

# **POVERTY FREE NWT**

An NWT where everyone has what they need to live in  
dignity

An Anti-Poverty Strategy for the Northwest Territories  
November 2012

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## INTRODUCTION

*“To live in poverty in Canada is to live with insufficient and often poor quality food. It is to sleep in poor quality and/or unaffordable housing, in homeless shelters, or on city streets and parks. It is on a daily basis to have to make difficult and painful decisions involving trade-offs, such as whether to “pay the rent or feed the kids,” pay the electric bill or go to the dentist, buy a new bus pass or forego inviting friends for dinner. To live in poverty is also to be at greater risk of poor health, family or neighborhood violence, and a shorter lifespan. It is to be unable to participate fully in one’s community and greater society. And it is to suffer great depths of anxiety and emotional pain.”*

*Source: Canada Without Poverty, 2012*

Poverty is a concern nationwide. Compared with most developed countries, Canada has a higher rate of poverty and a faster-growing gap between rich and poor. This gap is even wider in the Northwest Territories (NWT) than in other parts of Canada. Poverty disproportionately affects our communities’ most vulnerable citizens, including single parent families, elders, and those living with addictions or mental health issues. Children growing up in poverty are especially vulnerable when their basic needs are not met. In a developed country such as ours, there is no reason for poverty to exist.

Just as the gap between the highest earners and the lowest in the territory is increasing, so is the gap between our larger and smaller communities. Aboriginal residents face much higher rates of poverty than non-Aboriginal residents. Addressing poverty at its roots will help to reduce these growing disparities in income and promote a more inclusive territory. The current imbalance of wealth affects the health and well-being of individuals, families, communities and our territory as a whole.

The 17th Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories began its term by developing a vision for “strong individuals, families and communities sharing the benefits of a unified, environmentally-sustainable and prosperous NWT.” Taking action on poverty in the NWT is an essential part of fulfilling this vision. As we prepare our territory for the opportunities that exist under devolution, self-government and increasing economic development, we must address the inequalities that prevent the most marginalized citizens from accessing and succeeding in education and the workforce.

Eliminating poverty in the Northwest Territories is possible, but it must involve all of us: all orders of governments as well as community-based organizations and advocacy groups, business and labour organizations, families and individuals. Issues of poverty are multi-factorial and cross the service mandates of several GNWT departments and service organizations, making it a complex and interconnected issue that must be addressed from many angles. Additionally, some successful initiatives to fight poverty are already in place. This strategy builds on this work and proposes new means and relationships to create a poverty-free NWT.

The creation of this strategy reflects our belief that a poverty-free NWT rests on shared values and cooperation. Led by a partnership of community advocacy organizations and government, this strategy is a result of intensive community consultation held across the territory over the last two years. This strategy outlines the vision, goals and priorities developed as a result of these activities, and how we propose to proceed.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

The Northwest Territories is made up of small remote communities along with larger, increasingly urban communities which serve as government, business and industry and education centres. Our people are still connected to their traditions though essential relationships with the land, animals and each other. Through these relationships, the cultural identities of the Dene, Métis and Inuvialuit remain strong. A smaller proportion of the population is non-Aboriginal in the smaller communities, while in the larger regional centers the non-Aboriginal proportion of the population is on the rise. In Yellowknife, non-Aboriginal residents make up the majority of residents and there is a growing immigrant population. While the larger communities contain the most residents, the smaller communities and their people remain central to who we are as a territory. The solutions to addressing poverty vary across the territory because of cultural and demographic differences between NWT communities.

Understanding the territory's past is important background context for addressing the issue of poverty in the NWT today. The historical acts of people and systems who originally came north are underlying issues responsible for the degree of poverty seen in our territory today. Cultural assimilation was once seen as a way forward in northern development. Many colonial policies and practices attempted to destroy Aboriginal people's sense of who they were. Systems of governance, residential school, a wage-based economy, and forced settlement were imposed on Aboriginal people and were not in line with traditional values or ways of life. The impact of colonization was great and continues to be felt. It is visible in our communities through addictions and challenges to mental health, as well as other expressions of trauma.

There is much work to be done to reconcile this past and give hope to future generations. Relationships with the land and people knowledgeable about the traditional ways of life remain a strong source of cultural knowledge. Many residents identify these connections as the basis for healing, education and a way out of poverty. Promoting local solutions to poverty that support cultural connections is part of the reconciliation process.

## OVERVIEW OF THE ANTI-POVERTY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The Poverty Free NWT strategy is the result of over three years of hard work, including extensive collaboration with northerners across the territory. This process was initiated by the non-profit sector in December 2009. They pooled research substantiating the need for new ways to alleviate poverty. Their work was acknowledged by the political leadership of the day who identified the need for a comprehensive territorial plan to address poverty.

The 16<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly passed a motion in February 2010 calling for the Government to take a close look at the issue of poverty in the NWT. A further motion in 2012 by the 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly called for the development of a comprehensive Anti-Poverty Strategy for the NWT. Under the leadership of the Social Envelope Committee of Cabinet, Deputy Minister's Social Envelope Committee, lead Minister and a lead Deputy, the premier requested a plan be developed and brought back to the Assembly by the end of 2012. The deadline was later extended to March 31, 2013.

An internal working group was established to support this work, including representatives from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), Health and Social Services (HSS), Justice (JUS), the NWT Housing Corporation (NWT HC), Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI), and the Executive (EXE). The NWT Bureau of Statistics provided socio-economic data to support the initiative. A lead Minister, Glen Abernethy, and lead Deputy Minister, Gloria Iatridis, were both assigned to the initiative. The Ministers' Social Envelope Committee and the Deputy Ministers' Social Envelope Committee also provided guidance.

This strategy is led by the government but to ensure a wider scope and collaborative approach, an NWT Anti-Poverty Steering Committee was established. The role of this Steering Committee is to provide advice and recommendations for moving forward. Membership includes GNWT, federal government, Aboriginal Government, No Place for Poverty Alliance, Business and a person who experienced living in poverty.

