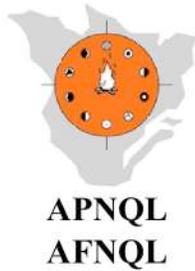


Regional Tripartite Committee on Housing



Canada's Economic Action Plan (Housing) in Quebec's First Nation Communities

**Report for the Authorities of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**

October 2011

Regional Tripartite Committee on Housing
AFNQL – AANDC – CMHC

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SUMMARY

The Regional Tripartite Committee on Housing (AFNQL-AANDC-CMHC) took advantage of the regional meeting held on November 23-24, 2010 to consult with the FN representatives (elected, administrators, technical advisors) on Canada's Economic Action Plan (CEAP) housing sector. First Nations had the opportunity to discuss and share their experience with CEAP. As far as the Committee is concerned, it was an opportunity to gather precious information in evaluating the success of CEAP, including the recommendations on how best to improve on future housing programs or initiatives.

CEAP (housing) numbers

- 48 million dollars additional investment over two (2) years
- 100 new houses: *construction increased by 23 %*
- 2 000 units renovated: *federal investment multiplied by six (6)*
- 120 social dwellings converted to individual ownership
- 120 lots served for residential construction: *federal investment increased by 19 %*

Positive aspects of programs

- Economic impact generated by the implementation of new programs
- Improvements on general housing conditions

Obstacles and challenges met in delivery of programs

- Short delay in applying
- High volume of files to manage; difficulty in recruiting qualified manpower
- Insufficient funding: below estimate costs; did not consider increased administrative costs
- Reporting requirements
- Creating expectations for the future

Suggestions for future programs or initiatives

- Priority to construction of new housing units
- Programs on individual housing, infrastructures, community health and capacity development
- More consultation of programs
- More flexibility to respond to specific needs
- More realistic budgets based on several years
- Simplify documents and procedures

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- Appendix 4 Specific suggestions from the participants on the contents of eventual housing programs or initiatives in the communities.

INTRODUCTION

Within Canada's Economic Action Plan (CEAP) framework, the federal government launched various programs such as social housing construction, the restoration of existing social housing and other complementary social housing activities for the financial years of 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. Many First Nations of Quebec participated, at various degrees, in these programs.

The present report is the fruit of a collaborative effort between the Assembly of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador (AFNQL), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) within the Regional Tripartite Committee on Housing (RTCH). The goal is to raise the awareness of the AANDC and CMHC's authorities of the positive aspects and the obstacles and challenges faced by the First Nations throughout their participation in the various CEAP (housing) programs.

The RTCH authorities meet together on a regular basis to discuss the regional stakes with the objective of improving the housing conditions in the communities of the First Nations of Quebec. The holding of an annual regional meeting is one of the ways advocated by the Committee to favour the networking between the participants of the housing sector. The RTCH decided to dedicate a portion of the November 23rd and 24th 2010 regional meeting on the assessment of the First Nations' experience with the CEAP (housing) programs. Twenty-six First Nations representatives (elected, managers, technical advisers) participated in the workshop with the main objective to obtain, from the main players of the housing sector, the comments, suggestions and feedback on the CEAP (housing). The specific objectives that the RTCH wished to obtain were to:

1. Allow the communities to exchange views on their "CEAP" experience;
2. Pass on to key administrators of the AANDC and CHMC an evaluation report on the success of the CEAP, including recommendations on improvements to bring on the future programs and initiatives.

The November 24th workshop started with the presentation and explanation of the questions submitted to the participants. Afterwards, they separated into groups of six (6) to eight (8) people speaking the same language in order to facilitate the exchanges. A resource-person was appointed at each table to coordinate the exchanges and record the participants' comments. Here are the four (4) questions that were on the agenda:

Group questions

1. In your community, what were the main obstacles and challenges met in the delivery of the CEAP?
2. In your opinion, what worked the best in delivering the CEAP's in your community?
3. Do you have any suggestions for possible housing programs or initiatives in the communities?

Individual question

4. Please, rate the success of each of the program elements.

The resource person appointed at each table handed the notes to the CRTCH who then compiled and analysed the information allowing the present report to be produced. Therefore, the reader will find in the following pages:

- A summary of the First Nations' accomplishments with the help of the CEAP (housing);
- The success rate of the various program elements;
- The obstacles and challenges faced by the First Nations;
- The positive aspects of the programs;
- Suggestions for the future housing programs or initiatives.

