



Knowledge Synthesis: Aboriginal Workplace Integration in the North

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Executive Summary

For many years, governments, industry, and Aboriginal communities have invested heavily in workforce training, professional development and upgrading, and employment-based skills preparation, with the shared goal of encouraging greater Aboriginal participation in the market economy. Across the North a significant challenge is overcoming the disconnect between northern opportunities and the Aboriginal labour force, a problem that has been compounded in recent years by the shift to fly-in labour, increasing immigration, and the rapid expansion of the northern Aboriginal population.

A large body of academic literature has linked disparities experienced by Aboriginal populations to social, economic, and political inequities (see Adelson 2005, and Lemstra et al. 2006). Aboriginal peoples in Canada have long advocated for interventions that focus on enhancing educational achievement and labour market participation as a strategy to reduce and eliminate disparities. The federal government, provincial/territorial governments, industry and postsecondary institutions have responded through various programming streams to enhance Aboriginal education, skills training and workforce development. Despite numerous studies, program reviews and institutional evaluations, there still remain significant and pervasive barriers to skills development.

This project was designed to accomplish four goals: (1) to summarize the state of the scholarly and professional literature on Aboriginal education, workforce development, skills training, and regional employment strategies relevant to the North; (2) to identify the insights gleaned about the education and training of Aboriginal northerners in order to better inform the policy discussions underway in the Canadian North; (3) to consult with current northern policy makers and administrators to identify the research papers and analytical works that underpin contemporary practice in the field; and (4) to share the results of the analysis with northern policy makers and administrators to inform regional education, workplace development, skills training, and Aboriginal/regional employment strategies with an ambition to improving outcomes.

Research was conducted in three phases: (1) an initial scan of the academic and grey literature on Aboriginal skills training programs, education, and workforce development programs; (2) a jurisdictional scan of government, industry, and Aboriginal-led programs in our six case study regions: Northern Ontario, Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut; and (3) discussions with representatives from government, industry, education, and Aboriginal organizations who are engaged with skills training, education, and/or workforce development programs to “ground truth” our findings. We met with over 59 stakeholders who were instrumental in identifying gaps, trends, and scholarly and professional analyses that have shaped current programming in the Canadian North.



What we discovered


While little critical academic literature exists on Aboriginal skills training and workforce development strategies, there is a growing body of government and non-government-authored reports and studies. This literature, in conjunction with stakeholder interviews with representatives from government, industry, education and Aboriginal organizations, revealed a number of barriers and challenges to skills training and workforce development:

- Socio-economic issues (e.g. child care, addictions, housing, transportation, racism, and justice) and support;
- Lack of essential skills and educational attainment (e.g. reading, numeracy, document use, writing, computer use, communication, collaboration/teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, English language skills, and continuous learning);
- Inadequate programs and content (e.g. funding, delivery and availability, structure and design, access, and content);
- Lack of collaboration among stakeholders (e.g. government, industry, educational institutions, and service providers);
- Systemic issues (e.g. disincentives, lack of employment opportunities, union regulations, apprenticeship opportunities, and financial barriers).

On the other hand, many practices have proven to be successful, particularly when combined and used over time. In most cases, best practices have arisen as a direct result of addressing challenges and barriers. Problem solving also requires unique approaches to the myriad of situations occurring across different jurisdictions. Best practices largely run parallel to barriers and challenges and are categorized as follows:

- Provide social supports to complement program delivery;
- Focus on essential skills training and bridging programs;
- Deliver community-based and engaged programming;
- Use approaches to deliver culturally appropriate material in a manner consistent with learner styles;
- Engage in stronger collaboration and coordination among stakeholders with a focus on long-term partnerships; and
- Pursue systemic changes to policy and regulations that provide more flexibility, accountability, and opportunities.

One of the objectives in this Knowledge Synthesis was to consult with current northern policy makers and administrators to identify the research papers and analytical works that underpin contemporary practice in the field. In discussing this research with representatives from industry, government, education, and Aboriginal organizations we discovered that most organizations had performed jurisdictional scans of programs and best practices from across the country. However,



program decisions were largely based on the place-based needs and the feasibility of implementation in their particular region.

This Knowledge Synthesis revealed four key themes:

Theme 1: Little has changed over the last two decades

The barriers and best practices identified in this report are largely consistent across all jurisdictions and widely known. Our findings also suggest that the same challenges and best practices have existed since the 1990s. Change has been slow because of weak collaboration, systemic issues regarding policy and funding, and the failure to take a holistic approach to addressing challenges and solving problems especially with regards to Aboriginal education.

Theme 2: It all starts with early childhood and K-12 education

Research has shown that barriers to education and labour market development begin to arise in early childhood and have cumulative effects throughout adolescence and into adulthood. To successfully prepare adults for the workforce, changes are required in early childhood education to stimulate learning and the desire to learn by crafting culturally relevant programming and delivery methods, and by providing quality education in communities.

Theme 3: Putting people before politics

As the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (2013: 16) argued: “training programs that come and go may be politically expedient but do not meet the Aboriginal peoples’ and employers’ needs.” One of the most important findings from this research is that successful skills training and employment outcomes require a holistic approach that fully supports the learner, their families, and their communities. This requires a long-term approach versus the current suite of short-term project-based approaches.

Theme 4: Breaking down the policy silos

We heard repeatedly that all systems required to deliver successful skills training are out of sync: programs are short-term, funding is temporary, policies are misaligned with outcomes, and not always do key stakeholders participate. Educational policy is directly related to health and wellness, health and wellness influences the ability and desire to learn, skills acquired through educational opportunities are meaningless without employment and economic development. All pieces of the puzzle must be addressed, collectively and, in meaningful partnerships if change is to occur.



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Context

For forty years, governments, industry, and Aboriginal communities have invested heavily in workforce training, professional development and upgrading, and employment-based skills preparation, with the shared goal of encouraging greater Aboriginal participation in the market economy. Across the North a significant challenge is overcoming the disconnect between northern opportunities and the Aboriginal labour force, a problem that has been compounded in recent years by the shift to fly-in labour, increasing immigration, and the rapid expansion of the northern Aboriginal population. Northern institutions have been experimenting with programs, delivery systems, workforce integration, and life skills opportunities. Despite numerous studies, program reviews and institutional evaluations, there is as yet no overall understanding of the degree to which the current educational systems and initiatives are meeting northern needs and preparing Aboriginal northerners for the 21ST century economy.

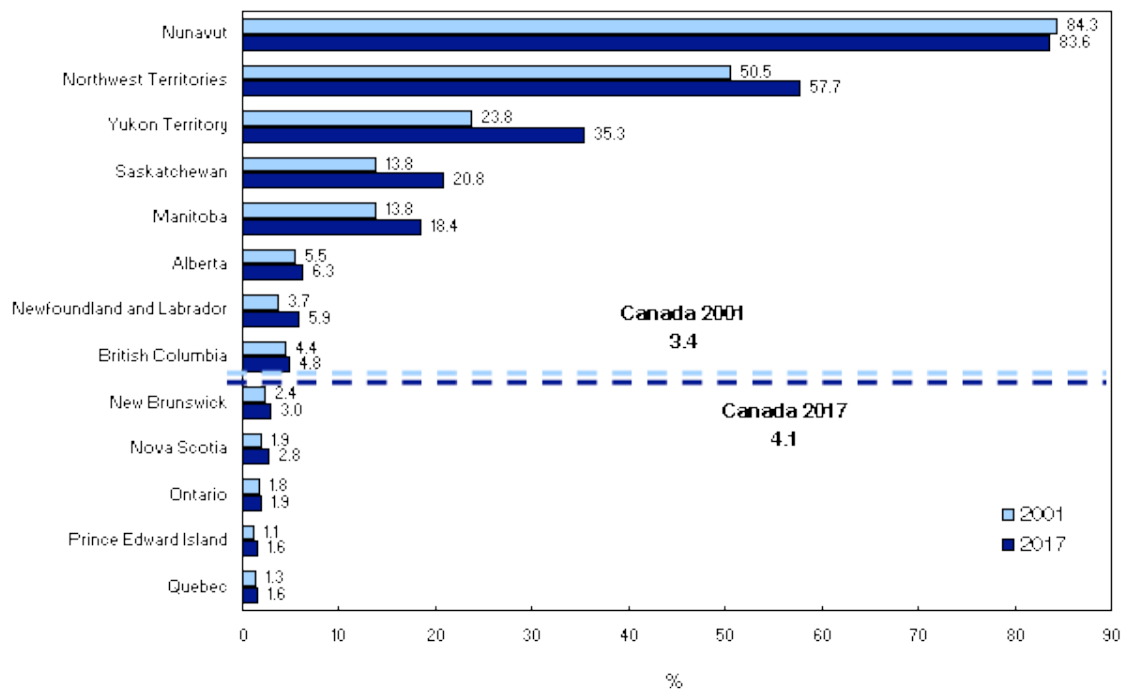
Northern institutions, often with southern partners, are working with communities, companies and individuals to address workforce opportunities. Corporations, having made public commitments to increase Aboriginal and local employment hires through impact and benefit agreements, work to create job opportunities to match their commitments. To date, few have reached their declared targets for the employment of Aboriginal peoples. In fact, it was recently noted that Aboriginal employment was actually declining in sectors that are expecting to grow in the coming decades (opportunity industries), such as mining, construction, tourism, and government administration (Carson et al. 2014). Equally disconcerting is the fact that few Aboriginal peoples move into middle and upper management, while continuing to occupy the lower paid, lesser-skilled positions. As well, resource firms are currently engaged in widespread technological upgrading exercises. As has happened in other sectors, this usually involves substantial job loss, particularly among the unskilled and semi-skilled workers, precisely the cohort currently dominated by northern Aboriginal people. (The North, for the purposes of this study, is defined as including the provincial North's, from Labrador to northern British Columbia, and the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut.)

Public debate about Aboriginal engagement in northern training, workforce preparation and employment is not strongly reflected in scholarly research. Scholars have, however, examined capacity-building efforts related to land claims agreements, individual corporate initiatives, specialized workforce development programs and, less often, regional efforts to improve employment outcomes (Fidder 2010, Hitch & Fidler 2007). Separate from most of this work, government agencies and several education departments and post-secondary educational institutions have produced limited circulation reports on the efficacy of their programs. Research has shown, for example, that substantial investments in Adult Basic Education (ABE) have produced limited employment outcomes and that few ABE graduates have completed other training programs (Baresford 2012, Wilson 2004). Experience in many northern

communities shows weak transitions from work skills and transition programs into the paid workforce (Marlin and Raham 2012). Furthermore, more than two decades of preferential hiring and on-the-job training initiatives have produced more jobs and more Aboriginal employees but without substantial shifts in the general patterns of low-skilled work (Luffman and Sussman 2007).

Implications


The Aboriginal population of Canada is growing faster than any other demographic in the nation according to the 2006 census (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2010). The National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 2011 reports that the Aboriginal population increased 20.1% between 2006 and 2011, compared with 5.2% for the non-Aboriginal population. Figure 1 illustrates expected population growth to 2017 by province and territory.



Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division.

Figure 1: Expected Aboriginal population growth to 2017 by Canadian province and territory

With respect to education, the National Household Survey indicated that approximately 48.4% of Aboriginal people reported having postsecondary qualifications in 2011, as compared to 64.7% of the non-Aboriginal population. The gap narrows considerably when comparing attainment of high school diplomas or the equivalent: Aboriginal populations (22.8%) versus



non-Aboriginal populations of the same age group: 23.2% (Statistics Canada 2011).

Aboriginal and northern workers face an employment squeeze of considerable importance. Employment rates have risen for Aboriginal groups closing the gap from 19.1% in 2001 to 15.8% in 2006. However, employment gaps still remain and are more prevalent in the North and on reserves. Aboriginal people are, at present, generally under-qualified for the best-paid and highest demand jobs in the resource economy (Gibb and Walker 2011). Efforts to catch up have not been overly successful. At the same time that technological innovations are displacing workers and eroding job opportunities, the working age of the northern workforce is growing dramatically. It is not clear that educational institutions have kept up with changes in technology and the workforce. The juxtaposition of these influences mean that employment preparation is increasingly important, as funding for elementary and secondary education sits below national norms and education, training, and workforce participation rates in the North remain well below national averages. Work-ready and demand-based training and educational systems are required if northern Aboriginal people are to capitalize on current and future resource development possibilities. Identifying best educational and training practices across the Canadian North and in other circumpolar countries must be a central feature of economic planning and preparation for the new economy.

This project was designed to accomplish four goals:

1. To summarize the state of the scholarly and professional literature on Aboriginal education, workforce development, skills training and regional employment strategies relevant to the North;
2. To identify the insights gleaned about the education and training of Aboriginal northerners in order to inform better the policy discussions underway in the Canadian North;
3. To consult with current northern policy makers and administrators to identify the research papers and analytical works that underpin contemporary practice in the field; and
4. To share the results of the analysis with northern policy makers and administrators to inform regional education, workplace development, skills training and Aboriginal/regional employment strategies with an ambition to improving outcomes.

This knowledge synthesis will serve to identify common barriers to skills training across the North, and best practices. Our hope is that this shared knowledge across the North will help stakeholders adopt and adapt successful approaches and strategies for the future.



Approach

This knowledge synthesis unfolded in three phases. The first included an initial scan of the academic and grey literature on Aboriginal skills training programs, education, and workforce development programs. This was followed by a jurisdictional scan of government, industry and Aboriginal-led programs in our six case study regions: Northern Ontario, Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan, the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut. In both of these phases we were searching for literature and information on barriers, best practices and models being used. Finally, we travelled to each of the six case study regions throughout August and September to “ground truth” our findings from the literature with representatives from government, industry, education and Aboriginal organizations who were engaged with skills training, education and/or workforce development programs. We met with over 59 stakeholders as seen in Table 1. Our meetings with stakeholders “on the ground” were instrumental in identifying gaps, trends, and scholarly and professional analyses that have shaped current programming in the Canadian North. It also provided the research team with the opportunity to engage in initial knowledge mobilization efforts.

Table 1: Stakeholder interview distribution

Region	Number of Representatives
Northern Ontario	6
Northern Manitoba	9
Northern Saskatchewan	18 ¹
Yukon	10
Northwest Territories	5
Nunavut	7
National	4
Total	59

Key Findings


Our findings are categorized into the following sections: a brief overview of programs in Canada, barriers to Aboriginal skills training, education and workforce development, and best practices.

A Brief Overview of Programs in Canada

A large body of academic literature has linked disparities experienced by Aboriginal populations to social, economic and political inequities (see Adelson 2005, and Lemstra et al. 2006).