### **Community Voices: How NWT Residents Were Involved in Strategy Development**

The work of identifying priorities and penning a territorial strategy was driven by a diverse range of community stakeholders. To ensure broad input on issues and priorities associated with poverty, several approaches were taken to obtain community feedback. Between 2010 and 2012 three major gatherings were held in Yellowknife, Hay River and Inuvik which fed into the NWT anti-poverty strategy. This included the *No Place for Poverty Workshop* and two roundtables specific to the development of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. Together, these consultations involved more than 140 individuals, representing almost every community in the Northwest Territories. The discussions benefited from a wide range of voices, including government representatives, non-profit organizations, front-line service providers and residents who have experienced poverty. A list of everyone who contributed at these different stages of development is included as appendix A on page 16.

In addition to these face-to-face meetings, several other data collection methods have been used to capture northerner's views on poverty. The Working Group heard the views of many stakeholders, including frontline workers, community members, students, seniors, business representatives, non-governmental organizations and community leaders. Methods of engagement included focus groups, one on one interviews, an internet based survey, and Photo-voice - a process using picture taking and storytelling to examine issues.

Several research documents and reports were produced that informed the strategic development process. Two notable ones are the *No Place for Poverty Workshop Report* in 2010 and the GNWT report entitled *What We Heard from Northerners about Poverty*, which prioritized community concerns and identified potential solutions. Further reports were also issued by partner organizations, including *Action on the Ground* - a response to the GNWT poverty survey and *Addressing Poverty in the NWT*, a report prepared by Alternatives North which explores successful programs currently offered to address poverty, successful case studies or wise practices. A literature review was also conducted that summarized all the research pertaining to the causes and solutions to poverty in the NWT. It included government and non-governmental agency reports as well as academic research. All of this information fed into the strategic development process.

The creation of this strategy was truly a collaborative effort. Key components were crafted during the community gatherings in Hay River and Inuvik, including the strategy's vision statement, guiding principles, priorities and goals and the theme of *Poverty-Free NWT*. A working group of delegates worked tirelessly to further develop this framework. The steering committee also worked hard to ensure all communities and Aboriginal governments had a say in the strategy. The result of all this research, community engagement and discussion is this document.

## OUR STRATEGY

The following vision and guiding principles inform the Poverty Free NWT Strategy.

### Our Vision

An NWT where everyone has what they need to live in dignity.

### Guiding Principles

We believe that all of us have a basic human right to adequate food, shelter, education, self-determination and freedom from discrimination. We are committed to the following principles as we work together to achieve a Poverty Free NWT:

#### ***Respect and equality are essential to anti-poverty work***

- We can address lack of access and marginalization by identifying and removing systemic cultural, racial, physical, gender, social, economic and other barriers.
- Gender equity benefits everyone.
- Respect for all people and life circumstances is basic to our work. We show our respect and understanding of diversity through non-judgmental legislation, policies, guidelines and actions.

#### ***People are our most important resource***

- People are better able to reach their full potential when their basic needs are met and they feel respected for who they are.
- Our work will be characterized by collaboration and partnership – everyone has a role to play.

#### ***How we do things is as important as what we do***

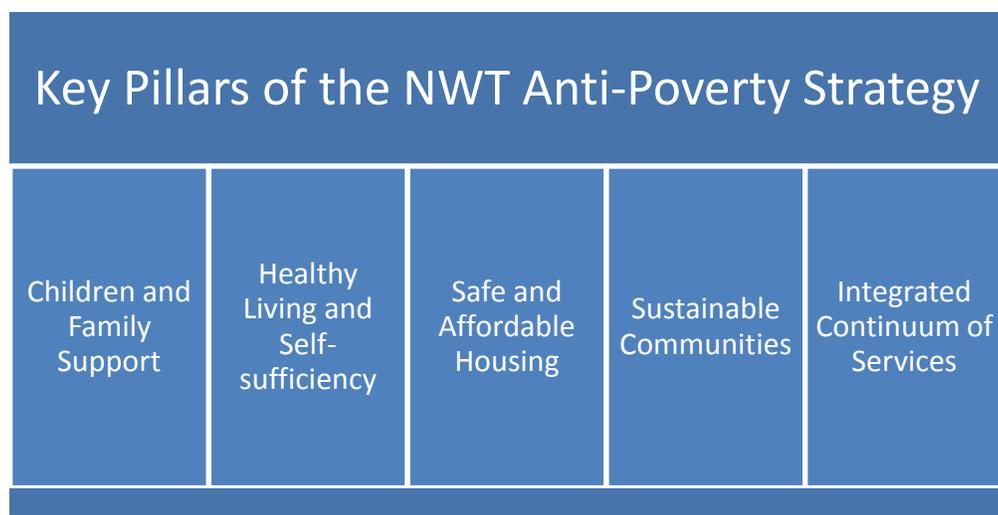
- Programs and services will be integrated and coordinated to enable us to address needs and gaps in service and also ensure timely service.
- We need both social and educational supports and economic opportunities.
- Traditional economies wage and mixed economies are equally respected.
- Progress must be measured, results reported, progress assessed and adjustments made on a regular basis.

## WHO IS AT RISK FOR POVERTY?

The face of poverty in the NWT is not identical. There are many different people, from different walks of life who are affected. This section provides a picture of some of the key demographics of those at risk for poverty in our territory today.

- **Single parent families**  
Single parent families, particularly single moms, are more likely to have a low income because only one person in the home earns money. But they still have to pay many of the same bills as families with two incomes.
- **Single adults**  
Single adults are also more likely to be poor, especially if they are age 45 to 64. Many may have health problems that make it hard for them to work.
- **People with disabilities**  
People with disabilities are more likely to have low incomes. Their disability may keep them from working. It may also cause them to have a lot of extra expenses like equipment and transportation.
- **Aboriginal people**  
On average, Aboriginal people are underrepresented in the workforce and as a result have lower incomes than non-Aboriginal residents.
- **Newcomers**  
Many people who moved to Canada have lower incomes than people who were born here. If they do not speak English, or they have training that is not accepted here, they may find it hard to get jobs. Refugee newcomers are especially likely to have low incomes.
- **Seniors**  
Seniors who rely on pensions today have a moderate fixed income. But many seniors face high costs that younger people do not have because of limited mobility or health conditions. Single or widowed seniors are more likely to be poor.
- **Low-waged or seasonal workers**  
Many people may have low wages or work only seasonally and rely on Employment Insurance for part of the year.
- **People with mental health and addiction problems**  
Mental health and addiction problems are barriers to employment or keeping a job and can lead to poverty.
- **Adults with low levels of literacy**  
Adult with low levels of literacy or education are less likely to have a job and more likely to have low incomes than other adults with education beyond high school.