1. THE CEAP (HOUSING) IN QUEBEC'S FIRST NATION COMMUNITIES

The CEAP (housing) resulted in an additional 48 million dollar investment in the community housing of the First Nations of Quebec, over a two (2) year period ending March 31st 2011. The financial aid was divided in six (6) program elements: construction, renovation, improvement, property conversion mode and infrastructure delivery by the AANDC and the CMHC.

The accomplishments resulting from the additional investment from the CEAP – housing are summarized as follows:

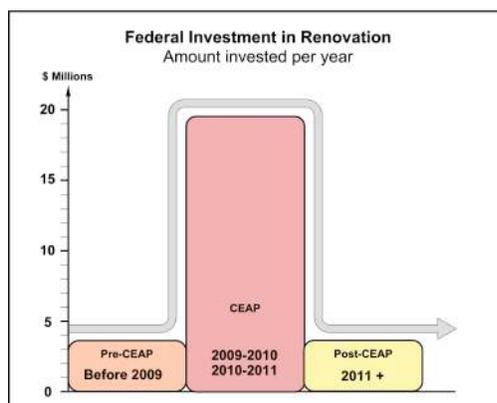
- Construction of over 100 housing units;
- Improvement / renovation of over 2 000 housing units;
- Nearly 120 social housing units converted into individual properties;
- The viability of 120 locations for residency construction.

Summary of the CEAP (housing) accomplishments, Quebec region

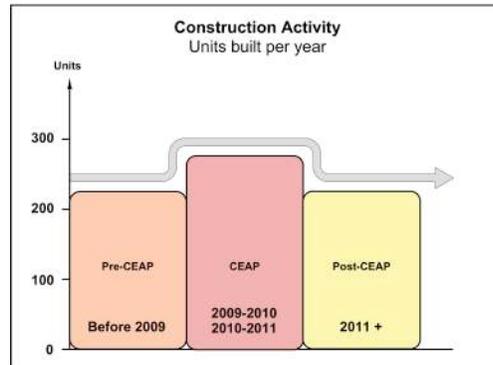
Program	Program elements	Units
CMHC	New construction	63
	Improvements / renovations	1 584
AANDC	New construction (multi-unit housing)	40
	Improvements / renovations	481
	Property transfers	119
	Servicing of lots	120

The CEAP (housing) had a very significant measurable effect in the communities of the First Nations of Quebec:

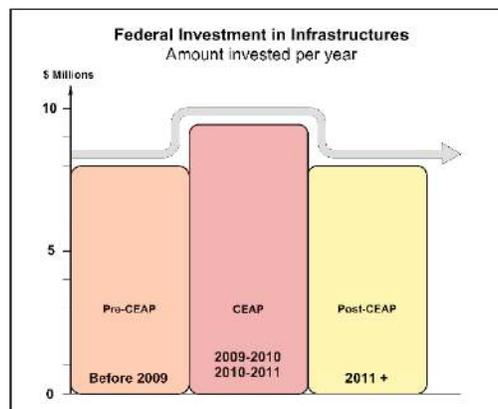
- multiply by six (6) the annual federal investments in renovation, which normally total ±\$3.3M but which reached \$19.5M for each of the two (2) years of CEAP. *The regular federal investments are composed of the basic renovation allocations from AANDC and the RRAP funds from CMHC. The investments from other sources, such as replacement reserves, FN funds other than the basic renovation allocations, private funds and bank loans were not considered. The CEAP figures are those from the AANDC and CMHC renovation programs and the INAC property transfer program;*



- increase by 23 % the pace of housing construction, which went from ±225 units (regular plan) to ±277 units built on average per year during CEAP. *Regular plan refers to the regular regional budget allocation as of 2005/2006, therefore with the application of the new national allocation method;*



- increase by 19 % the annual federal investments in infrastructure to service new residential lots, which normally total ±\$8.0M but which reached \$9.4M for each of the two (2) years of CEAP. *The regular federal investments are composed of the basic infrastructure allocations from AANDC. The investments from other sources, such as FN funds other than the basic infrastructure allocations, private funds and bank loans were not considered.*



Moreover, the First Nations recorded, in general, a significant rise amongst hours worked by local labour.

The main target of CEAP is unquestionably residential renovation, which obtained two (2) thirds of the total investment (\$32M). This has directly resulted in improved housing conditions for a large number of families. On the other hand, the impact is minor on the major problem affecting communities, that is, the lack of housing. The hundred or so units added under CEAP are quite far from the current need estimated at over 7,000 dwellings.