Aboriginal peoples in Canada have long advocated for interventions that focus on enhancing

¹ Members of the research team were invited to a workshop on Aboriginal skills training programs, which included representatives from major mining companies, postsecondary institutions, and government.




educational achievement and labour market participation as a strategy to reduce and eliminate Aboriginal disparities. The federal government, provincial/territorial governments, industry and postsecondary institutions have responded through various programming streams to enhance Aboriginal education, skills training, and workforce development.

Federally, the first labour market program specifically for Aboriginal peoples was the Pathways to Success Strategy, created in 1991. Through this initiative the Department of Human Resources and Development Canada (HRDC) created a number of national and regional Aboriginal management boards tasked with setting training priorities. After a 1995 Structural Review of the Strategy, the approach shifted to bilateral agreements, which “transferred the responsibility for the design and delivery of labour market program directly to Aboriginal organizations” (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2004: 2; Human Resources Development Canada 1998). In 1996, the final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was released and it called for a fundamentally new relationship between the federal government, non-Aboriginal people, and Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

In response to challenges identified with skills training initiatives, the government announced a five-year Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS), which would begin in 1999 (Indian Affairs and Northern Development 1997). Contributions agreements were signed with Aboriginal organizations and funding was provided for labour market development programs, childcare programs, and programs to help youth transition from school to work or return to school. AHRDS was renewed in 2003 and ended in 2009 (Human Resources and Social Development Canada 2009). It was replaced by the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) in 2010, which is focused on “supporting demand-driven skills development, fostering partnerships with the private sector and provinces and territories, and emphasizing increased accountability and results” (McColeman 2014: 39). It provides funding to over 80 Aboriginal agreement holders to create training programs based on the needs of their clients.

Another program launched in 2003 was the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP) program. It was designed to provide targeted training for Aboriginal people to secure employment in major resource development projects. Between 2003 and 2012, the program supported 45 projects with a total investment of \$290 million (Employment and Social Development Canada 2013). Results indicate that roughly 24,416 Aboriginal persons received training and 8,887 secured long-term employment (McColeman 2014). Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada also administers the post-secondary student support program, which offers support for Aboriginal people enrolling in college, undergraduate programs and advanced professional degrees (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada 2015).

In addition to these federal programs, there are numerous provincial, territorial, postsecondary, and industry-specific training, education, and workplace development programs and/or



strategies offered across the country to support Aboriginal workplace integration (see Regional Case Study in the Appendix for more detail). For example, a number of provincial and territorial governments have funding programs and/or strategies for Aboriginal labour market development (e.g. Labour Market Framework for the Yukon, 2010). One of the most comprehensive approaches is the Skills4Success (S4S) initiative in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Education, Culture and Employment is leading this initiative which so far has included: engagement sessions in five regions, an online survey, a series of reports based on the engagement sessions (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a-e), a labour market forecast and needs assessment prepared by the Conference Board of Canada, and a recently released 10-year Strategic Framework (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015f). The next steps include developing action plans in partnership with other levels government, industry and education and training organizations as well as developing a system for monitoring and evaluation.

The S4S initiative has a number of strengths. First is the approach, which included community consultation and engagement. Second, is the recognition that skills training and labour market development begins at an early age. This focus on the continuum has the S4S initiative linked to early childhood development efforts (Northwest Territories 2013) and K-12 education system improvements (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2013) to align education and training with NWT labour market demands. Third, the S4S initiative is using labour market forecasts, based on three different scenarios base, medium growth, and high growth, to inform their investments in training and education. Finally, the S4S initiative is collaborative and based on partnerships between education, industry/business, and all levels of government. Labour market development, education and economic development are intimately linked. However, in the 1990s they became separate policy spheres in many jurisdictions leading to a silo approach. The S4S initiative recognizes the value of linking these areas and breaking down these silos.

There are also a number of industry training consortia, such as the Mine Training Society in the Northwest Territories and the Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium, for example. The Mine Training Society NWT was created in 2003 and includes mining industry partners, the federal and territorial governments, and Aboriginal governments and organizations. They assess potential learners, deliver training programs, and provide mentoring and coaching to place northerners in mining and/or mining-related occupations (Mine Training Society 2015). Likewise, the Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium was created in 2005 to provide fisheries related-training to Nunavut beneficiaries. It includes a number of industry partners, the federal and territorial governments, Aboriginal governments and organizations, Nunavut Arctic College and the Marine Institute at Memorial University of Newfoundland (Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium 2015 online).



Barriers to Aboriginal skills training, education and workforce development

The increase in world demand for natural resources is giving rise to greater opportunities for participation in mining, oil and gas exploration, transportation, and many other sectors. Northern industries are reporting shortages in the workforce whereby finding workers with suitable skills and abilities associated with modernization is difficult (Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013). Furthermore, industry employers are increasingly seeking employees with strong cognitive skills, problem solving skills and a keen ability to think critically. Other key skillsets are related to strong emotional intelligence and include teamwork and collaboration, listening, and oral and written communication. Finally, it is proposed that jobs in the modern northern economy are increasingly requiring proficiency in maths and the sciences. In order for northern Aboriginal people to participate in the workforce, significant investment in skills and training will be required (Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013).

There is an extensive body of academic literature on Aboriginal education and its challenges in northern contexts much of which is focused on the quality of primary and secondary delivery (Preston et al. 2012, Mackay and McIntosh 2012), including culturally relevant programming (Wilson 2004, Tuck et al. 2014), jurisdictional issues surrounding quality of on-reserve delivery (Turner and Thompson 2015, Calver 2015), and a wide range of socio-economic issues including absenteeism and graduation rates (McFarlane and Marker 2012, Janozs et al. 2011, Riley and Ungerleider 2012).

While much less academic literature exists on northern workforce development and employment, or skills training strategies there is a growing body of government and non-government-authored reports and studies on Aboriginal inclusion and workforce development. This literature, in conjunction with our stakeholder interviews from government (federal, provincial and territorial, and First Nations), educators, industry and service providers revealed a number of barriers and challenges to skills training and workforce development programs. For the most part, these barriers were very similar across the North and can be grouped as follows:

- Socio-economic issues (e.g. child care, addictions, housing, transportation, racism, and justice) and support;
- Lack of essential skills and educational attainment (e.g. reading, numeracy, document use, writing, computer use, communication, collaboration/teamwork, critical thinking, problem solving, English language skills, and continuous learning);
- Inadequate programs and content (e.g. funding, delivery and availability, structure and design, access, and content);
- Lack of collaboration among stakeholders (e.g. government, industry, educational institutions, and service providers);
- Systemic issues (e.g. disincentives, lack of employment opportunities, union regulations, apprenticeship opportunities, and financial barriers).



Socio-economic issues and supports


Socio-economic barriers to Aboriginal skills training and post-secondary educational attainment are varied and complex. In many cases, personal and social issues preclude learners from successfully completing programs or entering programs at all. Several reports provide a comprehensive list of barriers that range from childcare and family requirements to criminal justice issues, which was supported in our discussions with regional stakeholders.

One of the primary socio-economic barriers is the cost, poor availability, and inadequacy of childcare, particularly for young and single mothers. Taking time to attend courses often means having to leave home and with it, family and community support, making such opportunities difficult to embrace, particularly over the long term (Association of Canadian Community Colleges 2010, Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013, Economic and Social Development Canada 2013, Abele and Delic 2014, Government of Saskatchewan 2007). Family responsibilities also include care for family members other than children such as elders, and the need to stay in communities to offer and receive support (Brunnen 2004, Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013, Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005). Additionally, fear of leaving home can pose significant challenges for those who must leave communities, even temporarily, for training or employment (Abele and Delic 2014).

Another serious challenge affecting access to skills and training programs is addiction. Because many of the programs focus on preparation for employment in the industrial sector, learners are required to maintain sobriety not only during training but afterwards while on the job. Individual and personal problems were listed as particularly difficult barriers to overcome. Malatest, R.A. & Associates (2004) examined postsecondary education in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia by reviewing a wide range of literature and conducting interviews with stakeholders including government representatives in education and individuals engaged at all levels of postsecondary education delivery. Results regarding individual and personal barriers included themes such as poor self-concept and motivation, which were:

“...manifested in a sense of powerlessness, apathy, poor mental and physical health, anger and frustration. These can in turn lead to alcohol and substance abuse, petty thievery, physical and sexual abuse, even incarceration and a further cycle of despair. These manifestations impact on many Aboriginal students. Their home communities may also have insufficient family or institutional support to assist them in the development of a healthy mind and body.” (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2004).

The Report on the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (McColeman 2014) echoes these personal barriers including, addictions, poverty, and low self-esteem. Another significant personal challenge cited is having a criminal record. Often training programs and industrial jobs require a criminal record check, which provides additional hurdles to acceptance into skills training programs and



subsequent entry into the workforce (Brunnen 2004; Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Abele and Delic 2014).

Such complex social barriers exist as a result of historic and past government policy that has shaped communities and adversely influenced trust in government (Brunnen 2004; Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Association of Canadian Community Colleges 2010; Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005). According to the Association of Canadian Community Colleges:

“The 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples concluded that many current problems facing Aboriginal communities – violence, alcoholism, and loss of pride and spirituality – have been caused by the residential school system.” (Association of Canadian Community Colleges 2005: 7)

Many of those interviewed commented on the effects of past policy, particularly residential schools, and their continued harmful influence on northern Aboriginal residents.

Another concern is that those most in need of skills training often live in remote communities, which is associated with limited connectivity (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a), higher transportation costs and limited work opportunities, particularly for women and youth (Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Frenette 2004; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a). In our discussions with stakeholders, not having a driver’s license was also mentioned as a challenge. Also associated with remoteness is the need for temporary housing while in larger centres to access training or education. In many of the large centres, affordable housing is scarce and difficult to secure short-term (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a).

One of the most widespread findings in terms of barriers, closely related to socio-economic problems, was the lack of support including: financial resources to help individuals overcome personal problems, academic support in the way of tutors, support in the workforce through mentorship and guidance, and support for family members in the communities (Abele and Delic 2014). Additionally, the lack of role models was listed as a barrier in the literature (Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005) and during our discussions with regional stakeholders. Carter and Polevychok (2004) note that where support exists it is often inadequate in terms of quality and quantity. Our stakeholders also discussed the limited and often lack of “settlement” support that is available to Aboriginal people versus the support provided to new Canadians. This need for relocation support or transitional assistance was also identified in the literature (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2002).




Essential skills and educational attainment

An overarching theme in the literature and in our discussions was the importance of essential skills and workplace readiness skills, and the lack thereof. Life Literacy Canada has identified nine essential skills including reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking, computer use, and continuous learning (see <http://abclifeliteracy.ca/nine-essential-skills>). Accountability and responsibility were also articulated during the interview process as being essential to training as well as job acquisition and retention.

Language has long been identified as a barrier to training (Hargreaves 2013; Education and Skills Development Canada 2013) and encompasses reading, writing and document use. Skills required within the industrial sector are increasingly requiring numeracy and computer skills, and an understanding of how to work collaboratively and think critically (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum 2004; Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005). Basic skills are often taught at home and in primary and secondary school, but with lower educational attainment, and lower participation rates in postsecondary institutions (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2002) these basic skills are often lacking (Abele and Delic 2014, Canadian Apprenticeship Forum 2004, Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015d). In addition, for many Aboriginal people in the North, English is a second-language.

Skills assessment has proven to be problematic when skills are not certified or officially recognized (Association of Canadian Community Colleges 2010). Although many Aboriginal adults have not completed high school, they have gained life skills through work and life experience, but require grade 12 as a minimum to be considered for some jobs. Furthermore, the skills taught in secondary school and beyond are often not connected or related to those job-specific skills needed in the work force (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015d). According to Simon (2013), institutions often teach irrelevant skills, yet cannot predict the skills that will be needed in the future. Additionally skills such as teamwork and collaboration gained through traditional Aboriginal activities or knowledge are often not recognized in spite of being valuable in the workplace (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015d).

Related to essential skills we also heard that a lack of workplace readiness skills was also a challenge. This included knowledge about punctuality, calling in to inform management when running late or needing to miss a shift, requesting time off, etc. In addition, many people spoke about the need for employer readiness in building Aboriginal cultural awareness and an understanding of unique HR needs.



Perhaps the most fundamental problem affecting skills training and workforce development in the North is educational attainment, especially high school. As the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (2013: 6) pointedly states: “Much of the focus on training and education for the workforce is on post-secondary education. Most of this is meaningless for people who are leaving the education system before graduating from high school.” Hodgkins (2015: 271) agrees that these training measures “will be largely ineffectual unless the present K-12 educational achievement level...is significantly improved.” This issue is multi-faceted and includes quality of K-12 education, especially on-reserve, underfunding, access to education, the historical legacy of residential schools, and little hope that a high school degree will lead to employment.

With regards to access, quality and underfunding, a factsheet produced by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in 2011, reported the following:


- There are 40 First Nation communities without schools, and there are First Nation communities where children have not been to school in more than two years.
- The K-12 completion rate for First Nation students living on-reserve is 49%. First Nation students are more likely to end up in jail than to graduate high school.
- First Nation students attending on-reserve schools are funded at a rate of \$3,000 –\$7,000 less than students attending other schools in Canada

The Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (2014) echoed this concern about quality of on-reserve education. It noted that a high school diploma from on-reserve schools often does not provide the essential skills needed to pursue postsecondary education, skills training or to enter the labour market.

In Northern Ontario, Aboriginal students are often sent hundreds of kilometers away to attend high school. This issue is now part of a coroner’s inquest into the deaths of seven Aboriginal youth who left remote northern communities to pursue high school in Thunder Bay (White 2015). One witness in the Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (2014: 9) summarized this situation perfectly:

“How many of us would want to send our kids, at the age of 12 or 13, two hours away, perhaps for the week, to attend high school? Most of us don’t have to deal with that. It’s kind of a perpetuation of residential schools in some way because they have to leave their families if they want to get high school education.”

There is also fear and scepticism associated with education especially when family members need to leave to access education and training opportunities elsewhere. Much of this is caused



by the historical legacy of residential schools. As the 1996 report Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples stated: “Many Aboriginal learners have developed a feeling of distrust towards education due to their families’ experiences in residential schools. As a result, the legacy of this system continues to be a barrier to Aboriginal participation in post-secondary education” (Association of Canadian Community Colleges 2005: 7).


Retention of teachers is also a serious concern. In northern Saskatchewan, one school had already hired their third grade-8 teacher halfway through the school year. Our regional stakeholders also discussed this challenge and explained how youth often feel abandoned by this staff turnover. Related to this, the literature and our discussions with regional stakeholders also discussed how early high school dropouts, especially among males, is related to the disconnect between education and employment (Human Resources Development Canada 1998).