## KEY PILLARS



Five pillars were chosen as main priorities for the NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy. They include: (1) Children and Family Support; (2) Healthy Living and Self-sufficiency; (3) Safe and Affordable Housing; (4) Sustainable Communities; and (5) Integrated Continuum of Services. The goals, objectives and rationale for prioritizing each pillar are outlined below.

### Children and Family Support

#### Goal:

*Children and families have the resources they need for healthy child development*  
(Target Group: prenatal – school age children and their care givers/families)

#### Objectives:

- All young children have the food they need to reach their full physical, cognitive and social potential.
- Mental health supports are available for adult caregivers.
- Families have access to community-based family and child programs and services that support young children's development.
- Families have access to affordable, quality early childhood education and care programs.
- All children in the NWT are safe in their own homes.

**Rationale:**

During early childhood (prenatal to school age), children are easily affected by poverty. A lack of good nutrition, not enough stimulation or a lack of learning opportunities can have lasting impacts on brain development. A mother who is depressed or being exposed to violence can also increase the child's vulnerability and increase the likelihood of child welfare involvement. Early experiences determine health, education and economic participation for the rest of life. Many risk factors for poverty, including health problems, poor literacy, and involvement with the law, can be linked to poor conditions in early childhood. Our children are our future; we need to see they get the start they need, thus our commitment to early childhood development is an important one if we are to develop a poverty-free NWT.

**Goal:**

*School-aged children and adolescents have the tools and resources they need to develop into healthy, confident, self-sufficient adults. (Target Group: K-12)*

**Objectives:**

- All NWT communities have effective youth programs and services that support mental and physical development.
- All youth have the food they need to be healthy and reach their physical and cognitive potential.
- Everyone in the NWT has access to affordable quality before and after-school care.
- The graduation rate of NWT students is on par with the rest of Canada.

**Rationale:**

The relationship between poverty and education is mutually supportive. Youth living in poverty are less likely to complete high school. Those who do not complete high school are more likely to become or remain poor as high school graduation is directly linked to earning potential. Teenage pregnancy and poverty are also closely linked, and teenagers in the NWT are far more likely than their southern counterparts to become parents. Currently the high school graduation rate for Aboriginal youth is significantly lower than both the territorial and national average. In order to stop the cycle of poverty, this gap needs to be closed.

Creating a supportive environment for learning involves ensuring nutritional needs are met. It also involves offering sports, cultural activities and healthy lifestyle programs which increase motivation for school success, reduces stress and promotes a positive self-identity. Ensuring that all NWT students have the supports they need to reach their potential and progress in their education is essential to ending poverty in the NWT.

## Healthy Living and Self-Sufficiency

### Goal:

*Youth and adults throughout the NWT have the supports they need to live healthy lives and become self-sufficient.*

### Objectives:

- Mental health and addictions services are accessible at the local level.
- Communities enhance and promote healthy living.
- Youth and adults with low levels of literacy overcome any barriers to learning.
- Enhance support services for persons with both physical and mental disabilities.
- Enhance the programs and resources for life skills and career development.
- Enhance support for transition to work.

### Rationale:

Poverty is one of the key determinants of health and well-being over the lifespan. Poverty affects the ability to access and succeed in education and the workforce. However, poverty not only affects individual well-being but that of families, communities and our territory as a whole. Poverty decreases health-enhancing autonomy and increases dependency. Challenges in all stages of life, including those of addictions and mental health, are made worse by poverty. Reducing poverty is a matter of equity and justice. It is also essential to meeting the strategic goals of the GNWT.

Issues of poverty as experienced by youth and adults in the NWT are multi-factorial and cross the service mandates of several GNWT departments and service organizations. Existing physical and mental health conditions, as well as substance use and addictions, are exacerbated by poverty. Poverty is associated with higher rates of these conditions and increases the related stress contributing to the overall burden of poor health.

Services and health promotion programs that are community-based and culturally relevant are more likely to be utilized and to prove effective. Self-sufficiency is increased with access to skill development, capacity building, literacy and activities that also validate culture and identity. Lifelong learning and education and training programs are important to self-sufficiency. So is pride in identity and lives that are free of discrimination and racism. Policies and services across departments that work at cross-purposes or inadvertently undermine efforts to increase self-sufficiency across the lifespan have also been reported, examining how this occurs has been helpful in other jurisdictions. Integrated services have been shown to be useful in other regions across Canada especially those which include small, remote and culturally diverse communities similarly to the NWT.

## Safe and Affordable Housing

### Goal:

*Everyone has shelter and a safe and affordable place to call home.*

### Objectives:

- Housing programs strengthen self-reliance.
- Increase stock of affordable housing.
- Increase awareness of existing programs and work to improve knowledge and skill of residents to manage their housing needs.
- Ensure on-going stable funding for social housing.
- Support housing for vulnerable populations including youth and seniors.

### Rationale:

The NWT has a chronic shortage of safe and affordable housing. Most people who live on low-income are renters who cannot afford to buy or maintain a home. Many end up sharing housing with relatives in often overcrowded conditions or end up in shelters for periods of time. For single people, public housing is rarely available due to the needs of families. Low-income residents are often overspending on housing (i.e. more than 30% of their gross income). As a result, their housing is precarious and just a slight change in circumstances – a missed cheque, an unexpected expense – can result in unpaid rent, eviction and homelessness. Once a family becomes homeless, it's a long and difficult journey for them to regain housing.