2. SUCCESS RATE OF THE DIFFERENT PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The CEAP workshop participants were invited to rate the success of each program elements. In order to do so, they completed a chart, in which they could indicate, in a general way, the success of one or many program elements for which their First nation obtained a financial aid within the CEAP framework. Please note that this activity took place on an individual basis, contrary to the other workshop questions which were answered in groups (round table discussion).

Success rate of the CEAP (housing) per program element, Quebec region

Program	Program elements	Rate of success			Applicable	Not applicable	No response	Total
		Low	Average	High				
CMHC	New construction	40%	20%	40%	15	8	3	100%, 26 participants
	Improvements renovation	23%	48%	29%	21	3	2	100%, 26 participants
AANDC	New construction multi-units	55%	27%	18%	11	11	4	100%, 26 participants
	Improvements renovation	22%	52%	26%	23	2	1	100%, 26 participants
	Property transfers	36%	36%	28%	11	12	3	100%, 26 participants
	Lots servicing	39%	15%	46%	13	9	4	100%, 26 participants

The lots servicing is the program element that obtained the highest success score (46%) according to the participants. The aqueduct and sewer infrastructures intended to serve the local residents constitute a major financial stake in the housing development of the communities. The First Nations who were able to comply with the qualification requirements, particularly those who were ready to present a project, had the opportunity to benefit from additional funds. The participants suggest increasing the element of "lots servicing", because individual housing solicits more and more the bank of serviced lots in the communities.

If we combine the average and high rates, the most successful program element according to the participants are the AANDC and CHMC "improvement / renovation" program elements, which were granted 78% and 77% respectively. The high number of renovated units and the "respite" allotted to the maintenance budget as well as the replacement reserves were especially appreciated. Following the completion of the renovation work the participants saw other positive aspects such as the tenants' satisfaction, the improvement of the housing appearance and the increased life span. The challenges faced in the delivery, particularly the lack of time to perform the work, were irritants.

The "construction of multi-unit housing" (AANDC) program element is the one that obtains the most comments of poor success (55%) and the least high ratings (18%). The labour constraints associated with the large-scale residential projects are listed among the remarks. However, keep in mind that only 11 participants expressed themselves on this program element, which touched a relatively low number of First nations.

The "property transfer" program element obtained a combined success rate (average and high) of 64%. The participants are surprised of the success obtained by this program element. The refinancing seemed to have worked well in certain communities. However, the people deplore the lack of time and resources allocated to work on the property transfer files as well as the lack of clarity in the application guides.

Finally, the First Nations who benefited from the “new construction” program element of the CMHC were generally satisfied (average and high combined success rate of 60%). Certain participants believe that this additional contribution for housing units of article 95 will create expectations for the years to come. Without a doubt, the level of satisfaction would have been greater if the budget associated with this program element had been more substantial. The participants that gave their opinion would have appreciated a more generous contribution. Obviously, the First Nations who weren’t able to benefit from the additional housing units due to the unavailability of the ready to build lots were evidently disappointed. The participants also mentioned that the inspection process of the new constructions still needs improvement.

The participants’ specific comments on each of the program elements are found in appendix 1.

3. OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES FACED IN THE DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMS

The main obstacles and challenges faced in the CEAP's delivery and which were collected during the CEAP (housing) workshop is divided into five (5) main themes: Program applications; its implementation; the financing and costs of the projects; the report requirements and the program rules; the CEAP contribution in regards to the housing needs in the communities.

For each of the 5 major themes, the following obstacles and challenges were noticed:

Program applications

The most frequent constraints mentioned were the short time span (consequently the lack of time) to apply for the different program elements and the additional workload required to complete the application forms (needs evaluation, technical specifications). The short application delays made it difficult to have an exact estimation of the work costs, which brought surprises during their realisation. Furthermore, the fact that the CMHC and the AANDC programs were not harmonized, although associated to the same application period, contributed to the complicate the application process. The First Nations would have appreciated more support during the application and reporting processes.

Implementation of the programs

The major constraints during this implementation phase were the volume of files (projects) to handle, the supply management (procurement time and availability of materials), the short time period to accomplish the projects (late start-up of the building site and the March 31st deadline), the availability of qualified labour (internal and external), as well as the temporary tenant relocation management.

Funding and costs of the projects

The lack of financial resources, linked to the unexpected and exceeding costs (initial estimates, winter period) as well as the allocated budgets that were lower than the proposals, turned out to be the major financial challenges. The First Nations also deplored the fact that there were no specific funds granted to cover the administrative costs generated by the local housing services resulting from the additional work volume caused by the new programs. Furthermore, disappointment was felt because the improvement / renovation program application guide of the CMHC hinted contributions of \$28 000, \$32 000 or \$40 000 per housing unit (depending on the geographical area) yet, in reality the work was conducted with \$10 000 to \$15 000 budgetary envelopes.

