	State Employees	One-Stop Centers, Community Based Organizations and Trainers	State Employees (Serving as Trainers)	Community Based Organizations and City Agencies	State Employees and Community Based Organizations	State Employees at IDHS Offices; Community Based Organizations	State Employees and Contracted Agencies	Primary/Secondary Schools and Community Colleges ⁶	Primary and Secondary Schools
Services	Job Placement and Counseling	Job Placement and Job Training	Job Placement	Job Training for Unemployment Insurance Claimants	Job Placement and Job Training	Job Placement and Job Training	Job Placement and Job Training	Database of Current Workforce Info. Training for Job Counselors	Vocational Training	Employment and Occupational Information	Academic Instruction Integrated with Job Training (in the Building Trades)	Job Placement and Monitoring	Job Placement and Monitoring	Job Placement and Job Training	Programs that Integrate Academic and Vocational Instruction	System which Assists with Education to Career Transition
Target Customer	Adults 55 years or Older at or Below 125% of Federal Poverty Level	Adults, Youth, Dislocated Workers, Employers	Unemployment Insurance (UI) Recipients, Adults and Employers	Unemployment Insurance (UI) Recipients	Veterans	Veterans with Service-Related Disabilities	Wage the Future (Low-Skilled High School Students; Offender Services; Mobile Van (Adults))	Employers; Research Groups, Public Planners & Administrators; Public	Dislocated Workers (Low-Skilled or no program of study; needs assistance Unemployment Insurance benefits called Trade Adjustment Assistance or TAA)	Employers and Job Seekers	High-risk Youth (Ages 16-24)	Food Stamp Recipients (who are not on TANF Caseload)	TANF Recipients	Individuals with Disabilities (14.5+ years)	K-12 Students and College Students	K-12 Students
Number of Customers/Participants	450-500	Total: 37,191 (10,919 Adults, 11,031 Youth, 15,241 Dislocated Workers)	582,271 Job Seekers (New and Renewing Applicants)	8,759 (Duplicated in the Employment Services Count)	11,475 (Duplicated in the Employment Services Count)	13,179 (Duplicated in the Employment Services Count)	1,377 (Duplicated in the Employment Services Count)	6,150 Counselors received LMI Training	1,035	8,469 received Training at Conference	358	11,037	8,057	48,933	Approximately 2 million students	Entire K-12 Population

- Service Categories**
- Job Training
 - Literacy
 - Financial Aid
 - Job Placement/Job Readiness
 - Career-Related Information

- Customer Types**
- Adults, Dislocated, and Incumbent Workers
 - Youth
 - Individuals with Disabilities
 - Cash Assistance Recipients
 - Veterans
 - College Students
 - Employers
 - Ex-Offenders

* FY03 data

TOTAL FUNDING: \$3,639,760,000



NOTES ON METHODOLOGY AND WHAT'S EXCLUDED FROM THE MAP

All data included in this report were provided in early 2003 by program or budget staff at the various state agencies operating workforce development programs. Unless otherwise indicated, the funding amounts are final budget numbers for FY 2002. This map documents public funding streams only; private sector contributions to workforce development are not included. CJC requested and received from some agencies funding data broken out by geographical distribution. However, a decision was made not to include this data in the report because of the difficulties presented with the multiple definitions used for geographic "area" and because some agencies did not track their funding distribution by location at all.

Competitive federal grants, national emergency grants, and incentive bonuses received by the state, as well as special programs funded through local municipal or county government, are not included in this funding streams report since, generally, these funds should not be counted on for planning purposes or they only benefit specific communities. Job Corps, a federal residential program for youth with an education and training focus, is not included because it has locations only in three Illinois communities (Chicago, Joliet, and Colcord). Funding for this program goes directly to those sites from the U.S. Department of Labor. We investigated HOPE VI funding from HUD that goes to public housing authorities and can be used for job-related services, but there was not enough consistent information available to include in the map.

Appendix 4. Interviews list

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