Homelessness has many ripple effects. People who are homeless or live in overcrowded conditions are sick more often and visit the emergency room more often. As well, people who are homeless find it difficult to stabilize others parts of their lives (i.e. dealing with addictions, finding a job), and this can lead to family break up. People who overspend on housing have to work more hours and face additional challenges finding appropriate child care or giving their children the attention they require. The wide disparity in our housing circumstances and the resultant stresses and which spills over into many aspects of life is not acceptable. It puts many of our citizens at risk including children.

## **Sustainable Communities**

### **Goal:**

*NWT sustainable communities managing their own human, natural, and financial resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are equitably available for future generations.*

### **Objectives:**

- Develop a diversified economy and vibrant businesses and communities.
- Programs and services are appropriate to the communities they serve.
- Social cohesion among institutions and residents produce communities that are working together to improve their condition
- Responsible, caring, and healthy community institutions, services, and businesses.
- Inspiring, effective, and responsive leadership.
- Active, organized, and informed citizenship.

### **Rationale:**

The NWT is largely dependent on natural resource development. Government services are also a major economic factor in communities. Often there are major differences between regions and communities in terms of economic viability. Dependence on government or resource based economies is not sustainable or balanced. In the long term there is a need to broaden the economy into other sectors that provide residents with more opportunities or new ways to support themselves. Reducing poverty by increasing the economic prosperity in communities requires different levels of governments to work closely together to plan and deliver community and economic development programs and services that are tailored to the communities they serve. Working more closely together to support sustainable community will serve to address the common issue of good programs being cut when the funding runs out.

## **Integrated Continuum of Services**

### **Goal:**

*Public and Aboriginal governments, industry, labour, non-governmental organizations and individuals partner to ensure an integrated continuum of services in each community to foster human, social and economic development.*

### **Objectives:**

- All partners are working together to create a Poverty Free NWT.

- Communities and Aboriginal governments form partnerships to create a one window/no wrong door approach to service delivery.
- Increase coordination, communication and access to programs and services.
- Promote the philosophy of working together.

**Rationale:**

Poverty is a result of a diverse array of social, cultural and economic circumstances. There is no single solution. To make a difference we need to work together and make more efficient use of limited resources. While not reinforcing a one-size-fits-all point of view, we must ensure equity and efficiency by coordinating between ourselves the smooth delivery of supports to those that need assistance from Aboriginal, regional and community governments or organizations. Integrating programs and services at a community level is necessary otherwise clients will not fully benefit from the full range of supports available. Business as well as government, both public and Aboriginal, has a responsibility to get involved with efforts to prepare our people for the opportunities of the future.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY**

As a result of roundtable discussions with communities, a number of **specific actions** have been recommended to realize the goals and objectives outlined in this strategy. Tables describing recommended actions, expected outcomes and proposed timelines are presented in Appendix B on page 20.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

This strategy is based in the belief that the GNWT and all its partners have a role to play in poverty reduction based on agreement to a common vision, goals and objectives for the NWT. It is recommended that the GNWT, in consultation with partners, establish a Poverty Free NWT Secretariat or body which will support and implement the Poverty Free NWT Strategy. This structure will provide partnership, guidance, oversight and accountability for the Poverty Free NWT strategy and develop an implementation plan and accountability framework that will ensure that the participants in the public engagement process to date, and in the future, have the opportunity to review and approve the work as it moves forward.

This plan is not intended to replace or duplicate the mandates, programs and efforts currently in place, but rather to create a space for increased collaboration and innovation and for ensuring there are no gaps in programs and services, or places where we work at cross-purposes for NWT residents impacted by Poverty.

## **Supporting Aboriginal Governance and Community Action**

The solutions required to address poverty will be different for each community. It is important to work towards equity of opportunity in our communities but it is also important to encourage autonomy in community visions. When indicators of need are community-identified and the supports developed at grassroots levels they are more likely to be effective.

As the changing face of governance in the NWT brought about by land claim settlements and on-going self-government processes, there is movement towards self-sufficiency and Aboriginal governments play a larger role in dealing with poverty. Aboriginal governments are now making wellness a major governance priority. Their work in this regard will go a long ways towards addressing root causes of poverty and should be supported.

Since many of the solutions must be found at the community level, Aboriginal governments and communities themselves will be encouraged to take ownership of their part in this strategy. NWT residents must gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their lives. The GNWT will support community empowerment and work with Aboriginal and municipal governments, communities and families moving forward.

## **MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION**

To ensure the continued alignment of priorities, goals and objectives, and accountability of strategic initiatives, it will be important to build structures of monitoring, reporting, and evaluation. These systems will be used to track and measure success, hold partners accountable to action, and respond to challenges in the NWT.

The Government of the Northwest Territories will work with the partners and the No Place for Poverty Coalition to develop reporting and accountability mechanisms for strategies and activities that support this plan.

This will include the identification and collection of relevant socio-economic data, and regular analysis information collected to assess the success of eliminating poverty in the NWT. Strategic outcomes and performance measures will also be established as part of the implementation processes.

## **MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

This *Poverty Free NWT* strategy is just the beginning. It is a roadmap towards improved outcomes for people living in poverty. We have articulated a common vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities, including overarching goals and objectives. Now we must come together to develop detailed action plans in order to achieve results. The GNWT will take a lead role in coordinating and communicating this work. However, the

GNWT is committed to continuing to work in collaboration with everyone to implement, monitor and report publicly on results.

Everyone has a role to play in reducing poverty. NWT residents can play a part in realizing this vision. Residents can live a healthy lifestyle, lead by example, help each other, be involved in the community, share traditional foods, instill family and cultural values, and hold leaders accountable. Business community can play a role by offering employment experience to people living in poverty. Businesses can hire more of the groups under-represented in the workforce, such as youth at risk, people with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and immigrants seeking the opportunity to put their skills to work.

Non-profit organizations can continue to engage with government and the business community - sit at the table and to help develop local solutions. Communities and local organizations can set goals and action plans, identify needs and solutions, raise awareness, engage and bring people together, provide support, infrastructure and services. All order of government can provide legislative frameworks and funding, critical services and infrastructure, spur economic development, monitor and report on success.