Reporting requirements and program regulations

The frequency, the complexity and the new method of reporting were raised as challenges or obstacles.

The CEAP contribution in regards to the housing needs in the communities

There is apprehension as to the after-CEAP period because the two intensive years of projects have created expectations among the First Nation communities. However, housing needs of all sorts remain considerable in the communities, particularly for new units, and we wonder how they will be met.

The participants' specific comments on the major obstacles and challenges faced in the CEAP (housing) delivery are found in appendix 2.

4. POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAMS

The CEAP (housing) was very demanding for the majority of Quebec's First Nation communities, particularly for the prescribed deadlines, yet, several aspects were very beneficial. The most frequent positive elements mentioned by the participants at the CEAP (housing) workshop were:

- the important local economical impact;
- the increased longevity and general improvement of the houses;
- the general increase of the tenants' satisfaction;
- the reduction of pressure on the replacement reserves;
- the hasty budget of year 2.

Other elements worthy of mention:

- facilitates the housing transfers to the individuals;
- Increase of local skills and expertise;
- Interesting lever for the rent collection.

The economical impact is the element that stood out the most. The CEAP financial contribution on a two-year period gave way to steady additional employment and the purchase of local goods. These employment opportunities allowed certain communities to increase their skills and local expertise in the construction management sector.

The work in the renovation section allowed important improvements to the different housing components. The general conditions of the houses and their appearance were therefore highly improved, not to mention its lifetime extension. These investments also had the benefit of reducing the massive use of the replacement reserves, which therefore, relieved the financial burden of many communities. Some tenants even chose to financially participate in the improvements.

The fact that the budgets were allocated quicker during the CEAP's second year was appreciated. Therefore, the First Nations benefited from additional time to complete the work compared to the previous year.

Many tenants declared to be very satisfied with the work which, in certain cases, turned out as a positive lever for the rent collection and the housing transfers to individuals.

The participants' specific comments on what worked the best in the CEAP's (housing) delivery is found in appendix 3.

5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE PROGRAMS OR INITIATIVES

Due to their functions, the elected representatives, housing managers and technical advisers who participated in the CEAP (housing) workshop have a good knowledge of the housing sector in First Nation's communities. Moreover, in the last two (2) years, they worked closely with the CEAP programs of the AANDC and CMHC. They are the key persons to document the considerations for future housing programs or initiatives in the communities.

The participants hope that a future program will focus on constructions as their first priority in order to fill the lack of housing units and therefore answer to the primary need of the First Nations. Thus, the emphasis should be put on the new housing units program. They also wish additional flexibility in the new programs in order to be able to solve the communities' particular problems. The participants wish that the RTCH or the representatives of the First Nations of Quebec be implicated right at the outset of the conception stage, so that the programs can be more adapted to the region's needs. Besides, in order to ensure a better long-term planning, it would be interesting that a future initiative not be limited to a two-year (2) program. Also standing out is the need to further reduce and simplify the documentation related to such programs, and that they be transmitted to the community housing departments, with the Leaders in cc (carbon copy). This will facilitate the dissemination of information to the people who have to deal with this documentation within the prescribed delays, documents that would benefit from being reviewed.

Moreover, the participants shared a few considerations relating to the funding, and suggested specific themes for the future programs or initiatives.

Summary of suggestions for the future programs or initiatives

PRIORITY TARGET: PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING UNITS

Flexibility to answer particular needs

- Allow the possibility to transfer funds from one program element to another
- Relax the rules to better respond to the reality of the remote regions
- Show more flexibility with the First Nations who face a temporary financial problem (the encouragement of a healthy management)

Implication of the First Nations or the RTCH right at the outset of the conception stage

- Consult the communities and implicate them right from the start in order to harmonize the conception of the new programs and the criteria to the needs

Long term planning

- A financial long term planning over several years would allow a better work plan and provide savings and a sustained impact on employment.
- In a case such as the CEAP where two (2) organizations (CHMC and AANDC) are implicated, the first year could have been dedicated to the programs of one organisation and to the other, the second year.