Inadequate programming, assessments, monitoring and funding

An important barrier to successful skills training is the lack of programming available within small communities. Key elements lacking included employment-specific training that would lead to gainful employment both in and beyond communities, culturally relevant programming, culturally relevant teaching methods and instructors who are aware of local needs and challenges (Association of Canadian Community Colleges, Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Abele and Delic 2014; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a).

Program opportunities in smaller centres have been limited for a variety of reasons including the high cost of delivery due to remoteness and low enrolments, the need for highly technical labs and equipment (e.g. machinery used in the mining industry), the lack of meaningful collaboration among stakeholders, poor infrastructure and the lack of funding for community and individual support necessary for local delivery (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a).

Often, individuals are unaware of existing programs and lack the support to successfully navigate the search and enrolment processes. McColeman (2014: 51) suggests that stakeholders would like to see “all funding for Aboriginal skills development programs... streamlined and funnelled into one program only.” Similarly, those living in remote communities often have limited knowledge about available courses (including those offered by distance and online), current trends in the labour market, and employment opportunities, particularly those available to women (Employment and Social Development Canada 2013; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a; Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005). Perceived barriers regarding program availability and opportunities were also noted specifically for apprenticeship programming (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum 2004).



Some reports have also raised concerns about the assessment and screening of applicants and the challenges of monitoring and reporting outcomes (Hodgkins 2015; Auditor General of Canada 2010). In one study, a respondent commented that “the college was ‘accepting anybody’ into its pre-trade programmes, resulting in people graduating from programmes but not passing the TEE, despite the fact that numerous re-writes were provided” (Hodgkins 2015: 266). This study also raised concerns about a so-called numbers game with monitoring and reporting to federal funders.


Other barriers cited by our regional stakeholders related to federal and provincial/territorial funding programs. On numerous occasions we were told about the negative impacts of the constantly shifting federal policy environment. Essentially, just as organizations were getting familiar with a new funding program – for example setting up appropriate institutions, finding partners, and developing training programs – programs would shift (see earlier discussion on federal programs). The literature and stakeholders we consulted recognize the fact that Aboriginal labour market development is a long-term initiative that requires long-term funding and programming to match. As Hodgkins (2015: 265) found in his study of the ASEP program in the Northwest Territories:

“...the periodic nature of funding envelopes...results in a fragmented, short-term approach towards training that contributes towards misunderstandings between employers and agreement holders as the target is always shifting; just when people are becoming acquainted with one programme, it is being replaced with another”

We also heard about staff-burnout and how downloading and cuts are forcing provincial and regional organizations to do more with less. In terms of funding, in some instances stakeholders felt there is enough funding but it is not flexible enough to meet local needs while others argued that the funding formulas have remained static since the mid-1990s and do not reflect the high growth rates in the Aboriginal population (see also McColeman 2014).

Weak collaboration

Often related to a mismatch in programming is the lack of collaboration in terms of development and delivery, funding, and long-term support (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2002) (Abele and Delic 2014). Programs that do not include all stakeholders at the table often result in failed initiatives; primarily for those that do not have employers and communities engaged. Apprenticeship programs are frequently offered where there are not enough opportunities to fill hours, or journeypersons to mentor trainees (Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005). Changing regulations can diminish the chance of success for skills certification providing more stringent rules and steps required in the process (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum 2004). Similarly, because the North is heavily reliant on



natural resource extraction where the economy can follow a boom/bust cycle, temporary unemployment makes it difficult to remain engaged in the workforce.


Coordination of benefits and programs beyond skills training is also important. There is a “lack of coordination between funding sources, delivery agencies, training institutions, and local housing authorities” (Construction Sector Council and Aboriginal Human Resource Development Council of Canada 2005: 5). Additionally, significant disincentives arise when people are forced to make trade-offs and must permanently or temporarily give up support related to housing or social assistance when they relocate or register for training (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a). In such cases, the lack of understanding of program benefits and outcomes results in a lack of motivation and often dissuades people from engaging in training or pursuing opportunities that could be beneficial to improving wellbeing in the long term.

We also found that in some regions, training providers were secretive about best practices due to the competitiveness of securing partners and funding. One industry representative also commented that training providers are often talking past each other, rather than with each other.

Systemic issues

Systemic challenges occur at all levels from federal funding to local delivery. One of the most commonly identified barriers was the lack of understanding and coordination among different agencies and service providers. Often federal programs are targeted at providing employment opportunities where the problem has been identified as high unemployment or low participation in the labour market. The prescribed solution is often to match people with jobs, or train them for specific employment opportunities. However, unemployment in many northern locations is a symptom of larger problems (e.g. social and personal challenges; limited economic opportunities) that require unique and innovative solutions that are more holistic. So, while funding is provided for education, it is often inadequate in terms of the individual and programmatic supports required for success. Overall, as discussed in many of the categories above, removal of most barriers require long-term approaches, flexibility, and support (Simon 2013).

Finally, barriers to employment arising from unions are often cited as an impediment to employment in spite of workers having the necessary skills and credentials (Brunner 2003). Interviews with stakeholders also revealed that strong unions had unparalleled access to large contracts in northern locations. Many of the successful bidders were able to bring their workforce from southern locations thereby reducing employment opportunities for local workers. While this trend is changing due to various resource development agreements signed



between Aboriginal communities and resource companies, it remains a challenge in some jurisdictions.

Best practices


Hargreaves (2013) believes that most of the literature has pointed to barriers and challenges, and that now is the time to look at best practices to identify what is working and how to continue to improve outcomes. There are many practices that have proven to be successful, particularly when combined and used over time. In most cases, best practices have arisen as a direct result of addressing challenges and barriers. Problem solving also requires unique approaches to the myriad of situations occurring across different jurisdictions. Solutions and best practices largely run parallel to the barriers and challenges mentioned above and can be categorized as follows:

- Social supports to complement program delivery;
- Focus on essential skills training and bridging programs;
- Delivery of community-based and engaged programming;
- Approaches to delivering culturally appropriate material in a manner consistent with learner styles;
- Stronger collaboration and coordination among stakeholders with a focus on long-term partnerships; and
- Systemic changes to policy and regulations that provide more flexibility, accountability, and opportunities.

Social supports to complement program delivery

By far the most important element to successful programming is support: support for the individual learner, support to overcome socio-economic barriers, and community support. Many individuals struggle to deal with a range of problems from addictions and violence, to chronic unemployment and inadequate housing, making learning that much more difficult. Programs that recognize such problems and that provide direct, and often one-on-one support to individuals have proven more successful where individual learners have been better able to navigate skills training programs and to ultimately secure long-term employment (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2002; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a, Government of Saskatchewan 2007).

Additionally, focusing on the individual and the community collectively, to help manage work-life balance, family and childcare responsibilities, the realities of training and employment opportunities (particularly when outside the community), is more likely to promote sustainable outcomes (Brunner 2003). Moral, financial, and logistical support can alleviate burdens that



impede individuals from finishing courses (Carter and Polevychok 2004).

Greenwood (2013) calls for “integrated” policy that develops programming to collectively consider childcare, family responsibilities, fiscal support, and an overall integration and coordination of services (Abele and Delic 2014). Support networks that focus not only on the individual learner but on building community capacity and relationships based on trust have shown more success (Atlantic Canada Opportunities 2003). Finally other forms of support that are increasingly used include job coaches that can help to build learner confidence, mentors in the workplace, support from elders both in the community and on the jobsite, as well as progressive training that uses a step-wise flexible approach (Employment and Social Development Canada 2014).


Focus on essential skills

Governments, educators, and employers are increasingly recognizing the importance of essential skills or life skills and have developed programming to reflect this, as well as assessment mechanisms to evaluate such skills for employment. Recognition of experiences, attitudes, and skills enables potential employees to enter skills-training programs or the workforce more readily without needing unnecessary and irrelevant credentials (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a).

Essential skills training focuses on key skills necessary for success on the job including numeracy and literacy, critical and creative thinking, and personal skills related to teamwork and individual behaviour. Skills assessment is equally important and is evolving from focusing on credentials (e.g. having graduated from high school or the equivalent), to assessing only those skills necessary in the workforce. This not only increases the labour pool, but it can vastly expedite the hiring processes. An example of this is the approach used in the Process Operator in Training (POinT) Program between Manitoba Jobs and the Economy, northern communities, industry and education stakeholders to prepare people for employment at Vale, Thompson. Workplace Education Manitoba assesses applicants and places them into one of four categories, which correspond to different levels of skills training needed to secure employment. There also remains a push to continue to revise assessment schemes to further focus on life skills, educational milestones and experience (Brunner 2003).

Delivery of Community-based and/or engaged programming

Equally important to holistic support and a focus on essential skills, is the delivery of culturally relevant programs within communities (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a). While this approach is more expensive up front, it is likely more cost effective and efficient over the long-term given the greater success. Factors that weigh heavily in the success of such programming almost always include community delivery, use of access



programs, and developed in partnership with communities (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2002)

It is critically important to note the importance of community-based programming with respect to addressing socio-economic challenges. Offering programming within communities can significantly reduce complexities associated with travel and off-reserve housing, family responsibilities, childcare, and emotional issues arising from being away from home. Providing additional support and flexibility in programs further promotes the success of community programs and can serve to establish long-term trusting relationships with stakeholders (Holmes 2006; Hargreaves 2013).

Some examples include the mobile training centres used by Cambrian College in Northern Ontario, which brings training to remote Aboriginal communities. Cameco, in Northern Saskatchewan, uses another approach. They have full-time workplace educators at two of their mine-sites who work in partnership with Northlands College to provide GED and grade 12 upgrading and skills training to employees (McColeman 2014). Community-based Adult Educators at Nunavut Arctic College also undertake community needs assessments to determine what programs the community wants and the kinds of employment opportunities that exist or are on the horizon.


Where training cannot be delivered in the community, engaging the community in the design, bringing elders to the training site, and including traditional country foods can provide additional support and success for learners.

Culturally appropriate curricula and methods

Programs that have been developed using community engagement, that provide an Aboriginal voice and culturally relevant curriculum, and include Aboriginal teachers and/or intercultural training for faculty, serve to better promote retention in postsecondary educational programs (Abele and Delic 2014) as well as skills-training programs. Furthermore, respect for how Aboriginal people learn is essential for success and should include hands-on and practical approaches.

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (2005: 67) provides an inclusive assessment of the importance of culturally relevant programming:

“There is a need to increase awareness of non-Aboriginal faculty, staff and students about Aboriginal history, culture, traditions, issues and challenges; Welcoming and safe learning environments must be provided for Aboriginal learners, that are respectful of Aboriginal culture and responsive to learners’ academic, emotional, spiritual and physical needs; ... Ensure students have the opportunity to study their own community’s needs, see themselves and their communities in the curriculum, not just in Aboriginal



programs but across mainstream programs.”

Culturally appropriate curricula are as important to learning as culturally appropriate methods. Individuals learn in many different ways – by reading, writing, listening and doing for example. Aboriginal people have a strong oral tradition and learn better through hands-on exercises (Taylor 2015). Finally, Ball (2004: 454) has written extensively on the “generative curriculum model” as a way to use indigenous knowledge and methods in teaching and learning:

“The use of a community of learners approach has also been shown to create conditions for community development by reinforcing the value of Indigenous knowledge, rekindling processes of intergenerational teaching and learning, increasing social cohesion, and securing community commitment to create programs of support for young First Nations children and families.”


The Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning in the Northwest Territories, for example, uses mixed methods to enhance students’ success and has reported higher success rates. Training for essential skills has been combined with traditional knowledge and activities, and academic learning. Students are required to complete a land-based field school where they learn hands-on about their environment using traditional practices such as fishing, hunting, and energy production (see www.dechinta.ca). While essential skills such as teamwork, oral communication, and problems solving are directly related to these traditional practices.

Stakeholder collaboration and long-term partnerships

Both the literature and interviews with stakeholders pointed to collaboration as being essential for learner success. Establishing partnerships with business and across all governments in skills training helps to address geographic and demographic realities and build flexibility into programming (Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013). Furthermore, best practices in terms of partnerships include: good governance structures, building strong relationships, and collaboration (Economic and Social Development Canada 2013). Funding should also be structured to provide incentives to work collaboratively rather than to induce competition and duplication of services (Hodgkins 2015).

Collaboration with employers was deemed highly important to ensure that learners who successfully completed skills training and other academic programs were able to find jobs (Economic and Social Development Canada 2013). One of the key barriers to success was the lack of job opportunities after completion. Many programs worked directly with industry (e.g. mining) and trained for specific positions for which there were openings (e.g. Vale in Thompson, MB, and the Mine Training Society in Yellowknife, NT).

Successful collaboration brings all parties together to not only share funding, but to consult with




communities on their needs and desires; to develop relevant programming from cultural, academic, and employment aspects; to deliver programming and to identify necessary support systems to assist learners, their families, and communities. Almost all academic, government, and regional sources and stakeholders discussed the need for continued and enhanced collaboration. Additionally, there is a need to balance economic outcomes with development opportunities (Brunnen 2003, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2004).

Systemic changes and integration

Broad themes on a global scale have been identified as fostering success for skills training including a commitment to community, integration of functions, sustained leadership, Elder participation, use of local language, attention to how people learn, traditional practices, and participatory research (Malatest, R.A. & Associates 2004). While some changes are occurring on an ad hoc basis, there remains much to do to improve outcomes across the broader spectrum. Policies to increase Aboriginal employment levels should include increasing education and training opportunities for Aboriginal people, in conjunction with creating positive incentives to become more independent (Brunnen 2003). To accomplish this, all stakeholders must work together to harmonize funding, development and delivery, and support systems at all levels. In spite of successes, there remain economic realities related to the boom/bust cycle of resource-based economies. Cyclical changes to industry often leave newly-trained individuals during periods of cutbacks or layoffs. Similarly, labour mobility means that apprentices cannot meet program requirements when journeymen leave the North to seek employment elsewhere (Canadian Chamber of Commerce 2013). Having employers at the table can alleviate these challenges in conjunction with demand-driven skills training programs. In smaller communities these challenges are particularly pervasive given the lack of an economic base.

Taking a longer-term view to funding and delivery will ensure that programs are not short-lived and provide sufficient time to evaluate outcomes (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada 2004, 2009, 2014). Government funding cycles of two to three years are not conducive to creating meaningful outcomes that often require longer time horizons. Brunnen (2003) further supports this view by calling for a more holistic approach that relies on transparent communication and dissemination of information, continued reinforcement of the values of education, consideration of social conditions, and a longer-term view that includes patience tolerance, and understanding.