The plan's success relies on the contributions and commitment by everyone to implement actions towards the shared vision, guiding principles, priorities and goals. Together we can achieve our vision of an NWT where everyone has what they need to live in dignity.

## **APPENDIX A: STRATEGY CONTRIBUTORS**

### **Poverty Free NWT, Steering Committee Members**

Gloria Iatridis – GNWT, Chair  
Julie Green – No Place for Poverty Coalition Lead  
Bob Simpson – Aboriginal Government, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation  
Hughie Graham – Business, NWT Chamber of Commerce  
Darlene Brown – Federal Government, Service Canada  
Christine King – Student with personal experience with poverty

### **GNWT Interdepartmental Working Group Members**

Jolene Saturnino and Janet Grinsted – ECE, Chairs  
Ian Legaree – MACA  
Lisa Cardinal – H&SS  
Michael Kalnay – EXEC  
Kathryn Walker – ECE  
Lois Walbourne – ECE  
Rebecca Latour – JUS  
Ioan Astle – NWT HC  
John Colford – ITI

### **No Place for Poverty Workshop Participants October 5-7, 2010**

Adam Speirs, NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities, Yellowknife  
Amanda Mallon, City Councillor, Yellowknife  
Andrea Hunter, GNWT Executive, Yellowknife  
Annemeike Mulders, Status of Women Council of the NWT, Yellowknife  
Arlene Hache, Centre for Northern Families, Yellowknife  
Barbara Lacey, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Bill Thomas, Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition, Whitehorse  
Bob Bromley, MLA Weledeh, Yellowknife  
Bree Denning, Institute for Circumpolar Health Research, Yellowknife  
Carol Ann Chaplin, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Fort Resolution  
Carol Heron-Colosimo, Hay River Health and Social Services Authority, Hay River  
Catherine Boyd, GNWT Education, Culture and Employment, Yellowknife  
Cecile Baton, Deline  
Clara Sabourin, Katlodeeche First Nation, Hay River Reserve  
Clarinda Spijkerman, GNWT Justice, Yellowknife  
Dana Britton, Breakfast for Learning, Yellowknife  
David Krutko, MLA Mackenzie Delta, Fort McPherson  
Dawn McInnes, GNWT Justice, Yellowknife  
Dennis Bevington, MP Western Arctic, Fort Smith  
Dyanne Doctor, Tulita Yamouria Community Secretariat, Tulita  
Ed McKenna, Government of Nunavut Anti-Poverty Secretariat, Iqaluit  
Eileen Koe, Tetlit Gwich'in Council/TI'oondih Healing Society, Fort McPherson

France Benoit, Territorial Farmers Association, Yellowknife.  
Frank Arrowmaker, Community Government, Gamètì  
Gayla Thunstrom, Union of Northern Workers, Yellowknife  
Georgina Jacobson-Masuzumi, Tuktoyaktuk  
Glen Abernethy, MLA Great Slave, Yellowknife  
Gloria Enzoe, Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation, Łutsel K'e  
Gloria Iatridis, GNWT Education, Culture and Employment, Yellowknife  
Gordon Ross, NWT Association of Communities, Yellowknife  
Gord Van Tighem, Mayor, Yellowknife  
Helen Balanoff, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife  
Herb Nakimayak, Hamlet of Paulatuk, Paulatuk  
Herbert Blake Jr., Nithat Gwich'in Council, Inuvik  
JC Catholique, Association of Social Workers in Northern Canada, Łutsel K'e  
Jill Christensen, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Joanne McGrath, Food First Foundation, Yellowknife  
Jolene Saturnino, GNWT Education, Culture and Employment, Yellowknife  
Joyce Jumbo, Sombaa K'e Dene Band, Trout Lake  
Kate Wilson, YWCA Yellowknife, Yellowknife  
Kathryn Barry Paddock, NWT Literacy Council, Yellowknife  
Laura Rose, Hay River Soup Kitchen, Hay River  
Lisa Cardinal, GNWT Health and Social Services, Yellowknife  
Liz Weaver, Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement, Waterloo  
Lone Hegeman, Food Rescue, Yellowknife  
Lorna Elias, Ingamo Hall Friendship Centre, Inuvik  
Lorraine Hewlett, Public Service Alliance of Canada Women's Committee, Yellowknife  
Lorraine Phaneuf, Status of Women Council of the NWT, Yellowknife  
Lydia Bardak, John Howard Society of the NWT, Yellowknife  
Lynn Foley, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Mark Mossey, Maliiganik Tukisiinaikvik Legal Services, Government of Nunavut, Iqaluit  
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Mary Lou Cherwaty, Northern Territories Federation of Labour, Yellowknife  
Mary Poitras, Fort Smith Food Bank, Fort Smith  
Melissa Doctor, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Yellowknife  
Michelle Gillis, NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities, Yellowknife  
Mira Hall, Alternatives North, Yellowknife  
Monica Godard, Yellowknives Dene First Nation, Yellowknife  
Natasha Harris, GNWT Education, Culture and Employment, Fort Simpson  
Noella Kodzin, Wekweètì  
Nora Wedzin, Tlicho Community Services Agency, Behchokö  
Paula McFadyen, NWT Housing Corporation, Yellowknife  
Rachel Abel, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Rev. Ron McLean, Holy Trinity Anglican Church/Yellowknife Seniors Society  
Rita Arey, Beaufort Delta Health and Social Services Authority, Aklavik  
Rob Rainer, Canada Without Poverty, Ottawa  
Ruby Trudel, Yellowknife Food Bank, Yellowknife  
Ryan Strain, GNWT Justice, Yellowknife