Documentation and application deadlines

- Transmission of documents to the key players well before the construction season (housing departments with a carbon copy to the Leaders)
- Simplify the application forms, provide more support during the process and condense the reports
- Revise the deadlines for the application and completion of works

Financial considerations

- The funding should take into consideration the contingency and the administration costs of the new programs
- The follow-up of the payments need to be simplified
- The 10% retention is a principle that needs to be revised because it places the First nations that are in financial difficulty at a disadvantage.

Suggestions for future programs or initiatives

- Individual housing
- Infrastructures
- Community health (mold and mildew, vermiculite, radon)
- Programs for specific groups (ex: senior citizens, middle class)
- Take into account the impacts of the “Mclvor” Ruling
- Training of housing inspectors
- Safety on the construction sites
- Capacity building

The participants’ specific suggestions on the future content of the housing programs or initiatives in the communities are found in appendix 4.

CONCLUSION

At the regional housing meeting of November 23rd and 24th 2010, the RTCH brought representatives of the First Nations (elected representatives, managers, technical advisors) to do an assessment of the CEAP (housing) programs. This activity not only allowed the communities to exchange views on their “CEAP” experience, but it was also an opportunity to gather precious information on the evaluation of success of the CEAP, including recommendations on improvement of future programs or initiatives.

The additional investment of 48 million dollars provided by the CEAP during the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 years translated into 100 new housing units, 2 000 renovated units, 120 social housing units converted into individual properties and 120 serviced lots for residency construction.

The CEAP (housing) turned out to be very beneficial in many regards, but it was the resulting economical impact and the improvements brought to the general housing conditions that most satisfied the consulted First Nation representatives.

In general, the CEAP turned out to be a success in the First Nation communities according to the participants who assessed the combined success rate (average and high) of 60% and more, to five (5) elements of the program, out of six (6). The “construction of multi-unit housing” (AANDC) was the only program element that obtained an inferior mark.

The major obstacles and challenges faced during the unfolding of the CEAP relate to the submission of a request to the programs and its implementation, the funding and cost of the projects, to the reporting requirements and the program regulations, as well as the contribution of the CEAP in regards to the housing needs within the communities.

Other programs or initiatives, such as the CEAP (housing) would be appreciated, but they would need to prioritize the construction of new housing units in order to respond to the primary need of the First Nations. These last are demanding more consultation. They also seek more flexibility in the programs, more realistic budgets stretching over several financial periods, as well as streamlined procedures and documentation.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Specific Comments from the Participants on
Each of the Program Elements

Specific Comments from the Participants on Each of the Program Elements

CMHC – Renovation Program

- Not enough money
- Has been used for the Elder's Home
- Replacement washroom, kitchen, windows for Phase 1
- Most of our section 95 units were repaired, approximately 75 – 80 % of the section 95 house stock
- Could use more, good program
- We would need more and have the necessary time to carry out these repairs
- Work description needs to be established in conjunction with communities
- Challenges and obstacles in delivery : staying within the outsider's work description; time frame to deliver units; New initiative
- Brought older unit up to date, relief on maintenance and replacement reserve
- Very good, excellent, but it's going to create expectations for future years
- It could be better if the budget requested was allocated
- Disappointed by phase 1
- Several requests submitted; the allotments represent a low % of the needs

CMHC – New Housing Program

- The first year, we built 3 units, but the second year we built 11 units
- Funding could be better
- All in all went well. Inspection process needs to improve
- Very good, excellent, but this will create expectations for future years
- It could be better if the budget requested was allocated
- Disappointed
- No lot available, therefore no possible construction

AANDC – Serviced Lot Program

- The first year we didn't have any allocation ; the second year we had 9 lots
- It comes under another department
- It should be increased, because we build a lot of individual units and the needs are large
- Disappointment
- No allocation received, problems in securing financial partners
- We were well prepared in advance; it's a good success

AANDC – Renovation Program

- Most of our housing stock were repaired
- Cost overruns in winter, high cost for materials and labor
- We ran out of time to submit other requests
- The people were given their amounts and should not have caused a lot of animosity
- It could be better if the budget requested was granted
- The amount allocated is higher than that of the CMHC

AANDC – Multi-unit Housing Construction Program

- Project in progress
- Labour force constraints for building such a large building
- Very good
- Disappointed

AANDC – Property Transfer Program

- This aspect was surprisingly successful
- Lack of time and resources for the composition of the standard form to formalize the transfer (content of this transfer, etc.)
- Clear guidelines needed
- Very good, mortgage redemption

General Feedback

- The whole project did not go well because of the previous Housing Administration which left many dissatisfied community members
- What went well ?
 - Tenants were appreciative
 - More attractive appearance to our units
 - Relief for our Maintenance Department
 - Prolong the life span of units
 - Employment opportunities

APPENDIX 2

Specific Comments from the Participants on the
Major Obstacles and Challenges Faced in the
Delivery of the CEAP (Housing)

Answers to the question: In your community, what were the main obstacles and challenges met in the delivery of the CEAP?