Research and practice is showing that success to post-secondary training, and entry into the workforce requires early intervention (beginning in childhood), and ongoing transitions/bridging mechanisms that include holistic support (Holmes 2006). This was widely recognized within communities. There is a large literature (beyond the scope of this research) on child welfare and well-being and its importance to individuals in later life. Children that grow up in unhealthy environments are less likely to finish school, or to have the essential and life skills needed to



further education thus limiting employment opportunities. Recognizing this link, and more importantly, developing programming that targets children and young adults can serve to improve wellbeing by reducing challenges or eliminating barriers before they are created.


The Skills4Success in the Northwest Territories (see earlier discussion) program embodies this thinking and is an example of collaboration that transcends governments and departments (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2014, 2015a, 2015d)

Research & Analytical Works Underpinning Practice

One of the objectives in this Knowledge Synthesis was to consult with current northern policy makers and administrators to identify the research papers and analytical works that underpin contemporary practice in the field. In discussing this research with representatives from industry, government, education and Aboriginal organizations we discovered that most organizations had performed jurisdictional scans of programs and best practices from across the country (see for example Derome and Associates Development+Management Inc., 2012). They were also gaining insights through conferences and professional networks/associations. That being said, program decisions were largely based on the place-based² needs and the feasibility of implementation in their particular region. For example, many of the training/educational organizations are constantly assessing potential labour market training opportunities and adjusting their programs to meet the needs of their learners, industry partners, and government funders. In addition, both Ontario and the Northwest Territories recently undertook in-depth reviews of employment and training programs using jurisdictional scans and public engagement to evaluate what is working and what is not (Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities, 2014; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture and Employment 2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d, 2015e, 2015f).

Where we did receive jurisdictional scans/literature reviews, this information was incorporated into our review of the literature (see earlier discussion). We did, however, gain some insights on a number of influential reports and models underpinning contemporary practice. For example, a number of people involved with training programs related to the mining industry identified the work of Pascale Larouche and the Mining Essentials Program, which is a 12-week pre-employment training program for Aboriginal people. It was developed in partnership between the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (MiHR) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) to provide the essential skills needed for entry-level employment in the mining industry. The curriculum was developed with input from both the mining industry and Aboriginal organizations to be culturally relevant and relevant to the industry. The program is delivered

² The concept of place-based development has been widely used in the geography and economic development literature. It advocates a more holistic and targeted approach focused on the unique challenges, opportunities and assets in a particular location (see Markey 2010 for example).



locally and can be customized to the needs and culture of the learners. For example, there is alternative lesson material for Metis, First Nations, and Inuit learners. The program also requires two trainers, one with industry experience and one of Aboriginal descent (see also The Canadian Career Development Foundation 2014). The program has had 30 deliveries at 12 training sites across the country. Interestingly, the Mining Essentials program drew inspiration from a program in the NWT called Ready to Work North, which was developed by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment and delivered through Aurora College. Ready to Work North provided essential workplace skills like expectations, responsibility, accountability and teamwork. The textbook produced also used culturally relevant and familiar content, for example Northern communities and people (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada 2010).

A training provider also identified the work of Virginia Gibson (2008) exploring the relationship between Dene communities and diamond mining in the Northwest Territories through a unique inter-disciplinary approach using insights from anthropology and mining engineering. The goal of this research was to explore the meaning of relationships between and within communities as well as to shift thinking about mine planning to a more collaborative process with communities. An important part of this research provides an in-depth account of the experiences of Aboriginal miners' including how the individual, family, community, and mine negotiate access, retention and advancement. These experiences, as seen in Table 2 provide important insights for skills training, especially retention efforts. Gibson (2008) also highlights a number of key challenges in this report: the need for long-term planning, funding, and the under-skilling of Aboriginal workers, including the prevalence of Aboriginal workers in low-skilled positions. Her explanation is worth quoting at length,

"...training an underground miner requires an investment of \$50,000 for training and a commitment of a job from industry (Interview with mine manager, April 26, 2007). However, the government only commits training funds to programs that result in a job within months of training completion (Interview with mine manager, April 26, 2007). This means that there are few available dollars to invest in a long-range plan to develop a northern cadre of underground workers."

Some industry representatives we spoke with recognized this issue and are now working on strategies to "up-skill" Aboriginal workers employed at their operations. Finally, Gibson's work highlights the need to "take culture more seriously in the mines" (2008: 267), which echoes our discussion of employer readiness.

Table 2: Negotiating Access, Retention and Advancement

	INDIVIDUAL	FAMILY	COMMUNITY	MINE
Recruitment	Pass criminal record check, interest in job, low vulnerability to drug and alcohol problems, past experience relevant such as bush skills	Family readiness, support while worker away	Constant negotiation with mines, providing knowledge of available pool of labour and relevant skills	Commitment to hiring, passing the torch to the community to surface labour force; emphasize skills and experience
Retention	Abide by industrial rules, timeliness, obedience of supervisors, ability to juggle mine and home demands	Family readiness, support while worker away, allowing worker to train in time off	Support of worker in the mine through networks, scolding workers who are off the rails, scolding mine for managers that are not empathetic	Supervisor-worker relationship key
Advancement	Personal drive, prior experience of education, self esteem, willingness to adapt new style of supervision	Allowing worker to train in time off	Help in training from networks of kin, tension of having to supervise kin	Supervisor key enabler of training, advancement and skill building (i.e., moving around on equipment, clear progression plan)

Source: Gibson 2008: 190; 190-205 for more detail.

Another report, identified by an Adult Basic Education administrator, describes an Indigenization framework for Aboriginal literacy and was prepared by the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development in British Columbia (Ostrowidzki et al. 2009). This report provides an overview of the literacy challenges facing Aboriginal learners; outlines a potential model of Aboriginal education; identifies eight indigenization strategies (see Table 3) for teaching literacy to Aboriginal learners; and discusses a holistic ecology of Aboriginal Literacy that includes incorporating Aboriginal values into learning objectives and the entire educational process. This report echoes sentiments expressed in our best practices including the importance of culturally relevant curriculum.

Table 3: Eight indigenization strategies for teaching literacy to Aboriginal learners

1. The Principle of “Thinking the Highest Thought”	5. A Learner-Directed Approach for Aboriginal Students
2. Story-Telling as a Model of Aboriginal Literacy	6. Collaborative Learning and Aboriginal Literacy
3. Teaching Standard English as an Additional Dialect	7. A Critical Pedagogy of Place, Social Action, and Aboriginal Literacy
4. Reading and Writing—a Constructivist Approach	8. Aboriginal Literacy and the Mass Media

Source: Ostrowidzki et al. 2009: 63; Chapter 3.



Themes and Further Research

Theme 1: Little has changed over the last two decades

The barriers and best practices identified in this report are largely consistent across all jurisdictions and widely known. Our findings also suggest that the same challenges and best practices have existed since the 1990s. Change has been slow because of weak collaboration, systemic issues regarding policy and funding, and the failure to take a holistic approach to addressing challenges and solving problems especially with regards to Aboriginal education.

Theme 2: It all starts with early childhood and K-12 education

Research has shown that barriers to education and labour market development begin to arise in early childhood and have cumulative effects throughout adolescence and into adulthood. To successfully prepare adults for the workforce, changes are required in early childhood education to stimulate learning and the desire to learn by crafting culturally relevant programming and delivery methods, and by providing quality education in communities.

Theme 3: Putting people before politics

As the Canadian Chamber of Commerce (2013: 16) argued: “training programs that come and go may be politically expedient but do not meet the Aboriginal peoples’ and employers’ needs.” One of the most important findings from this research is that successful skills training and employment outcomes require a holistic approach that fully supports the learner, their families and their communities. This requires a long-term approach versus the current suite of short-term project-based approaches.

Theme 4: Breaking down the policy silos

We heard repeatedly that all systems required to deliver successful skills training are out of sync: programs are short-term, funding is temporary, policies are misaligned with outcomes, and not always do key stakeholders participate. Educational policy is directly related to health and wellness, health and wellness influences the ability and desire to learn, skills acquired through educational opportunities are meaningless without employment and economic development. All pieces of the puzzle must be addressed, collectively and in meaningful partnerships if change is to occur.



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Appendix A: Regional Case Studies – Northwest Manitoba

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Lack of housing
- Retention in education and training programs when they are not located in the region is a major problem
- Lack of driver's license
- Lack of confidence
- Limited work ethic
- Language barriers
- Duplication of efforts and training providers too busy to see what others provide
- Monitoring, tracking, and evaluation
- Lack of affordable daycare options
- Transportation issues
- Not enough staff to handle the needs and demand
- Burn out of program coordinators and government workers in the North
- Funding
 - Lack of money to support programs
 - Project based funding versus long-term sustainable funding
- Economic challenges
 - Resource prices
 - Volume of opportunities is smaller in the North
- Unions
- Policy disconnect
 - Federal – Provincial jurisdictional issues are a huge challenge that drain resources
 - Federal programs that do not align with provincial needs
 - Realigning federal policies every 5-6 years versus focussing on the people who need education and training
 - Constantly responding is leading to a more fragmented and strained approach
- Higher resource intensive clients with less staff and financial resources
- Lack of local capacity especially in smaller more remote communities
- Community readiness is a huge issue

Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Providing daycare and housing
- Incremental frontend programs and stepped training
- Having people in the community like outreach workers
- Partnerships
- Demand-driven training
- Community-based
- Listen to industry about what their needs are

- Project management team attached to a training program to deal with any issues when they arise
- Horizontal government activity to share resources, leverage capacity, and avoid duplication
- Essential skills training is a game changer
- Customized assessments and interventions
- HR support and mentorship
- Flexibility
- Providing tuition subsidies to wards of the crown

Provincial Programs & Strategies³

Manitoba Jobs and the Economy - Workforce Development and Income Support Division

Apprenticeship - Aboriginal Liaison Coordinator

- Connection between communities, apprentices, colleges, and Apprenticeship Manitoba to promote the benefits of apprenticeship training. The Coordinator provides direct oversight and monitoring of the technical training component of apprenticeship programs in northern and aboriginal communities.
- Communities that have benefited from apprenticeship training include Sapotaweyak, Rolling River, and Peguis First Nation.
- The Coordinator has also helped local trades people with work experience achieve certification through Trades Qualification. As journeypersons, these individuals can train new apprentices in their home communities.


Community Delivered Training

- This provides northern and rural First Nation, Métis and Inuit apprentices with the opportunity to complete technical training in or near their home communities. Technical training is delivered by Red River College, Assiniboine Community College and University College of the North, and practical (on-the-job) training is obtained in or around the community.
- Combined with improved Recognition of Prior Learning Techniques and Essential Skills initiatives, this is expected to lead to more certified trades people in Aboriginal communities and an overall increase in the number of Aboriginal apprentices by:
 - Improving retention and completion rates in apprenticeship training programs
 - Increasing success rates on certification examinations
- In addition to benefiting the individual, the use of on-site practical and technical training provides communities with the opportunity to develop and enhance their facilities and infrastructure.

Northern Construction Trades Training Pilot Project

- Delivered in partnership with the Northern Manitoba Sector Council, this \$3.3 million five-year project will provide pathways for 32 Aboriginals with limited opportunities to become

³ All information in this section was provided by a Nunavut government representative



apprentices in three trades: Industrial Electricians, Industrial Mechanics, and Steam/Pipefitters.

- Because of the involvement of the Sector Council, the apprentices can move among employers during their practical training, ensuring that they are exposed to the full scope of their trade.
- Stakeholders include Manitoba Hydro, Workplace Education Manitoba, industry and First Nations partners, Manitoba Metis Federation, and the University College of the North.
- The project began in January 2015. It builds on the successful Northern Apprenticeship Training Co-op Pilot Project that concluded in July 2014, which focused on Heavy Duty Equipment Technicians. Three-quarters of those participants successfully completed the program.

Training to Employment Pathways (TEP) Initiative

- To assist northern residents with lower than average literacy/Essential Skills, particularly Aboriginal people, that do not meet the entry level criteria required by the traditional apprenticeship model.
- Develop industry-based and demand driven Essential Skill responses to meet northern employers' needs and to help with the transition into the workplace or apprenticeship system.
- Activity for 2014/15 included 680 learners in Essential Skills training to support specific workplace goals and customized to their learning needs.

Manitoba Works! Co-operative Work Experience Program

- To address barriers to employment and enable individuals not engaged in the labour market to find and maintain good jobs that are in demand by employers.
- Deliver a customized holistic intervention through 4 service providers in Winnipeg and Northern Manitoba. Each intervention includes a paid work experience combined with industry specific pre-employment training, Essential Skills and employability skills. Post-hire transition supports are provided as a critical element to client success.
- Up to 272 multi-barriered clients in total are expected to benefit from the program, and to date 245 have already enrolled (as of April 2015). This includes Aboriginals, youth, and persons with disabilities in receipt of Employment and Income Assistance.


Process Operator in Training (POinT) Program

- Jobs and the Economy, in partnership with northern communities, industry and education stakeholders, has developed an ongoing and networked series of training responses leading to Process Operator jobs at Vale in Thompson, Manitoba.
- The seven-week training program includes Essential Skills, Employability Skills, overall mining industry information and Smelting and Refinery Process-specific training. Onsite mentorship is provided upon completion of the training program to support retention in the Vale workforce.

To date, the POinT program has completed five intakes, the last finishing in February 2015. The fifth intake included 16 participants.

Northern Manitoba Drivers Education Program

- Manitoba Public Insurance and Jobs and the Economy have partnered to deliver adult driver licensing training in northern Manitoba to help address specific barriers to



employment and to increase overall employability of Aboriginal and other low-income northern residents.

- Industry, Training and Employment Services is implementing training through existing service providers in The Pas, Thompson, and Flin Flon.

The Fishing Industry Labour Force Development Project

- The Fishing Industry Labour Force Development Project, delivered in partnership with the Communities Economic Development Fund, is a short-term program targeting fisherman north of the 53rd parallel.
- The intent is to target up to 350 individuals in receipt of social assistance (provincial or band) who are unemployed with little or no experience in the fishing industry, expose them to a career as potential commercial fisherman, provide on the job training that can lead to self employment or seasonal employment opportunities and assist with the training costs for the commercial fishers to provide the on the job training.
- Operating dates are September 2014 to November 2015.

Island Lake Retrofit Training Initiative

- Manitoba has been participating in the ILRTI since 2012/13 to retrofit homes four Island Lake communities with needed sewer and water improvements.
- Training is enabling apprentices from the communities to gain practical experience in the plumbing, electrical, and carpentry trades as they move towards journey person status.
- As Garden Hill and Wasagamack First Nations are currently under federally appointed Third Party Management, and Red Sucker Lake First Nation has not submitted an application for training, the Department is working with St. Theresa Point First Nation at this time.
- The Department contributed \$208,000 in 2014/15 to upgrade 83 existing housing units in St. Theresa Point and providing training for 20 apprentices.