Sandra Lockhart, PSAC Aboriginal Peoples Committee, Yellowknife  
Sheila Nelson, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Shirley Wilkinson, Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority, Yellowknife  
Sigrun Gerisdottir, GNWT Executive, Yellowknife  
Spencer Tracy, Native Women's Association of the NWT, Yellowknife.  
Stephanie Poole, Łutsel K'e Dene First Nation, Łutsel K'e  
Stephen Pretty, NWT Housing Corporation, Yellowknife  
Suzette Montreuil, Roman Catholic Diocese of Mackenzie, Yellowknife  
Valerie Conrad, Poverty Lawyer, Yellowknife  
Vishni Peeris, GNWT Executive, Yellowknife  
Violet Edgi, K'asho Got'ine, Fort Good Hope  
Wendy Bisaro, MLA Frame Lake, Yellowknife  
Yasemin Heyck, Yellowknife Education District #1, Yellowknife  
*Facilitator*: Lois Little, Luttra Associates, Yellowknife

### **Poverty Free NWT Hay River Roundtable Participants June 26 – 28, 2012**

Aggie Brockman, Alternatives North  
Annemieke Mulders, Status of Women Council of the NWT  
Betty Robinson, Hay River Soup Kitchen  
Bob Simpson, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation  
Charles Jacobson, Department of Education, Culture and Employment  
Christine King, Student, person who experiences living in poverty  
Franklin Carpenter, NWT Housing Corporation  
Garry Hubert, Yellowknife Side Door Youth Centre  
Gloria Iatridis, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
Helen Balanoff, NWT Literacy Council  
Ioan Astle, NWT Housing Corporation  
John Colford, GNWT – Industry, Tourism and Investment  
Jolene Saturnino, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
Julie Green, No Place for Poverty Alliance  
Kathryn Walker, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
Kowesa Etitiq, Hamlet of Sachs Harbour  
Lisa Cardinal, GNWT – Health and Social Services  
Lorraine Tordiff, GNWT – Municipal and Community Affairs  
Margaret Thom, Deh Cho First Nation  
MaryLou Cherwaty, Northern Territories Federation of Labour  
Mike Kalnay, GNWT – Executive  
Rebecca Latour, GNWT – Justice  
Richard Anthony, NWT Disabilities Council  
Susan Ross, Gwich'in Tribal Council  
Suzanne Desfosses, NWT Housing Corporation  
Tina Gargan, NWT Association of Communities  
Vishni Peeris, NWT Bureau of Statistics  
*Facilitator* – Lois Little, Luttra and Associates

## **Poverty Free NWT Inuvik Roundtable Participants October 1-3, 2012**

Aggie Brockman, Alternatives North  
Annemieke Mulders, Status of Women Council of the NWT  
Bob Simpson, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation  
Caroline Yukon, Sahtu Dene Council  
Christine King, Student  
Darlene Brown, Service Canada  
Franklin Carpenter, NWT Housing Corporation  
Garry Hubert, Yellowknife Side Door Youth Centre  
Gloria Iatridis, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
Helen Balanoff, NWT Literacy Council  
Ian Legaree, GNWT – Municipal and Community Affairs  
Ioan Astle, GNWT – NWT Housing Corporation  
Janet Grinsted, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
John Colford, GNWT – Industry, Tourism and Investment  
Julie Green, No Place for Poverty Alliance  
Kathryn Walker, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
MaryLou Cherwaty, Northern Territories Federation of Labour  
Mike Kalnay, GNWT – Executive  
Natasha Harris, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
Peggy Day, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation  
Rai Brown, GNWT – Health and Social Services  
Rebecca Latour, GNWT – Justice  
Richard Anthony, NWT Disabilities Council  
Susan Ross, Gwich'in Tribal Council  
Clarence Wood, NWT Association of Communities  
Newton Grey, Inuvik Chamber of Commerce  
*Facilitator* – Barb Curtis, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment  
*Coordinator* – Mike Argue, GNWT – Education, Culture and Employment

## APPENDIX B: RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO SUPPORT THIS STRATEGY

<b>HEALTHY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</b>			
<b>Goal: Children and families have the resources they need for health child development (target group: prenatal – school age).</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Recommended Timeline</b>
All young children have access to the food they need for healthy growth and development.	Strengthen the nutrition components of prenatal and postnatal programs so that they are better equipped to provide and teach about the importance of healthy food choices.	More NWT communities include nutrition as part of their prenatal and postnatal programs.  A greater number of pregnant women and young children who receive proper nutrition on a daily basis.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
Communities have effective child and family programs and services that support young children’s development.	Expand the Healthy Family Program and use it as a basis for family resource centre programming wherever possible.	Families have improved access to quality parenting support, guidance and resources.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Provide core funding to communities to establish family resource programs.	Families have increased skills to support child development.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Strengthen the territory’s healthy parenting guidance / support programs.	Increase in the number of parents who receive training to help them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate with infants &amp; children;</li> <li>• stimulate children for better growth;</li> <li>• handle common developmental problems as sleep, feeding and discipline;</li> <li>• reduce common childhood injuries;</li> <li>• provide proper nutrition to infants and children.</li> </ul>	1 – 3 years (medium term)

	Establish or expand early learning programs geared towards young children in all NWT communities.	Improved access to appropriate learning programs critical for children's mental, physical and social development.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Implement the recommended community-based model of midwifery care as outlined in the GNWT <i>Midwifery Options Report</i> .	Increased number of women who have the option of receiving the services and support of a midwife before and after birth.  Greater male investment and involvement in newborn and partner care.  Greater feelings of dignity in pregnancy and parenthood.	> 3 years (long term)
	Enact legislation to improve employment standards that will provide for more paid sick leave for parents with young children.	Increase in the number of parents who are able to take time off work to care for sick children.	> 3 years (long term)
Families have access to affordable, quality early childhood education and care programs.	Improve both the salary and training opportunities for early childcare providers.	Early childhood education and care programs employ highly skilled staff and provide high-quality programming and consistent standards.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Establish universal childcare.	All young children will have access to the same high-quality care.	> 3 years (long term)