- The inspectors (reporting) must visit several communities
- Deadline is too short: May 4 vs June 4
- The number of files to be dealt with is too large
- Affects and gives a false impression on the quality of work and tenders
- Distance of the inspector versus the community
- Problem: the number of inspectors
- Allocated amounts versus amounts requested
- End of agreement, so we could no longer renovate
- Cost overrun (winter and remoteness)
- Large increase in new requests (creating requirements)
- Problems with tenants (relocation, no family, reorganization, organization)
- A lot of secretive work and unforeseen work (cracks, etc.)
- The forms are confusing and difficult to understand
- Lack of training for reporting
- No specific amount for administrative costs and unforeseen expenses
- Lack of human resources (office and on the field)
- Lack of financial resources (Cost overrun)
- Cash shortages to begin the works are causing delays (problem 15% initial and 25%)
- The delay is too short to prepare the requests, especially when it covered 2 years
- Increased flexibility in the delivery date, especially the 1st year – March 31, right in the middle of winter is not ideal, and it increases the costs
- AANDC's Progress Reports are complicated
- No real impact in order to increase the number of new units
- Some applications for funding were refused
- Dissemination of information should be done at both the political and administrative levels – Accelerates the process
- The needs are still so pressing that many people expect to have their house renovated – management of expectations
- Delays are too short for the implementation and delivery of the program
- Increase in managerial responsibilities due to an increase in file management, in administration and tasks over and above the regular tasks
- The allocations are inferior to the sums requested in the proposals (estimates initially submitted)
- It's difficult to get the services of consultants and manpower (in number, and qualified internal and external labor) because there are much more external projects than usual, and the supply is not keeping pace with the demand
- The forms (AANDC and CMHC) are not standardized, therefore more difficult to complete
- Too short a period of time to grasp and understand the mandate and produce the proposals in accordance with the demand and the requirements
- The programs are different (AANDC and CMHC, at the same time, with the same deadline to apply)
- Discontent and disappointment (members and band councils) towards rejected projects
- Equity contribution and cash management are difficult because of the financial situation of the Band
- Program driven by economic stimulus rather than actual housing needs
- Should have been First Nation driven to establish needs

- Working season for northern communities not taken into account
- Short delays did not allow for proper planning capacity and resources (database on housing stock condition should be available)
- Time constraints vs program requirements
- No more \$, no extensions
- Timeline + quick response (2 weeks, no flexibility)
- Not enough time to carry out proper inspections and intervention needs
- Additional works needed over and above program allocation \$
- "Unforeseen" surprises when doing interventions
- Inspections and evaluation by contractors were higher than usual due to limited available resources (materials, need of work, more \$)
- Funding came with new allocation process and payment requests
- New reporting requirements (CEAP)
- Left little time to deal with regular program units in year 1 and allocations were not revisited in year 2
- The time frame to apply is limited
- No resources on site to develop the application, work overload
- Difficult task (quotations, photos, reports, etc.)
- Delays in responding to budgetary requests
- No budget allocation for the personnel assigned to the project management (clerk, coordinator, inspector)
- No allocation for administrative fees
- Costs related to the acquisition of inexperienced manpower are not taken into account
- Loss of leasing revenues
- Added costs for unforeseeable works (mold, cracks, etc.)
- Elaboration of quarterly reports
- Added costs for winter-related works
- Vacancy of an accommodation to relocate the tenants during the works
- Assume the moving costs of tenants in certain cases
- Hire experienced Aboriginal workers
- Storage of tenants' furniture
- Delays in the delivery of materials
- Coordinate continuously the works
- Continue the management of current operations with the CEAP
- As a whole, the program contributed in a significant way to assist certain communities, but not all of them
- Those communities faced with budgetary restriction problems could not risk submitting several applications in order to minimize the risks of cost overruns
- Opitciwan was able to profit from the program. The Band Council had to provide an equity contribution in order to properly complete the intended works. The needs were partly met. A project manager had to be hired in order to monitor the execution of the works. The local manpower contributed greatly to the execution of the works
- Manawan was able to profit to some extent from the program. Very few needs were met
- All the works were carried out by the local workers cooperatives
- Wemotaci did not really benefit from the program. The needs were not met
- Timeframe is way too short to apply for this program and the timing was inappropriate (June and July)
- It is at that specific time of the year that many officers in charge of the works, plan their summer vacations

- In order to be able to answer in a timely manner, the housing authorities had to be already prepared and have on hand project summary documents and budgetary estimates

APPENDIX 3

Specific Comments from Participants on what
Worked Best in the Delivery of the CEAP
(Housing)

Answers to the question: In your opinion, what worked best in the delivery of the CEAP in your community?