Ndinawemaaganag Endaawaad Inc. (Ndinawe) – Child and Youth Care Worker Training

- To break the cycle of poverty, violence, homelessness, and isolation faced by many urban Aboriginal people, particularly for those who have previous experience as a sex trade worker.
- A 52-week certified Child and Youth Care Worker Training program in partnership with Red River College for Aboriginal adults for former sex trade workers who may not have been in the mainstream workforce and with other barriers to employment.
- Upon graduation, participants will have the skills and work experience to work in youth serving agencies, specifically helping to deter youth from the sex trade industry.

Gateway to Apprenticeship and Certification

- The Gateway Initiative, offered through Apprenticeship Manitoba, provides pre-apprenticeship co-op programs to provide under-represented participants, such as Indigenous persons, women, persons with disabilities, and new Canadians, the skills necessary to be successful in the skilled trades.
- Projects have been implemented in 2014/15 by Prairie Arctic Regional Council (carpentry) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (electrical) to help individuals gain a Level 1 credit in their trade.



Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

Thompson, Manitoba
<http://www.mkonorth.com/>

Manitoba Metis Federation Inc.

Winnipeg, Manitoba
<http://www.mmf.mb.ca/contact.php>

Universities, Colleges & Other Training Institutes

University College of the North

The Pas Campus; Thompson Campus; 12
Regional Centres
<https://www.ucn.ca/aboutucn/Pages/About-UCN.aspx>

Workplace Education Manitoba

WEST Centres in Thompson, The Pas, Flin Flon
<http://wem.mb.ca/>

Northern Manitoba Sector Council

The Pas
<http://nmscouncil.ca/>



Appendix B: Regional Case Studies – Northwest Territories

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Education
 - Lack of educational attainment; youth dropping out of high school
 - Lack of culturally relevant content in high schools
 - Massive challenges before children get to school
 - Teachers from the south not properly trained for the realities of working in the north leading to high turnover
- History and legacy of residential schools
- Policy disconnect between early childhood education, K-12, labour market and economic development
- Housing availability and cost especially in Yellowknife
- Criminal records
- Elder/community concerns about youth out-migration for employment and educational opportunities
- English is a second language for many people
- Political world wants to see short-term results
- Need to move beyond entry-level positions
- Transferability of skills

Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Policy focus on the continuum – early childhood, K-12, postsecondary, labour market planning and economic development
- Need long-term policies and planning
- Labour market assessments, forecasting and planning
- Early childhood and K-12 education needs to start with wellness
- Need to rebuild the relationship between schools and Aboriginal people
- Community-based training
- Engage the family so that they understand the industry schedule and lifestyle if fly-in/fly-out
- Employer readiness; need to have cultural awareness
- Longer-term training programs that give trainees hands-on experience
- Help people apply for criminal record suspensions
- Demand-driven training
- In-house caches to help with retention
- Community support especially for women
- Role modeling
- Focus on the whole person
- Co-instruction with Aboriginal instructors and industry or educational instructors
- Educating the communities about industry/economic development/ training and educational opportunities
- Partnerships especially industry who can supply real dollars, equipment, placements, and jobs
- Culturally relevant curriculum

- Education delivered in blocks or intensive delivery
- Providing daycare on site that is culturally appropriate
- Regional training partnerships

Territorial Programs & Strategies

Department of Education, Culture and Employment⁴

Skills4Success⁵

- A 10-year strategic framework to:
 - Better understand current and future labour market needs;
 - Ensure that supports and incentives are relevant, effective and aligned with evolving labour market needs;
 - Ensure that Northern residents have access to adult and postsecondary education and skills training programs and pathways that leads to employment; and,
 - Strengthen economic diversification and growth by ensuring that employer and business skills needs are met.

Programs are delivered through ECE Regional Service Centres:

- Beaufort Delta ECE Service Centre; Deh Cho ECE Service Centre; North Slave ECE Service Centre; Sahtu ECE Service Centre; South Slave ECE Service Centres; Fort Smith ECE Service Centre; Hay River ECE Service Centre

Programs to Support Training


- Skills Development; Building Essential Skills; Building Essential Skills-Apprenticeship; Canada-Northwest Territories Job Grant
- These programs provide support for employers and eligible clients to participate in short-term training opportunities (52 weeks or less) to develop essential employability skills and/or upgrade their skills and knowledge to meet the demands of the labour market.
- Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to: academic upgrading, workplace essential skills, life skills, employment readiness programs, pre-employment training courses, and skill-specific training programs.
- Financial assistance may include: tuition costs, books, travel, living allowances, special equipment and supports, childcare, and license or certificate fees.

Programs to support on-the-job training:

- Work Experience; Training-on-the-job; Apprenticeship Training-on-the-Job; Youth Employment; Small Community Employment Support
- These programs provide support for employers in developing a productive workforce and providing work and learning opportunities for eligible clients. Employer assistance may

⁴ All information in this section is from <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/advanced-education/career-employment/programs-services#SupportTraining>

⁵ All information on Skills4Success is from <https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/advanced-education/skills-4-success-initiative>



include: wage subsidies, course costs, special equipment and supports, job coaching and mentoring.

Programs to support 3rd party career development initiatives:

- Community Initiative; Employment Assistance Services; Local Labour Market Partnerships; Small Community Employment Support
- These programs provide support for third party organizations to deliver community and regional activities aimed at engaging underrepresented groups in the labour market.
- Activities may include: training programs, workplace education programs, community projects, and labour market partnerships that identify trends and create strategies to address community labour market needs. Programs may also include employment assistance services such as job coaching, counselling, and labour market information.

Programs to support territorial-wide labour force development initiatives:

- This program provides support for organizations involved in capacity building of the NWT labour force, to deliver targeted projects on a territory-wide scope. Projects may include research and curriculum development related to capacity building.

Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Tlicho Government

Behchoko, NT

<http://www.tlicho.ca/government/directory>

Sahtu Dene Council

Deline, NT

Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Fort Smith, NT

<http://www.nwtmetisnation.ca/staff.html>

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation

Inuvik, NT

<http://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/>

Gwich'in Tribal Council

Inuvik, NT

<http://www.gwichin.nt.ca/contact-us/>

Dehcho First Nations

Fort Simpson, NT

<http://www.dehcho.org/home.htm>

Akaiicho Territory Government

Fort Resolution, NT

Universities, Colleges & Other Training Institutes

Aurora College

Fort Smith, Inuvik and Yellowknife, NT

http://www.auroracollege.nt.ca/_live/pages/wpPages/home.aspx

Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning

<http://dechinta.ca/>

Yellowknife, NT

Mine Training Society

Yellowknife, NT

<http://minetraining.ca/intro/>



Appendix C: Regional Case Studies – Nunavut

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Low educational attainment
- Essential skills
- Access to childcare/daycare
- Home sickness and culture shock
- Housing in Iqaluit
- Airlines changing their schedules has changed how people can move around
- Cost of travel
- Health concerns (e.g. TB)
- Family concerns leading to dropouts from education, training and employment opportunities
- Access to broadband and bandwidth
- Geography and access to training, education, and employment opportunities
- Tracking trainees
- People not wanting to leave their communities and families
- Creating jobs, economic development, and diversification especially in smaller communities
- Lack of confidence; low self-esteem
- Work readiness skills; workplace culture skills
- Deficit model – you do not have this skill or that skill etc.

Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Demand-based training
- Listen to industry partners
- Work with the individual; whole person – workplace culture skills; life skills; money management; time management etc.
- Co-op/hands-on experience
- Partnerships between industry, postsecondary, government, communities and training institutes
- Provide all costs associated with training – supplies, costs of travel, tuition
- Provide traditional country foods; check-in on trainees to provide support
- Culturally-relevant approach – more tactile and oral tradition in Nunavut
- Culturally-relevant curriculum; blend traditional societal values with workplace values
- Strong assessments
- Be clear about realities and expectations from the beginning
- Role models/mentorship
- Career counsellors
- Focus on up-skilling
- Community-based
- Land claim agreements and resource benefit agreements can provide the catalyst
- Building community capacity

- Need a long-term vision
- Use community needs assessments
- Need political will
- Need to think about the impacts and changes for the individual and the family
- Labour market gap analysis/planning
- Country food kitchens
- Cross-cultural training for employees and employers
- Using Elders and Indigenous instructors

Territorial Programs & Strategies⁶

Department of Family Services / Department of Education

- Career Development: <http://gov.nu.ca/family-services/information/career-development>
- Programs listed: Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS), Adult Learning and Training Supports (ALTS), Training on the Job (TOJ), Canada Nunavut Job Grant (CNJG), Nunavut Entrepreneurship Incentive (NEI), Targeted Training Initiative (TTI), Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupations Certification, Special Professional Fund (SPF).

Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy:

- The intent of the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy (NALS) is to provide support and reinforce the goals and successful implementation of the Nunavut Land Claim by providing Nunavummiut with training, education and tools required to actively participate in the development of Nunavut and provide coherence and coordination to existing and planned activities.
- <http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/information/nunavut-adult-learning-strategy>

PASS: Pathway to Adult Secondary School (PASS) Graduation

- Pathway to Adult Secondary School (PASS) graduation gives adult learners a new route to earn the same Nunavut Secondary School Diploma (commonly known as the Grade 12 Diploma) as those students who have completed the high school route.
- PASS is specially designed for adult students over the age of 19 who only need a few credits to complete their high school program requirements.
- Nunavut Arctic College instructors deliver the online curriculum offered through the Alberta Distance Learning Centre (ADLC), and it is the same as that offered in Nunavut schools.
- Trained facilitators, computer equipment, connectivity, specialized training to use the equipment, and space to learn, are all provided by Arctic College to help student enrolled in a PASS course succeed in meeting their learning goals toward completion of their Grade 12 Diploma.

⁶ All information in this section was provided by a Nunavut government representative

- PASS links learners to other students, teachers and content online through dedicated computers and connectivity designed to work in Nunavut. Students can learn from any Nunavut community – even if they change communities during their studies.
- <http://www.gov.nu.ca/education/information/pathway-adult-secondary-school-graduation>
- <http://www.arcticcollege.ca/en/education-news/item/5839-pass-program-news>

Department of Economic Development & Transportation

Northern Aviation Scholarships

- The Department of Economic Development & Transportation has scholarships to award to people pursuing an aviation-related career. The studies can be related to airline or airport operations or management, aircraft maintenance, and pilot training. You can get up to \$5,000 to help pay for your aviation education!

Nunavut Mine Training Fund

- The purpose of the Government of Nunavut's Mine Training Fund is to maximize the employment opportunities for Nunavummiut from mining and related activities. The Mine Training Fund will provide accountable contributions to develop, co-ordinate and execute mine training for Nunavummiut.

Nunavut Prospectors Program


- Qualified prospectors may apply for a contribution of up to \$8,000 per year to cover basic expenses while exploring for new mineral occurrences in Nunavut. This financial support applies to project-related expenses such as fuel, vehicle maintenance, food allowance while in the field, assistant wages, prospecting supplies, and mineral assay costs.

Business Development

- The department provides funding to businesses through its small business support and strategic investments program. It also has a guide to starting a business in Nunavut. The department funds the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation. The corporation provides funding to larger businesses that are unable to access sufficient debt capital from commercial sources.

Community Development

- The department supports the development of community economies through funding assistance to municipalities and non-governmental organizations.
- Under the Strategic Investments Program, the Nunavut Economic Foundations Fund targets community organizations that work to improve the ability of Nunavummiut to participate in Nunavut's economy. The Entrepreneur Development Fund provides



financial assistance to community organizations to deliver entrepreneurship and business aftercare services.

- All Nunavut communities can receive financial assistance from the department to employ a Community Economic Development Officer, to maintain a community economic development plan, and to implement projects identified in the plan. This support is provided through the Community Capacity Building schedule of the Policy Program Partnerships.

Arts and Crafts

- The Department of Economic Development & Transportation funds the Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association (NACA). NACA uses this funding to promote the growth and appreciation of Nunavut artists and the production of their arts and crafts.

Small Business Support

- This program is primarily focused on providing up-and-coming small businesses, community organizations and individuals with support to grow.

Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Kakivak Association

Iqaluit, Nunavut

http://www.kakivak.ca/en/training_programs

Kitikmeot Inuit Association

Cambridge Bay, Nunavut

<http://kitia.ca/en/programs/training>

Kivalliq Partners in Development

Rankin Inlet, Nunavut

<http://www.kivalliqpartners.ca/funding-programs>

Universities, Colleges & Other Training Institutes

Nunavut Arctic College

Nunatta Campus, Kivalliq Campus,
Sanatuliqsarvik, Piquisilirivvik, Kitikmeot
Campus, Nunavut Research Institute

<http://arcticcollege.ca/>

Nunavut Fisheries Training Consortium

Iqaluit, Nunavut

<http://nftconsortium.org/>

Kivalliq Mine Training Society

Rankin Inlet, NU

<http://www.kivalliqmts.ca/home/>



Appendix D: Regional Case Studies – Northern Ontario

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Eligibility criteria
- Funding
 - Concerns that federal funding is perceived to be based on 1996 Census data)
 - Concerns that the money available is too small to address the inequities that exist
 - Competition for funding among training providers; pits every Aboriginal community against each other
 - Some social assistance recipients see their funding reduced when they receive training subsidies which acts as a disincentive
 - Project-based, short-term funding
- Silos between the federal and provincial governments
- Jurisdictional battles between the federal and provincial government over responsibilities, especially for education
- Access to a driver's license
- Need to increase cultural awareness and inclusion within HR practices
- Resource benefit agreements
 - Some do not specify types of employment leading to low skill work
 - Chiefs and Councils who lack the knowledge and the experience to effectively negotiate
- Geography/access to education, training and employment opportunities
- Capturing transferable employment skills from traditional skills and knowledge
- Education and training of crown wards
- Breaking stereotypes

Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Education is part of the solution for employment and training
- Role modeling
- Hands on experience in the industry built into the training programs; job shadowing
- Demand-based training
- Meeting regularly with stakeholders including communities, economic development officers and industry
- Partnerships between post-secondary institutions, training institutions, industry, and communities
- Life skills help with success;
- Culturally appropriate curriculum
- Being realistic about expectations (e.g. do not train people for jobs that do not exist regionally)
- Employee readiness for workplace culture
- Employer readiness for Aboriginal culture
- Learning centres at industrial sites
- Flexibility to focus on the individual

- Engaging Elders to provide support onsite or throughout the training program

Provincial Programs & Strategies⁷

Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MTCU)

Aboriginal Skills Advancement Pilot Project (ASAPP):

- This pilot supported over 100 Aboriginal learners' skills advancement, ranging from literacy and basic skills upgrading to pre-apprenticeship training, to improve access to anticipated employment opportunities associated with the Ring of Fire.
- ASAPP helps prepare Aboriginal clients for opportunities in economic development and growth based on the chromite and mineral deposits in the James Bay lowlands area (commonly referred to as the Ring of Fire area).

Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training (APSET) Policy Framework:

- In 2011, Ontario launched the Aboriginal Postsecondary Education and Training (APSET) Policy Framework, which guides the development of targeted policies and programs to close the education attainment gap for Aboriginal learners and enhance the Aboriginal student experience. Since its release, MTCU, in collaboration with its partners, has made significant progress toward the realignment of existing programs to achieve the goals of the Framework, including:
 - o Postsecondary Education Fund for Aboriginal Learners (PEFAL) to support Aboriginal students and partnerships with Aboriginal communities and organizations.
 - o Aboriginal Student Bursary Fund, which supports Aboriginal learners with financial need participate in postsecondary education and training.
 - o Financial support to ensure that high-quality postsecondary education and training remain accessible to Aboriginal youth through the Province's nine Aboriginal Institutes.

Employment Ontario (not regionally specific or Aboriginal specific, but Ontario's largest employment and training support program):

- Through Employment Ontario, Aboriginal people in Ontario are accessing a variety of services, including:
 - counselling, job search and job placement services;
 - literacy, numeracy and basic skills training;
 - on-the-job and in-class apprenticeship training;
 - community Partnership development; and,
 - on-the-job training in Ontario's Northern resources sectors.
- Employment Ontario supports traditional methods of Aboriginal learning by encouraging the inclusion of Indigenous cultural perspectives into programming. Programs such as Literacy and Basic Skills and Pre-apprenticeship have training tailored to the needs of Aboriginal learners

⁷ All information in this section was provided by an Ontario government representative



Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM)

The Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC)

- The NOHFC provides funding for a range of activities occurring in Northern Ontario. Aboriginal uptake of this program is substantial. You can visit <http://nohfc.ca/en/programs> for more information on the specific programs offered.

Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs (MAA)

Aboriginal Economic Development Fund (AEDF):

- The 2014 Budget introduced a three-year Aboriginal Economic Development Fund (AEDF) which is beginning to address some of the key barriers to economic development, including improving access to skills training and financing as well as supporting community economic development.
- The AEDF is supporting projects through three streams - Economic Diversification Grants support communities in broadening their economic base through planning and other activities; Regional Partnership Grants support regional or province-wide projects that improve access to skills training and financing; and the Business & Community Fund provides funding to Aboriginal Financial Institutions who in turn provide grants and loans for promising community projects, as well as start-up, early stage and expanding Aboriginal small- and medium-sized businesses.

Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Anishinabek Nation (Union of Ontario Indians)

North Bay, ON
<http://www.anishinabek.ca/local-delivery-mechanism-offices.asp>

Métis Nation of Ontario

Fort Frances, Dryden, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Sault Ste. Marie, North Bay, Sudbury ON
<http://www.metisnation.org/>

Sioux Lookout Area Aboriginal Management Board

Sioux Lookout, ON
<http://www.slaamb.on.ca/contactinfo>

Shooniyaa Wa-Biitong

Kenora, ON
<https://shooniyaa.org/>

Wabun Tribal Council (Mamo-Nuskomitowin)

Timmins, ON
<http://www.wabun.on.ca/wabun-employment-training>

Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve

Wikwemikong, ON
http://www.wikwemikong.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=77&Itemid=79

Matawa Employment and Training

Thunder Bay, ON
<http://www.matawa.on.ca/departement/kkets-2/>

Mamaweswen, The North Shore Tribal Council

Cutler, ON
<http://www.mamaweswen.com/>



Aboriginal Education Institutes

Anishinabek Education Institute

North Bay, ON

<http://www.aeipostsecondary.ca/index.asp>

Oshki-Pimache-O-Win Education & Training Institute

Fort William First Nation, ON

<http://www.oshki.ca/index.php>

Seven Generations Education Institute

Fort Frances, ON

<http://www.7generations.org/>

Shingwauk Kinoomaage Gamig

Garden River First Nation, ON

<http://www.shingwauku.ca/>

Kenjgewin Teg Educational Institute

M'Chigeeng, ON (Manitoulin Island)

<http://www.ktei.net/>

Universities & Colleges

Laurentian University

Sudbury, ON

<http://laurentian.ca/>

Algoma University

Sault Ste. Marie, ON

<http://www.algoma.u.ca>

Nipissing University

North Bay, ON

<http://www.nipissingu.ca/>

Lakehead University

Thunder Bay, ON

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/>

Northern Ontario School of Medicine

Sudbury & Thunder Bay, ON

<http://www.nosm.ca/>

Cambrian College

Sudbury, ON

<http://www.cambriancollege.ca/Pages/Home.aspx>

College Boreal

Sudbury, ON

<http://www.collegeboreal.ca/accueil>

Canadore College

North Bay, ON

<http://www.canadorecollege.ca/>

Sault College

Sault Ste. Marie

<http://www.saultcollege.ca/>

Confederation College

Thunder Bay, ON

<http://www.confederationc.on.ca/>

Northern College

Timmins, Kirkland Lake, Haileybury,

Moosonee, ON

<http://www.northernc.on.ca/>



Appendix E: Regional Case Studies – Northern Saskatchewan

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Education
 - Underfunding of education in Northern Saskatchewan; employers should be banging their fists that their future workforce is not getting treated fairly and they will ultimately end up funding the problem later through training programs
 - Need a larger public policy debate about education
 - Traditional model of education is not working for the North
 - Quality of education
- Need to unlock people from having to go to Saskatoon or Regina for training; once they are there retention is harder
 - Living away from home and community
- Training and education institutes not talking with each other but talking past each other
 - Do not need more programs; need better programs
 - Quality of training and quality of content
- ‘Unsuccessful’ trainees are unsuccessful because they are not ready – lack life skills, essential skills, have no home, car etc.
- Students do not feel comfortable that they will fit in the workplace
- Short work placements which are the norm are not enough; want 3 months not 2 weeks
- Programs that do not require grade 12 may result in further marginalization
- Employer readiness to work with Aboriginal employees; Cultural awareness of employers and training institutions as well as recognizing the barriers for individuals coming from smaller, isolated communities
- People have no long-term employment experience
- Serial training
- Aboriginal workforce – 1/3 ready; 1/3 need training; 1/3 not ready due to poverty and other social issues
- Access to childcare
- Not having a driver’s license
- A lot of times there is a mismatch between training programs and the economy which leads to unsuccessful programs
- Poor assessments in the beginning
- Funding for education and skills training is a common barrier whether it is accessing the funding or a lack of funding.
- Human resources available to manage and organize programs
 - Often overworked with little extra resources meaning that burn out rate tend to be higher.
- Role models

Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Longer term work placements
- Be up front about industry realities and expectations
- Community readiness
- Employer readiness to work with Aboriginal employees
- Up-skilling people already employed to higher skilled positions

- Engaging Aboriginal Economic Development Corporations
- Get parents and communities involved in K-12
- Work learn environments versus learning environments
- On-site, hands on training was noted as successful for employees to experience the work first hand and gain more practical and real-world training and to understand situational dynamics that you cannot learn in a classroom.
- Reward trainers who are prepared to take those who are on social assistance and need coaching throughout the programs
- Programs which focus more on the individual person as a whole, identifying barriers and working to prepare and overcome barriers has been identified as more successful at assisting individuals obtain meaningful employment than those that only focus on an individual's employability.
- Culturally relevant programs and curriculum
- Multi-faceted approach that looks at community needs, labour market/industry demand, demographics, funding.
- Program plan changes constantly so they need to be flexible – need to be able to meet the needs of clients
- Demand-led training
 - Industry identifies a skill shortage and must commit to hiring and is also the primary selector of clients
 - Industry partnerships
- When employment and job placement is made a priority outcome for programming there has been significant successes
- Community-based education and training
- Assessment of personal, family and community barriers that individuals are faced with is important to ability to complete training courses.
- Employment counselling can help to identify barriers and work towards overcoming them.
- Successful programs typically add more pre-training preparation classes for up-skilling and those that offer the opportunity to move into higher level positions often do well and increase retention because those in the programs can see potential to move up into higher positions and advance their skills

Provincial Programs & Strategies⁸

- The Joint Task Force on Improving Education and Employment Outcomes for First Nations and Métis People <http://www.jointtaskforce.ca/>
- Following Their Voices is an initiative that is designed to engage and support students through improved relationships with their teachers. Strengthening this relationship will result in increased educational achievement and graduation rates among First Nations and Métis students.

⁸ All information in this section is from: <https://www.saskatchewan.ca:443/residents/education-and-learning/first-nations-and-metis-education>

- This made-in-Saskatchewan model is based on research conducted with a group of First Nations and Métis students, their parents, their teachers and Elders through a project called Seeking Their Voices.
- The approach has identified key factors that produce increase academic achievement, including:
 - increasing professional learning and capability of teachers;
 - focusing on responsible and accountable leadership;
 - setting priorities in First Nations and Métis culture and language; and
 - strengthening inter-agency collaboration.
- Canada Saskatchewan Job Grant

Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Gabriel Dumont Institute Training & Employment (GDI)

Saskatoon, SK

<http://www.gdins.org/>

Saskatchewan Indian Training Assessment Group Inc.

Saskatoon, SK

<http://www.sitag.ca/>

Saskatchewan Indian Institution of Technology

Asimakaniseekan Askiy Reserve,
SK

<http://www.siiit.sk.ca/>

Universities, Colleges & Other Training Institutes

University of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, SK

<http://www.usask.ca>

Northlands College

La Ronge, Buffalo Narrows, Creighton, SK

<http://trainnorth.ca>

North West College

Meadow Lake, North Battleford SK

<http://www.northwestcollege.ca/>

First Nations University of Canada

Saskatoon, Prince Albert Campus, SK

<http://fnuniv.ca/>

Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies

Prince Albert Campus, SK

<http://www.siiit.sk.ca/>

Gabriel Dumont Institute

Saskatoon, La Loche, Beauval, Ile-A-La-Crosse,
Meadow Lake, Prince Albert, North Battleford,
SK

<https://gdins.org/>

Saskatchewan Polytechnic

Prince Albert Campus, SK

<http://saskpolytech.ca/>

Northern Career Quest

La Ronge, SK

<http://www.northerncareerquest.com/>

International Minerals Innovation Institute

Saskatoon, SK

<http://www.imii.ca/>

BATC Employment and Training

North Battleford, SK

http://www.batc.ca/departments/employment_training.php



Appendix F: Regional Case Studies – Yukon

Barriers Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Political issues
 - Short-sighted policies
 - Lack of collaboration among governments
 - Mismatch of priorities
 - Lack of buy-in by different parties
 - Failure to provide flexibility with grant monies
 - Ad hoc participation
 - Change in leadership
 - Poor intergovernmental relations
 - Government-centric focus
- Inadequate funding
- Failure to share information
- Employment issues
 - Failure to commit support in the workforce (employment training officers, journey-people,)
 - Lack of employment opportunities in communities
 - No incentives for training (other social supports are sufficient)
 - Lack of synergy between employers and learners
- Education
 - Lack of educational attainment; youth dropping out of high school
 - Lack of culturally relevant content in high schools
 - Problems associated with early child development, health and wellbeing
 - Preparedness for higher education
 - Lack of quality programs in communities
 - Curricula needs to be more adaptive
- Skills programs
 - Revolving door through programs with no jobs at the end
 - Failure to use culturally relevant training methods (oral/hands on)
 - Lack of training opportunities in communities
- Social problems
 - Housing availability in larger centres
 - Life problems get in the way of training, education and employment
 - Criminal records
 - Lack of driver's licences
 - English language proficiency
 - Substance abuse
 - Addictions
 - Violence
- Regulatory requirements
 - Assessments not appropriate
 - Skills not recognized
 - Union barriers
 - Apprenticeship programs – difficult to obtain hours and experience/insufficient placements and support



Best Practices Identified by Regional Stakeholders

- Policy focus
 - Collaborative
 - Buy-in is important
 - Policy must be empowering to all groups
 - Long-term policy is better
 - Ownership and consensus work to solve problems (although the process is slower)
- Solutions and strategies tailored to each group according to needs
- Jobs and an economic base
- Stronger relationships between students/teachers and Elders
- Use Elders to help teach life skills
- Stronger focus on Adult Basic Education
 - Develop adaptive curricula
- Funding individuals
 - Provide supports
 - Need daycare
 - Add coaching
 - Provide strategies and tailor support to meet “individuals’ needs”
 - Start with children
- Use relevant learning methods/content
 - Work from land-based focus
 - Focus on skills development
 - Recognize values
- Provide one-on-one support
 - Help with vehicles/transportation
 - Food/breakfast
 - Find partners
 - Use case management
 - In-kind support is also important (esp. from industry for training)
- Use project based programs
- Find role models
- Begin dialogue starting from K-12 and beyond
- Educating the communities about industry/economic development/ training and educational opportunities
- Develop a one-stop-shop for job search and other supports
- Develop partnerships especially industry who can supply real dollars, equipment, placements, and jobs
- Culturally relevant curriculum
- Take a holistic approach to wellness
- Match skills to jobs
- Investigate better training models
- Need to be innovative



Territorial Programs & Strategies⁹

Department of Education

Community Training Fund

- Funding available to help meet labour market needs in three areas: Project-Based Training; Regional Training; and Sectoral Training
 - *Regional Training Funds*: Regional-based training funds are managed by Training Fund Committees comprised of individuals who are representative of the region they serve
 - Klondike Region Training Fund
 - Campbell Region Training Fund
 - Pelly-Carmacks Training Fund
 - Champagne-Aishihik Training Fund
 - Watson Lake Training Fund
 - *Sectoral Training Funds*
 - Community Training Trust Fund
 - Heritage Training Fund
 - Tourism Training Fund
 - Cultural Industries Training Fund
 - Environmental Training Fund
 - Non-Government Organization Training Fund
- Labour market development agreement programs and services
 - Employment Assistance Services
 - Labour Market Partnerships
 - Job Creation Partnerships
 - Self Employment
 - Targeted Wage Subsidies
- Canada-Yukon Job Fund

Federal ASETS Agreement Holders

Aboriginal Labour Force Alliance

Whitehorse, Yukon

(867) 456-4348

Council of Yukon First Nations

Whitehorse, Yukon

<http://cyfn.ca/>

Universities, Colleges & Other Training Institutes

Yukon College

Whitehorse, Yukon

<http://yukoncollege.yk.ca/>

Yukon Mine Training Association

Whitehorse, Yukon

<http://ymta.org/>

⁹ All information in this section is from: <http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/training.html>

Appendix G: Statistical Analysis

(Prepared by Greg Finnegan, Research Fellow, International Centre for Governances and development, University of Saskatchewan; any errors and/or omissions are the responsibility of the author of the statistical analysis and not the authors of the report)

Aboriginal Demography and Labour Force Profile; Northern Manitoba

The following is a short demographic and labour overview of the Aboriginal community in Northern Manitoba (Census District 18) which demonstrates the persistent disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada at the regional level. This sets the context for our analysis and critique of the role of Aboriginal training programs in the development of the Aboriginal labour force.