All children in the NWT are safe in their own homes.	Implement the 19 recommendations outlined in the Coalition Against Family Violence 2011 report for addressing gaps, shifting attitudes, and enhancing services to reduce family violence and abuse in the NWT	<p>Violence against women and children becomes socially unacceptable</p> <p>Children are not exposed to violence in their homes</p> <p>Decrease in the number of children in foster care.</p> <p>Youth homelessness is reduced.</p>	> 3 years (long term)
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<b>HEALTHY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES</b>			
<b>Goal: School-aged children and adolescents have the tools and resources they need to develop into healthy, self-sufficient adults.</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Recommended Timeline</b>
All NWT Communities have effective programs and services that support youth development.	Increase core funding for youth programs, including youth centres and programs that encourage active living.	<p>Reduced turnover of staffing.</p> <p>High quality programming at youth centres.</p> <p>Stronger sport-related youth programs.</p> <p>Increased number of youth participating in extracurricular activities.</p>	< 1 year (short term)
	Expand before and after school programs.	Increased number of child care options for parents of young school-age children.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Increase coordination and information sharing among existing mentoring/role model programs for young people	Improved mentoring/role model programs for young people.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
All youth have the food they need to be healthy and reach their full mental and	Review existing nutrition programs in all NWT schools in order to identify gaps and improve access to school-	Greater knowledge about the status of current food programs being	< 1 year (short term)

physical potential.	based healthy foods program (breakfast and lunch)	delivered in NWT schools.  Increased number of youth having access to healthy food on a daily basis.	
Everyone in the NWT has access to affordable and quality before and after-school care.	Review funding for before and after school care and integrate programming into family resource centres.	Quality and availability of after-school programming is increased across the territory.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
The graduation rate of NWT is on par with the rest of Canada.	Develop strategies and implement programs to encourage school attendance.	Student academic achievement improves.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
	Develop a K-12 education improvement plan that addresses academic achievement, particularly in the areas of literacy and numeracy.	NWT students are graduating at rates and with grades that meet or exceed the national average.	1 – 3 years (medium term)
			1 – 3 years (medium term)

<b>HEALTHY LIVING AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY</b>			
<b>Goal: Youth and adults throughout the NWT have the supports they need to live healthy lives and become self-sufficient.</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Recommended Timeline</b>
Mental health and addictions services are supported at the local level.	Link anti-poverty work to the NWT Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan.	Services in Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan are carried out with the goals of poverty reduction integrated into the approach.	< 1 year (short term)
	Establish drug and alcohol programs in all communities.	NWT residents have improved access to community-based drug and alcohol programs.	> 3 years (long term)

	Increase communities' access to detox treatment centres with appropriate medical staff.	NWT residents have improved access to regional detox treatment centres where they can get the medical support they need.	> 3 years (long term)
	Improve drug and alcohol laws to effectively prevent bootlegging.	Illegal sale of alcohol and drugs is lessened throughout the NWT.	>3 years (long term)
	Provide community based counseling for families of residential school survivors and survivors of other trauma.	NWT youth and adults receive the supports they need be mentally well.	1 -3 years (medium term)
Communities enhance and promote healthy living.	Establish free smoking cessation program.	Smoking cessation program is accessible to everyone in the NWT regardless of income.  Smoking rates are decreased.	1 -3 years (medium term)
	Provide tax incentives for healthy lifestyles.	Residents are rewarded for making healthy lifestyle choices which in turn, will reduce the burden of illness in the territory.	>3 years (long term)
	Ensure health care workers are in place in every community.	NWT residents have improved access to community health care services.	>3 years (long term)
Youth and adults with low literacy levels overcome any barriers to learning.	Establish a means to provide financial support for Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) students.	Youth and adults with low levels of literacy and other skills have improved financial support for education.	>3 years (long term)
	Modularize (separate into smaller components) the Adult Literacy and Basic Education Courses.	Youth and adults want to and are able to increase their level of education and develop employable skills.	1 -3 years (medium term)
	Promote the benefits of increasing literacy and other skill levels.	Increased completion of ALBE courses and employment skills.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

Support services for people with disabilities are strengthened.	Expand day programs for people with disabilities to every regional centre.	Day programs for people with disabilities are available throughout the NWT.	>3 years (long term)
	Expand assisted living programs for people with disabilities to every regional centre.	Assisted living programs for people with disabilities are more accessible to people living in smaller communities.	>3 years (long term)
Programs and services promoting life skills and career development are enhanced.	Develop and deliver life skills and financial life skills career development courses.	Youth and adults have the knowledge and skills to make sound life and career choices.	< 1 year (short term)
	Review existing role model programs and share results.	Increased coordination and information sharing among service providers.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
Support for those transitioning to work is improved.	Tie income assistance rates to the cost of living.	Youth and adults on income assistance receive sufficient allowances to meet their basic needs, regardless of where in the territory they live	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Allow income assistance recipients to keep more assets.	Income assistance recipients have positive financial incentive to become more self-sufficient.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Allow for a gradual decrease in income assistance benefits as an individual gains employment income.	Income assistance recipients have support to transition off benefits and become self-sufficient.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Continue to provide case worker support and counselling to income assistance clients who have transitioned off benefits.	Continuum of services is maintained for residents as they transition off benefits and become self-sufficient.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

## SAFE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Goal: Everyone has a roof over their heads and a safe and affordable place to call home.**

Objective	Recommended Actions	Anticipated Outcomes	Recommended Timeline
Housing programs strengthen self-reliance.	Expand territorial programs that help residents reduce their energy consumption.	Residents spend less money on their energy needs.	< 1 year (short term)
	Strengthen programs that support training to homeowners on maintenance topics.	Homeowners are better equipped to maintain their own homes.	< 1 year (short term)
	Strengthen programs that provide debt and credit counseling to renters and homeowners.	Residents are more educated on how to avoid and manage debt.	<1 year (short term)
	Review current programs to determine whether financial support is reaching those in need.	Better knowledge of who is receiving financial support and who is not.	< 1 year (short term)
	Continue support for maintenance and repair programs that support seniors and people with disabilities to live independently.	Maintained ability for seniors and people with disabilities to live independently.  Elders and people with disabilities live in stable housing that's in good condition.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Support repair programs that improve the quality of housing.	Repair programs that are able to maintain and improve the quality of housing in the NWT.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
Increase stock of affordable housing.	Explore municipal opportunities that promote the increase of affordable housing.	Better understanding of how municipalities can support an increase in affordable housing options.	< 1 year (short term)
	Research the application of legislation related to rent increases.	Increased knowledge on how rent increases are managed through legislation.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