- A lot of houses were renovated
- People appreciated the work done
- Improve the visual aspects of the houses
- Efficiency of entrepreneurs
- Prolong the quality and life expectancy of the current housing stock
- Improve the air quality and the members' health
- Sustain local economy and job creation
- Year 2 is easier, because it has been faster with the budgetary announcements
- There is some flexibility in the implementation
- Perspective over a two-year period helped diminish the burden on the 2nd year
- Job creation
- Lever for rental collection
- Very positive impact on the condition of the homes
- A lot of job creation
- A lot of improvement on the quality of the housing stock and the infrastructures
- Increased satisfaction among certain tenants
- Increased economic development (companies in communities solicited) and increased incentives for purchasing locally
- Timing = projects were announced in a good period (\$ funding opportunity for new \$)
- Helped deal with safety issue in a timely manner
- Good economic spin-offs but outside the communities
- Developed expertise and capacity
- Increased interest in trades (more youth interest)
- Increased life expectancy of housing stock
- The satisfaction of the clientele has increased
- The satisfaction of the housing department employees has increased
- Job creation (labourers, clerks)
- Decrease in one-time maintenance related interventions
- Decrease in long term maintenance costs
- It was possible to carry out certain works which significantly improved the homes, the overall vision reflecting a definite improvement (ex. : replacement of obsolete vinyl outside finishing by a "Canoxel" outside siding, renovations of roofing, balconies, doors and windows, which helped stop infiltrations by water and made the homes safer)
- The oil furnaces that had reached the end of their operational lifecycle were also replaced, thus facilitating the maintenance and ensuring a safe operation
- The transfer of homes to individuals through the "Access to Ownership" program was also interesting. It was possible to make renovations of up to \$25,000 to the satisfaction of the future owner
- CEAP investments relieved pressures from the housing O&M budget
- CEAP investments have helped repair Section 95 units in cases where the replacement reserve was insufficient
- CEAP investments allowed for the renovation of older section 95 units, especially those close to the end of agreement
- CEAP investments provided an opportunity to support tenants, encourage them to enhance their sense of pride and responsibility notably by giving them options to pay for upgrades to their houses
- CEAP investments provided employment opportunities in the community

- CEAP investments has contributed to extend the life of assets through the renovation component
- CEAP investments has increased tenant satisfaction
- The clarity of information on the programs and the forms to be completed should be done differently for the CMHC and for AANDC. In general, the completion of documents was often problematic
- It was easier to access information from the CMHC than it was from AANDC. The resources were already in place at the CMHC.
- The housing officers had to take initiatives, without having necessarily having received the approval of the administrative authorities. Example: possibility of equity contribution, restriction of expenses, Band Council resolutions, etc.
- The communities were expecting larger amounts to carry out the renovations. There was a mention of ± \$28,000 maximum per unit, and we were forced to carry out the works with \$10,000 to \$15,000 per unit, as far as the CMHC is concerned.
- We had to revise the descriptions of the works downward, in order to comply with the budget available
- After receiving the budgetary confirmation, we revised the works and estimates. We proceeded to the elaboration of the lists of materials, tenders and/or orders
- There were delays at the level of deliveries once the orders were passed, which delayed the start of the works
- Several projects were executed late in the fall, even in the winter season
- The completion date for the end of the works, that is March 31, was not very logical for certain projects
- Also, certain additional budgets were received late, and we still had to meet the same deadline of March 31 to complete the works
- CEAP was implemented in such a way that tenants often disbursed their allocation on material alone, overlooking the cost of labour
- New staff and the lack of a full assessment of houses prior to the selection process have made difficult the establishment of a coherent selection process
- Tight dealines led to the community missing Part B of the initiative. As a result, it lacked the resources to complete Part A projects that had incurred cost overruns.
- Time constraints for submissions and implementation made it difficult to accurately estimate financial needs (no time for thorough inspections) and to complete projects in time, notably due to late confirmation of funding and the short construction period. Also, the training needed to help the staff manage the initiative efficiently takes time
- The initiative did not come with funding for overhead costs, which has put a strain on the band council's resources
- It has been difficult to find qualified personel for the management and implementation of CEAP initiatives
- External contractors had to be hired to do work that community members could have done if the timeline had allowed for it. As a result, it did not help build internal capacity and expertise to the extent it could have
- Uncertainty from the band administration as to appropriate application criteria have led to claims of unfair selection of recipients from certain community members
- Work description were done externally and proved unreliable, which led to higher costs than expected

