Regions That Work: Assessing the Challenge

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Agenda

- What is a Regional Workforce Development System?
- Components of a Regional System
- The Public Sector and Leading Organizations
- Labor Market Intermediaries and Partnerships and Collaborations
- Conclusions
What is a Regional Workforce Development System?

A regional workforce development system is defined as those processes, rules and institutions that finance, regulate, provide services, maintain, and link the core functions and activities necessary to prepare and support workers, and to respond to the human resources needs of employers on a geographical scale corresponding to a labor market, often inclusive of a central metropolitan area and across surrounding political and local governance jurisdictions.
Elements of a Regional Workforce Development System Definition

- Processes, rules and institutions that finance, regulate, provide services, maintain, and link core functions and activities
- to prepare and support *(disadvantaged)* workers
- to respond to the human resources needs of employers
- on a geographical scale corresponding to a labor market, often inclusive of a central metropolitan area
- across political and local governance jurisdictions.
The Geography of Work: Why Regional Labor Markets

- Most workers travel from their residence to the workplace within the boundaries of a metropolitan area or region.

- Employers are often clustered in certain industrial areas and business districts within that metropolitan region.

- Often times a mismatch in the spatial distribution of jobs and people create challenges for workers to access jobs, and for employers to recruit and retain capable workers.

- Spatial dynamics are compounded by the evolving nature of technologies and its effect on skill requirements.

- As the market for human resources changes, new challenges arise for the matching of regional talents to industry needs and for the skills retooling of incumbent workers.
Objective of a Regional Workforce Development System

The main objective of a regional workforce development system is to support economic efficiency, equity and growth.

To achieve this objective, effective systems:

- Support High Wages and Employment Standards
- Regional Scope & Neighborhood-Based (Access)
- Decentralized & Integrated
- Dual Customers & Triple Bottom Line
- Multiple Funding Streams & Service Integration
Interrelated Components of a Regional Workforce Development System

We are particularly concerned with regional workforce development systems that focus on low skills, low wages workers, the industries that employ them, and their employers.

Components of the System:

- Supply Side: Workers’ Services
- Demand Side: Employers' Services
- System Building & Netting
- Financing and Oversight: Scope of Regional Authority
# Supply Side: Workers’ Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access and Supports</th>
<th>Skills Training: Community-Based</th>
<th>Skills Training: Education</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach</td>
<td>• Job Readiness Training</td>
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<td>• Assessment</td>
<td>• ABE, ESL</td>
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<td>• Referrals</td>
<td>• Vocational Training</td>
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<td>• Case-Mngt</td>
<td>• Technical certifications</td>
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<td>• Support Services</td>
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<td>• Job Placement and Job matching</td>
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<td>• Program Development</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Structuring of Partnerships and Collaborations</td>
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Demand Side: Employers' Services

- Recruiting and screening
- Retention
- Incumbent workers training
- Career ladders

- Program Development
- Structuring of Partnership & Collaborations
System Building & Netting

- Policy
- Program Development
- Structuring and Managing Collaborations

- Program Development
- Structuring of Partnership & Collaborations
Workforce Development Organizations

Workers’ Services:
- OSCC’s
- CBO’s
- Community Colleges
- Technical Schools
- Union-Based Training
- Other labor market Intermediaries

Employer Services
- Business Associations
- Community Colleges
- Other labor market Intermediaries

System Building and Netting
- WIBs
- Regional Partnerships
- Other labor market Intermediaries
Programmatic cohesiveness in the system is largely a function of:

- How the public system has aligned resources and organized the provision of services;
- Whether the publicly funded system has adopted a truly regional perspective in their deployment of program activities; and
- To what degree the leading organization commands authority over the various streams of financial support for employment and training services broadly conceived.
Limits and Scope of the Public Sector at the Regional Level

- **Geographic authority**: whether the authority over program implementation and oversight is comprehensive of a regional labor market, such as those in a metropolitan area and its satellite suburbs; and,

- **Programmatic authority**: whether the agency that oversees the allocation of WIA-related funding is also given the mandate to oversee substantive allocations of other funding streams such as those from TANF employment-related activities.
# Scope of Authority in the Public System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Authority</th>
<th>Programmatic Authority</th>
<th>Programmatic Authority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversees WIA, welfare and other funds</td>
<td>Primarily oversees WIA funds, not welfare or other funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Public System</td>
<td>Regional Integration</td>
<td>Regional scope, limited authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Regional Public System</td>
<td>Integrated authority, limited geography</td>
<td>Limited geography and authority</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Critical Role of “Leading Organizations”

“Leading organizations” actively promote regional integration through the structuring of regional partnerships and collaborations.

These partnerships depend on:
- the availability of public and philanthropic funding,
- competitiveness in the industry, and
- the existence of intermediaries able to undertake the organizing and development of the network.

Partnerships and collaborations often include local community organizations targeting disadvantaged populations.
## Leading Organizations and the Scope of Authority in the Public System

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<tr>
<td>Regional Public System</td>
<td>SETA, Sacramento, SER Metro-Detroit</td>
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<td>JobWorks, NEI, LA Urban League</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Regional Public System</td>
<td>UMOS, Milwaukee, OICW-Menlo Park</td>
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<td>Three Rivers WIB- Pitts, Baltimore County OET</td>
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The Role of Workforce Intermediaries

1) Workers, or supply-side services: to provide access to job-supporting programs and skills training to workers;

2) Employers, or demand-side services: to provide industry workforce needs;

3) System building, or “netting” services: to sponsor programs and activities that complement those of other intermediaries and benefit the industry in general; and

4) System governance: to actively engage in WIBs and other public oversight boards to set system-wide goals, performance standards, and accountability protocols.
The Importance of Partnerships and Collaborations (Ps & Cs)

Ps & Cs enable intermediaries to coordinate supply-side and demand-side services so that regions can meet the human resources needs of industry.

Ps & Cs add value to the system by:

- Structuring financing for programs,
- Facilitating economies of scale for training,
- Implementing successful replication of best practices and effective programs,
- Providing legitimacy to projects,
- Providing quality control and standards, and
- Partnering with local community organizations.
Conclusions

Workforce development regionalism depends on:

- Regional integration of the public sector.
- Leading organizations that articulate a well-defined regional agenda.
- Labor market intermediaries that facilitate service delivery and promote effectiveness and accountability.
- Partnerships and collaborations with significant industry and employment services providers.
- Public funding and other supports for system building and netting activities.
System Netting and Policy

- System netting activities are an essential component of a regional workforce development system.
- System netting activities are not generally recognized as an important dimension of the system.
- System Netting requires dedicated funding and greater attention by policy makers, civic leaders and advocates.
Policy Strategies

- First, state and local agencies should support organizations that engage in system building and netting activities.
- Second, state and local governments should facilitate geographic and programmatic integration at the regional level.
- Third, programmatic and regional integration requires consolidation of various job training and employment programs currently not part of the WIA.
- Finally, OSCC functions should expand to support system building and netting activities, and to promote partnerships and collaborations among key stakeholders in the region.