	Explore trades and skill development programs that enable communities to repair homes in a more cost effective manner.	Better understanding of how existing trades and skill development programs can support affordable home maintenance in communities.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Maximize on existing structures to address housing shortage.	Every house that is fit for human habitation is occupied. Unused or underused structures are repurposed for housing	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Consider legislation that prevents excessive rent increases.	Protection of residents against excessive rent increases.	> 3 years (long term)
Increase awareness of existing programs and work to improve knowledge and skill of residents to manage their housing needs.	Strengthen programs and services within social public housing that support individuals at risk of losing their units.	Residents in social housing are better supported to avoid eviction.  Keep everyone with a house in a house	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Strengthen programs that support a seamless continuum of services for people to move from homelessness to permanent housing.	NWT residents move from a place of homelessness to being permanently housed with greater ease.	> 3 years (long term)
Ensure on-going stable funding for social housing	Secure stable and predictable federal funding for social housing.	More federal funding available to support NWT social housing needs.	< 1 year (short term)
	Develop incentives to encourage subsidized housing tenants to have pride in their units and conserve energy.	Tenants take better care of their units and reduce their use of energy and are rewarded for doing so.	< 1 year (short term)
Support housing for vulnerable populations, including youth and seniors.	Determine what shelter advice to give homeless youth 16-19 years of age in all communities.	Youth 16-19 years of age have a better understanding of their shelter options.	< 1 year (short term)
	Examine housing options for homeless youth who are 16-19 years of age.	Feasible housing options are identified for NWT youth who are 16-19 years old.	< 1 year (short term)

	Maintain and expand shelter options for homeless residents.	Homeless people have a safe and warm place to live 24/7	< 1 year (short term)
	Explore standards for emergency shelters.	Standards are identified which can form the basis for rules and regulations guiding NWT shelters.  Prevent overcrowding in emergency shelters	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Examine the demand for 24-hour emergency shelters and other options related to homelessness in all communities.	A better understanding of the needs for emergency shelters and other solutions to homelessness is ascertained.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Examine ways to enable seniors and persons with disabilities to stay in their own home rather than go into long-term care facilities.	More NWT seniors and residents with disabilities are living independently for longer periods of their lives.	> 3 years (long term)

<b>SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>			
<b>Goal: NWT sustainable communities managing their own human, natural, and financial resources to meet current needs while ensuring that adequate resources are equitably available for future generations.</b>			
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Anticipated Outcomes</b>	<b>Recommended Timeline</b>
Develop a diversified economy and vibrant businesses and communities.	Review existing community economic profiles and identify new ways to use existing resources to increase employment.	Strategies are identified which promote high employment in communities and a balanced economy.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
Programs and services are appropriate to the communities they serve.	Review all programs and services to make sure they are appropriate to both market and non-market communities.	Programs and services that serve communities with different economic circumstances.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

	Address barriers to employment for government jobs.	Fewer barriers exist for resident to obtain employment with the government.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
Social cohesion among institutions and residents produce communities that are working together to improve their conditions.	Develop sustainable and community wellness plans that also build community capacity and leadership to implement those plans.	Community sustainability plans and community wellness plans that support responsible, caring, and healthy institutions, services, and businesses.	> 3 years (long term)

### INTEGRATED CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

**Goal: Public and Aboriginal governments, industry, labour, non-governmental organizations and individuals partner to ensure an integrated continuum of services in each community to foster human, social and economic development.**

Objective	Recommended Actions	Anticipated Outcomes	Recommended Timeline
All partners are working together to create a Poverty Free NWT	GNWT draft, in consultation with partners, legislation to establish a Poverty Free NWT Secretariat or body to support implementation of strategy.	The 17 <sup>th</sup> Assembly passes legislation to create the Poverty Free NWT Secretariat or body.	< 1 year (short term)
	Poverty Free NWT Secretariat or body supports and implements the Poverty Free NWT Strategy in consultation with NWT communities.	A collaborative approach to addressing poverty is maintained.  A dedicated team is in place to carry out the actions outlined in the Anti-Poverty Strategy.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	The Secretariat or body establish indicators to measure progress of each pillar in the Poverty Free NWT Strategy as well as indicators which track the partnerships formed to reduce poverty.	Broad social indicators are in place to track the impact of anti-poverty strategy actions on poverty rates as well as the methods/actions taken to promote broad stakeholder involvement.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

	The Secretariat or body delivers a report every two years on indicators to measure progress and monitor integration activities. Report identifies potential gaps in service and conflicting policies.	There is an accountability framework in place to guide progress on the actions taken to reduce poverty in the NWT.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
Communities and Aboriginal governments form partnerships to create a one window/no wrong door approach	Create a model or template for intergovernmental and partnership arrangements.	A resource to assist different orders of government in creating one-stop access for NWT residents to programs and services.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Promote Government Service Officers as a primary source of information on all programs and services.	Increase in the profile and importance of the Government Service Officers.	< 1 year (short term)
Increase coordination, communication and access to programs and services	Develop and pilot case management protocols among agencies to enhance working relationships and pooling of resources.	More efficient management of funds and more effective service provision to residents receiving services from a diverse range of professionals.  Services that are delivered in a fair and equitable manner.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Provide annual Information Fairs for service providers and clients.	Greater awareness of poverty and the benefits of eliminating poverty.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Develop a road map of services.	A resource is available to the public which clearly lays out all available services which might serve to alleviate poverty.	1 - 3 years (medium term)

	Design and implement gender/cultural/disability analysis on new and existing programs and services.	All new and existing programs and services are assessed for their accessibility and sensitivity to general, cultural and disability issues.	1 - 3 years (medium term)
	Increase support to Interagency committees, including funding for full-time coordinators. Begin by building on the success of the Inuvik Interagency by providing funding for a part-time coordinator.	Interagency committees are better equipped to assist residents in accessing programs and services and coordinating supports at the community level.	< 1 year (short term)