APPENDIX 4

Specific Suggestions from the Participants on
the Content of Eventual Housing Programs or
Initiatives in the Communities

Answers to the question: Do you have any suggestions to offer for possible housing programs or initiatives in the communities?

- Training or assistance in finding construction inspectors
- Consult and train communities on new programs
- Extend the delays to implement and complete the projects
- Improve the safety of construction sites (government requirements and training of contractors)
- Extension of time limits
- Discussion between AANDC, CMHC and Band Council (policy) for extension
- Target the individual component
- Targeted Programs (vermiculite, radon, mold)
- Training on radon, vermiculite
- Create a program for the elderly persons
- Housing assistance program for middle class, because, too often, the low income level is the only one targeted
- Housing program adapted to members under the age of 65
- Create new programs, such as the CEAP, in the future
- Problem with the 3rd generation (re : "Mclvor" Ruling) who will need houses, thus creating a need for programs and financing
- Increase the initiative for construction of new housing
- Programs spread over at least a 2 year period, because it allows savings
- Spread out the constructions over a span of several years – a positive impact on employment and income
- FLEXIBILITY
- Consider the challenges encountered by remote First Nation communities
- Refer to the elements of question #1
- Have a certain flexibility to extend the time limit to implement and assimilate the mandate
- Reconsider the March 31st deadline (ex. : postpone the deadline in the fall of the following fiscal year, possibility of extension after March 31st to complete the works, to call for tenders in January-February, in order to be in line with the construction cycle, etc.)
- Transmission of documents and methods of distribution, and letters to be revised (addressees : housing officers and carbon copy to the Band Council) to avoid delay within the organization of the Band Council
- Re-examine the principle of the 10% holdback amount, since the Band must assume this 10% up until the requirements of the agreement are completed (meaning the certified completion report + audited financial statements in the case of the CEAP). Cash management and ability to support financially (ex. : interest) this 10%, are difficult, depending on the financial situation and availability of the Band
- Infrastructures initiatives are a must for First Nations
- Capacity \$ = training / evaluation
- Advanced "warning" allow sufficient time for proposals
- Sustainable funding (example: 5 years)
- Phase out funding vs "dead stop"
- Get First Nations involved as soon as possible in process / planning (formula driven, determine needs and criteria)
- Revisit the "Kelowna" accord \$ for housing
- Regional vs national involvement / not only consult but also get First Nations consent before going back to Headquarters

- CEAP investments provided employment opportunities in the community
- CEAP investments has contributed to extend the life of assets through the renovation component
- CEAP investments has increased tenant satisfaction
- Work start period vs deadlines (Fall + March)
- Provide greater support in the application process (especially AANDC)
- Have a yearly application process for the AANDC program elements
- Extend application and delivery timelines
- Ensure allocation process can be completed before the start of the construction season
- Have continuous submission process (no cut off date)
- Allow flexibility to reallocate funding between program elements (e.g. from renovation to construction)
- There is a need to review the application process of the program, to reduce the burden of documents and/or forms to be completed, to review the deadlines for distribution, via the executions, to transfer the deadlines of the works to August 30th
- The two years should have been divided as follows:
 - 1st year : funds distributed and monitored by the CMHC only;
 - 2nd year : by the department of AANDC only and only for programs other than renovations (ex. :lot development).
- The follow-up of payments at the budget level and the report to be completed could be reviewed and simplified
- Cost overrun could be avoided if the works were to be done in the spring time
- Provide sufficient funds to achieve the targeted projects (ex. : lot development overrun of $\pm 20\%$)
- Provide the information and the criteria three months in advance, so that Band Councils prepare themselves
- There should be a process in place in order not to loose the budgets allocated, in case of a temporary financial problem, and this is to encourage the communities to maintain a sound management
- Grant a reasonable delay for submission of applications (approximately 6 weeks)
- Condense reports
- Anticipate a 10% margin for unforeseen expenses and payments on documentary evidence
- Take into consideration the administrative costs
- Take into consideration the administrative cost management for the initiatives (salaries)