This profile is greatly hampered by the failure of the National Household Survey across much of Northern Manitoba and in Aboriginal regions. As these are some of the poorest regions in Canada, the cancelling of the Long Form Census which the NHS failed to adequately replace is another example of elimination of the data required to make informed evidence-based policy; an issue that needs to be urgently corrected. This leaves us with dated 2001 and 2006 Census socio-economic data and the

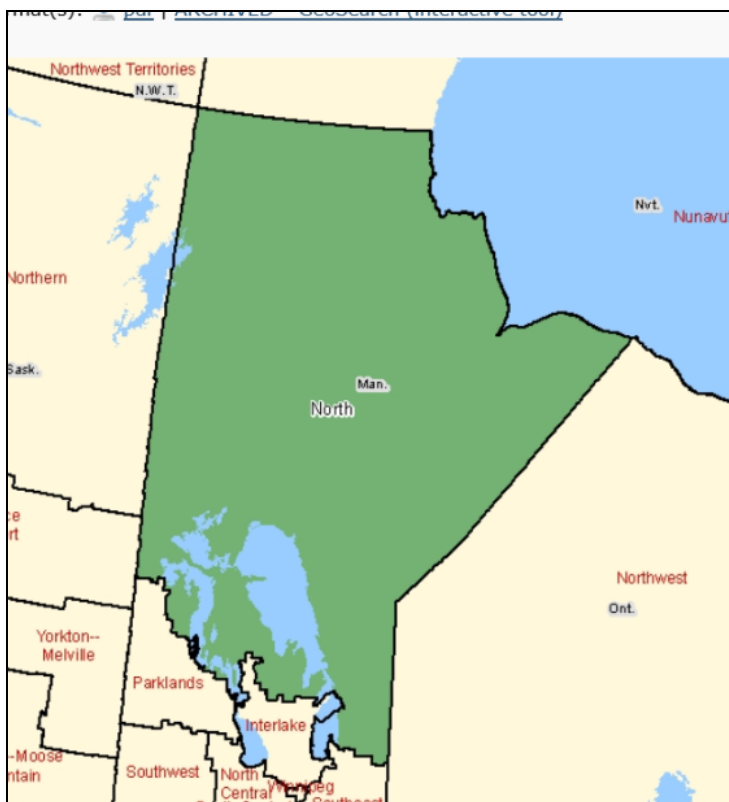


Figure 1: Census 2011, Manitoba North Economic Region

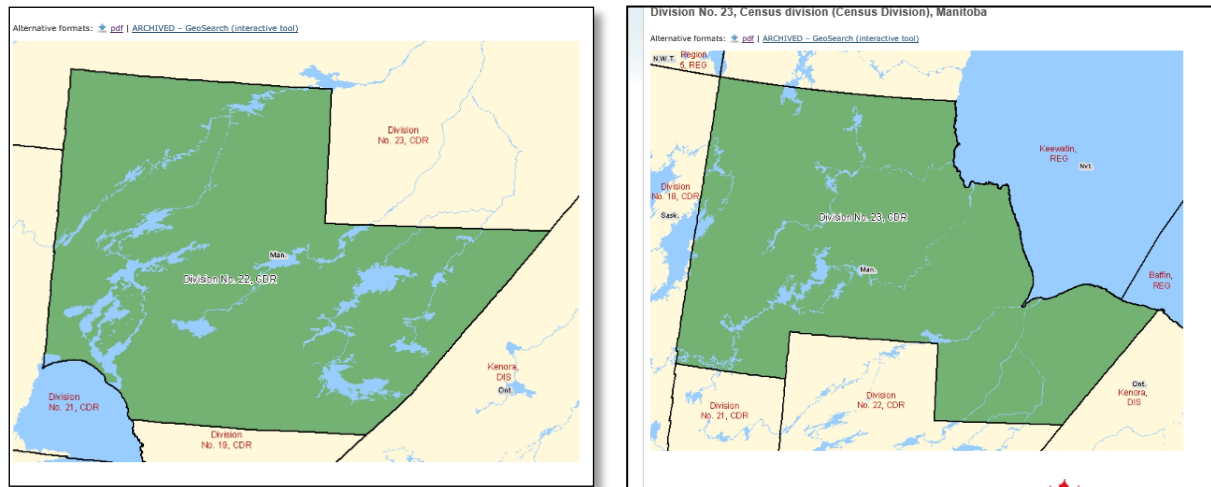
2011 Nominal Census to work with and Labour Force Survey Aboriginal splits data from 2004 to 2014 that has been provided by Statistics Canada for this analysis. We should also note that the Manitoba bureau of Statistics was less than forthcoming when we requested data from the Northern region, citing the failure of the Census and a lack of LFS with Aboriginal splits.

While a composite 2011 Census is available for the Economic Region of Manitoba North there is no equivalent geography for the Aboriginal Population Profile, which is an unfortunate situation as Manitoba could have request this geography to have been compiled.



1. In Northern Manitoba (CDs 21, 22 and 23) the Aboriginal population accounts for 68.8% or 48,415 of 70,415 northern residents living in these three Northern Census Divisions. The Aboriginal

Figure 2, 3 & 4 Census maps for CD 21, 22 and 23



population is 94.6% First Nation and 7.2% Métis living along with a very small population of Inuit numbering some 145 people, of whom 110 were females. The Aboriginal population median age in all three CDs is low with the median age in CD 21 being the highest at 23.3, while in CD 22 the median age was 20.8 and 21 in CD 23 in 2011. In comparison the provincial median age stood at 38.4.

2. Dependency Ratios are alarmingly high in CD 18 when compared to the provincial levels, with in the DR for CD 21 in 2011 being 95.8%, meaning that there were 95.8 dependents aged 0-19 and 65 years of age and over for every 100 working age adults. By comparison the Manitoba DR was 68.2%. The DRs for CD 22 and CD 23 were even higher at 108.3% and 113.7%.

In all three cases the percentage of the population that was comprised of children 0-19 years of age stood at 45%, 48% and 48% for the three Northern CDs (See Table 1) while the provincial percentage of the population 0-19 stood at 26%.

High DRs put considerable pressure on families and communities to provide basic needs and services from food through to educational and recreational

Table 1: Northern Manitoba Dependency Ratios 2011				
Age Cohorts	CD 21	CD 22	CD 23	Manitoba
0-19	4,815	15,245	3,275	317,375
20-64	5,495	15,135	3,175	718,440
65 and over	450	1,150	335	172,450
Total Population	10,760	31,530	6,785	1,208,265
% pop under 19	45%	48%	48%	26%
Dependency Ratio	95.80%	108.30%	113.70%	68.20%

programs and they limit the ability of adults to improve their savings and can impact educational opportunities.

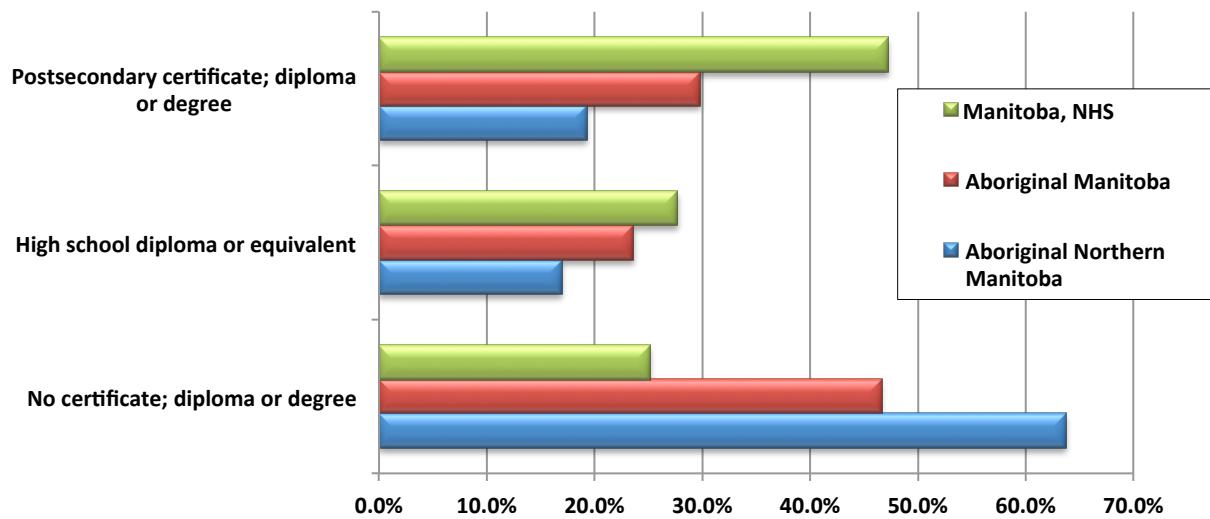
3. Aboriginal Lone-parent families represent a high percentage of family units in the North with female parents commonly carrying the burden of lone-parenthood. This again impacts income earning abilities, educational opportunities and decreases access to the labour force for these women. In 2011, the number of Aboriginal lone-parent families in CD 21 totalled 965 or 26.6% of all households. Aboriginal lone-parent households had a total of 1,925 children living in them or fractionally, just under 2 children/household, on average. In contrast, lone parents accounted for only 12.1% of families living in private households in Manitoba. In 2011, there were also 235 Aboriginal children in CD 21 who were living with grandparents with no parents present in the household.

Table 2: Northern Manitoba Aboriginal Single Parent Families, 2011									
	CD 21			CD 22			CD 23		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Lone parent families	965	270	690	2,945	755	2,185	660	200	460
Total number of private Aboriginal households	3,630	1,885	2,415	7,190	5,175	6,755	1,635	1,045	1,420
Single parent families as a % of all households	26.6%			41.0%			40.4%		
% Female single parent		28.0%	71.5%		25.6%	74.2%		30.3%	69.7%
<i>We cannot acquire the number of Aboriginal family units from the APP so we have used total number of households as a proxy baseline.</i>									

The frequency of lone-parent Aboriginal households increases substantially as we move north-west and north into CD 22 and CD 23 where the frequency of lone-parent households jumps to 41% and 40.4% respectively. The burden of lone-parenting falls disproportionately upon females in all cases running from 69.7% in CD 23 to 74.2% in CD 22. In CD 22 and CD 23 lone-parent households had 2 and 2.1 children per household in 2011; while children living with grandparents totalled 720 and 165 children respectively.

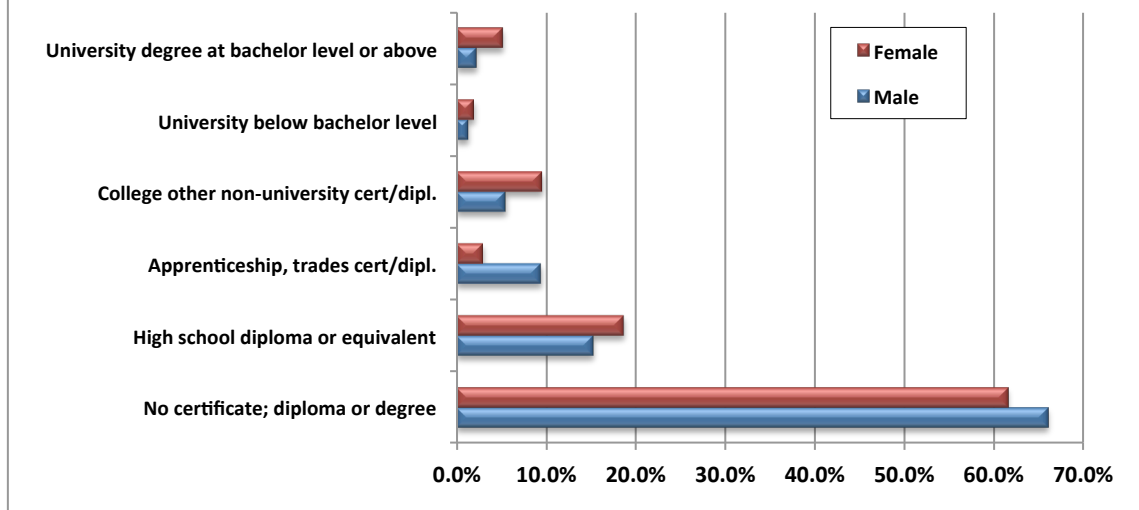
4. The educational differences between the Aboriginal North and the province are profound for adults 15-64 years of age. In 2011 the Aboriginal population of the three Northern CDs (21, 22 and 23) saw only 19.3% of their population 15 years of age and over completing some level of postsecondary education, while almost two thirds had not graduated high school or acquired any other certificate. In comparison the percentage of Aboriginal Manitoban as a whole who had not acquired a certificate at any level stood at 46.6% while across Manitoba as a provincial population only 25.1% of the population 15 to 64 had not completed some level of certificate program. We see pretty much the inverse of this relationship when we look at higher educational attainment with 47.2% of Manitobans having acquired a postsecondary education compared to 29.8% of the provincial Aboriginal population and only 19.3% of the North's Aboriginal population.

Figure 5: Manitoba: Total Aboriginal identity aged 15 years plus in private households by highest certificate; diploma or degree Compared, NHS 2011



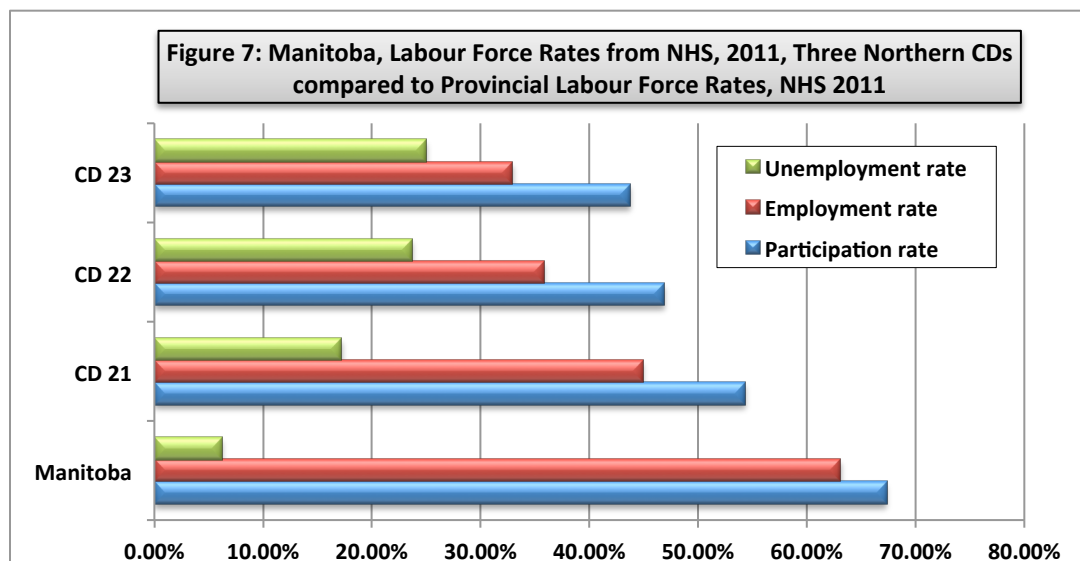
Educational attainment also has a gender component to its story in that females tend to be more accomplished than males. In 2011, 66% of males compared to 61.5% of females had not completed high school out of a population of 31,070. While males outnumber females in the apprenticeship programs in the trades by 1450 to 475 or 9.5% of the population compared to only 3% for females. When we focus on higher education including college and university experience we find that females outperform males at a rate of 16.8% of the population compared to 9.2% for males.

Figure 6: Comparison of Aboriginal Northern Manitoba Educational Attainment by Sex, NHS 2011



At the highest educational attainment level of university degrees above a Bachelor Degree, we find the male/female split is 100 males to 180 females. In Northern Manitoba this higher level of educational attainment appears to correlate well with income with female income earners posting higher median incomes than males in all three CD. In CD 21 the male median income was \$15,641 while female incomes stood at \$16,385; this gap grows when we move Northwest and North with the median splits being \$6,479/\$11,418 in CD 22 and \$9,174/\$14,570 in CD 23. In Northern Manitoba increased educational attainment by females appears to have paid dividends in the wage economy, this is not always the case in the North where males working in the natural resource industries often pull down higher wages than their better educated female compatriots.

5. Labour Force Outcomes in 2011 were dreadfully poor for Aboriginal workers in Northern Saskatchewan when compared to the Manitoba provincial rates which were 67.3% for Participation (PR), 63.1% for the Employment Rate (ER) and fairly low by national standards 6.2% for the Unemployment Rate (UR). In contrast the URs in the North ranged from 17.2% in CD 21 to 23.7% in CD 22 and in the far north at 25% in CD 23.



Likewise, the PRs were much lower in the Northern CDs than in Manitoba, dropping some 13 percentage points in CD 21 off of the Manitoba rate to a low of 43.7, while in the far North (CD 23), the PR was 23.6 percentage points below the provincial PR in 2011. Employment rates also dropped from the provincial rate of 63.1 to 44.9% in CD 21 and again fell lower in CD 22 and CD 23 to 35.8% and 32.9%.

6. Aboriginal workers as captured by the 2011 National Household Survey, Aboriginal Population Profile of CD 23 had a very low participation rate at only 43.7% compared to 67.3% provincially, while the employment rate of 32.9% for Aboriginal workers compared poorly to the provincial rate of 63.1%. We can compare these 2011 Labour force rate to the 2006 Census data to see how the Aboriginal and provincial workforces reacted to the Recession of 2008. What we see is a drop in the PR from 49.3% to 43.7% and a drop in the ER from 37.1% to 32.9%, while the unemployment rate

dropped stayed steady at a very high 25%/24.8% rate between 2011 and 2006. This suggests that the movement of Aboriginal workers during the recession

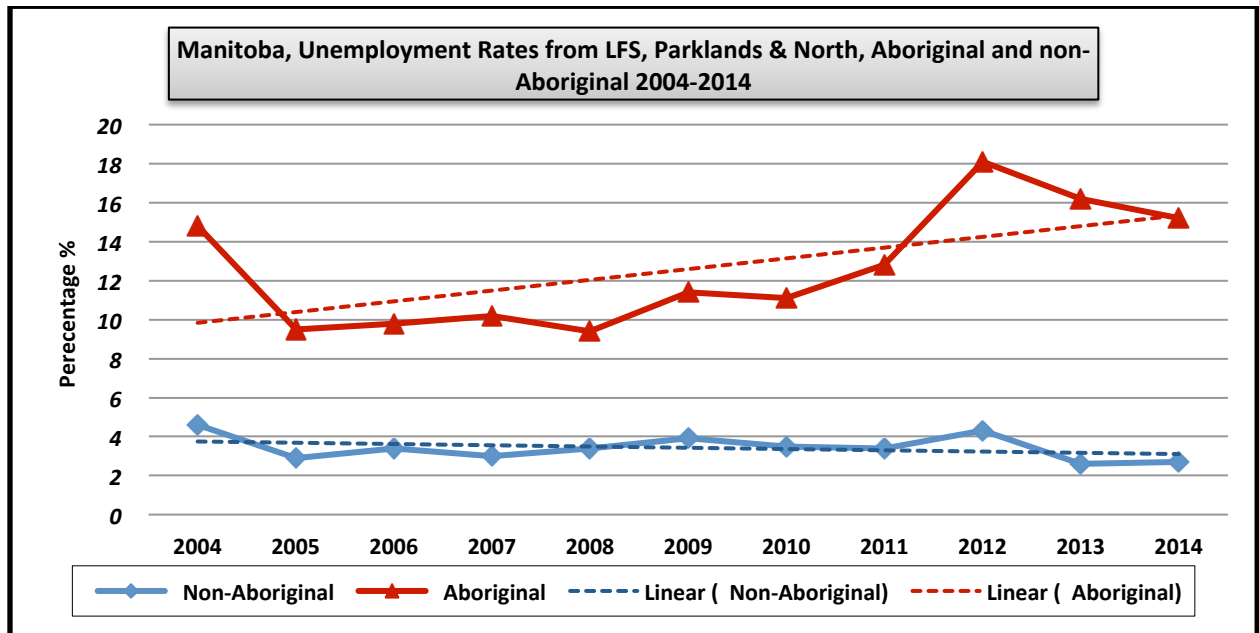
Table 2: Comparisons of Labour Force Dynamics 2011 and 2006, Saskatchewan and the North				
	Aboriginal Northern Manitoba; CD 23		Manitoba	
	NHS 2011	Census 2006	NHS 2011	Census 2006
Participation rate	43.7%	49.3%	67.3%	67.3%
Employment rate	32.9%	37.1%	63.1%	63.6%
Unemployment rate	25.0%	24.8%	6.2%	5.5%
Sources: Statistics Canada, NHS 2011, Census 2006, Aboriginal People's Profile 2012 and 2006				

was out of the labour force and in the Not in the Labour Force or NILF category probably adding to the ranks of the discouraged workers.

7. Between 2006 and 2011 the number of Aboriginal people falling into the NILF category rose from 2,075 to 2,420 or by 16.6% in a slow growing labour market which increased by 5% from 4,100 to 4,305. Male and females workers both added to the increase in the NILF category. Provincially, the NILF rates for Manitoba did not change being at 32.7% in both 2006 and 2011. This indicates that during the recession more Aboriginal workers moved from the labour force into the NILF category or into the NILF category directly from the termination of conclusion of their education.

Table 3: Northern Manitoba: Total Aboriginal identity population, aged 15 years plus by labour force status - NILF, 2011 and 2006						
	Total	As a % of Total	Males	Males as a % of Total	Females	Females as a % of Total
Total Aboriginal Population 2011	4305		2110	49.0%	2200	51.1%
Not in the labour force	2420	56.2%	1140	47.1%	1290	53.3%
Total Aboriginal Population, 2006	4100		2135	52.1%	1965	47.9%
Not in the labour force	2075	50.6%	970	46.7%	1105	53.3%

8. We also have access to Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal splits since 2004 from the Labour Force Survey that have been provided by Statistics Canada. Remarkably the unemployment rates for the non-Aboriginal labour force in Parklands and the North ran from 4.6% in 2004 to 2.7% in 2014, with the worse year for non-Aboriginal workers being 2012 when they peaked at a still amazingly low 4.3%. Likewise the Aboriginal labour force in 2012 also suffered from a high unemployment rate but one that stood at 18.1% more than four times the non-Aboriginal rate.



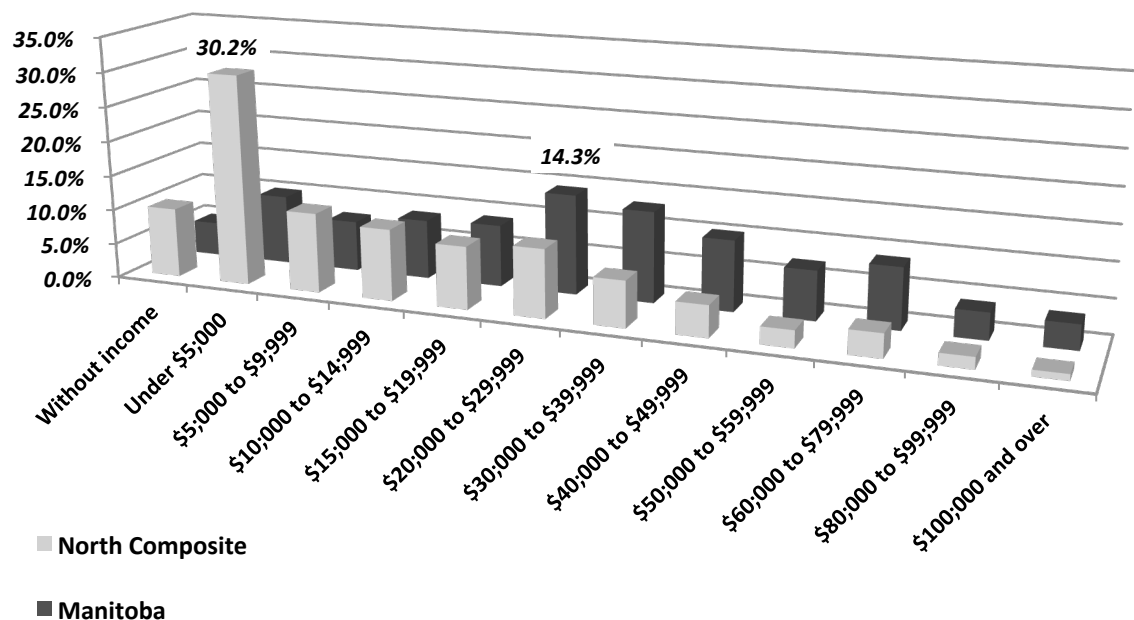
The trendline for the Aboriginal labour force indicates an increase through time in the UR of Aboriginal workers, while the non-Aboriginal trendline shows a continued (if this is possible) reduction through time in their already extremely low UR. During the period 2004 to 2014 the Non-Aboriginal Labour Force population declined by 12.8% while those people in the labour force declined by 11.7%. In contrast the Aboriginal Labour force population grew by 41.4% while the Aboriginal labour force, those people working and looking for work rose by almost 50% at 49.2%. Clearly the Parklands and North economy has been incapable of accommodating and including the growing Aboriginal labour force participants, while it is running remarkably low UR for the non-Aboriginal workers.

9. In the North considerable emphasis and planning has been put into expanding the Aboriginal labour force in the natural resource sector. The 2006 Censuses allow us to investigate employment by industry using NAICS coding for Agriculture and Natural Resources as one category, while the NHS 2011 breaks out Agriculture and forestry from Mining, quarrying, oil and gas employment. In 2006, 210 of Aboriginal CD-23's experienced labour force was employed in the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector representing 11.4% of the labour force by industrial category; ranking this category in fifth place among the ten available listings. By 2011, we find that only 60 Aboriginal workers were working in Agriculture with no employee listed in the category of Mining, quarrying, oil and gas sector in CD 23. Across Manitoba few

Aboriginal workers were listed as being in the Mining, quarrying and oil and gas sector, ranking 18th out of twenty categories with only 945 workers representing a meager 1.3% of the Aboriginal labour force by industrial classification. For all of Manitoba the Mining, quarrying and oil and gas sector accounted for 5,325 jobs or less than one percent of the province's work force, ranking 19th of the twenty classifications.

10. *Self-employed Aboriginal workers represented only 2.1% of all workers in 2011 in Northern Manitoba's Northern CDs compared to a 10.3% rate of self-employment at the provincial level, indicating that Aboriginal entrepreneurs are facing greater barriers to accessing the market place and acquiring the financial support required to start their own business.*
11. The incomes of Aboriginal people in the North were substantially lower than provincial incomes based on median income levels and average income levels, while the Northern Aboriginal income distributions generally shows a negatively skewed distribution. The Aboriginal median income in 2010 stood at a low of \$9,864 in CD 22 to a high of \$15,801 in CD 21, while CD 21 had a median income of \$11,951. All three of these Aboriginal median incomes were well below the provincial median for the total population of \$29,029.

Figure 8: Comparison of Individual Incomes, 2010, by percentage of income earners in each income range, Northern Aboriginal Manitoba Composite and Manitoba, NHS 2011



We have generated a composite of North Aboriginal Incomes by income range and compared that to the income distribution for Manitoba (15 plus in private households) in Figure 8. What we see an Aboriginal income distribution that is negatively skewed with 40.2% of the income earners having incomes of less than \$5,000 (Without income plus under \$5,000) compared to only 14.8% of all Provincial income earners. The provincial income distribution, while somewhat

flat does follow a normal distribution grouped around the average income of \$36,696. In comparison average incomes for the three CDs fell at \$23,569 in CD 21, \$17,252 in CD 22 and at \$18,316 in CD 23.

Aboriginal communities were also far more dependent upon government transfers than the provinces as a whole with the percentage of 2010 income was derived from government sources standing at ranging from a 25.4% of all income in CD 21 to a full 31.9% in the far North in CD23. Provincially, only 12.5% of incomes in Manitoba were derived from government sources, meaning that market sourced incomes accounted for 87.5% of all income. Finally, in the North (CD 23 and 23) child benefits accounted for 14.9% and 15.2% of all incomes, far higher than the provincial level that stood at 1.8% in 2010.

Table 4: Comparison of Income Composition 2010 Aboriginal North and Manitoba, NHS 2011				
Census Income Source	Aboriginal Northern Manitoba			All
	CD 21	CD 22	CD 23	Manitoba
Market income (%)	74.6%	70.9%	68.3%	87.5%
Government transfer payments (%)	25.4%	29.1%	31.9%	12.5%

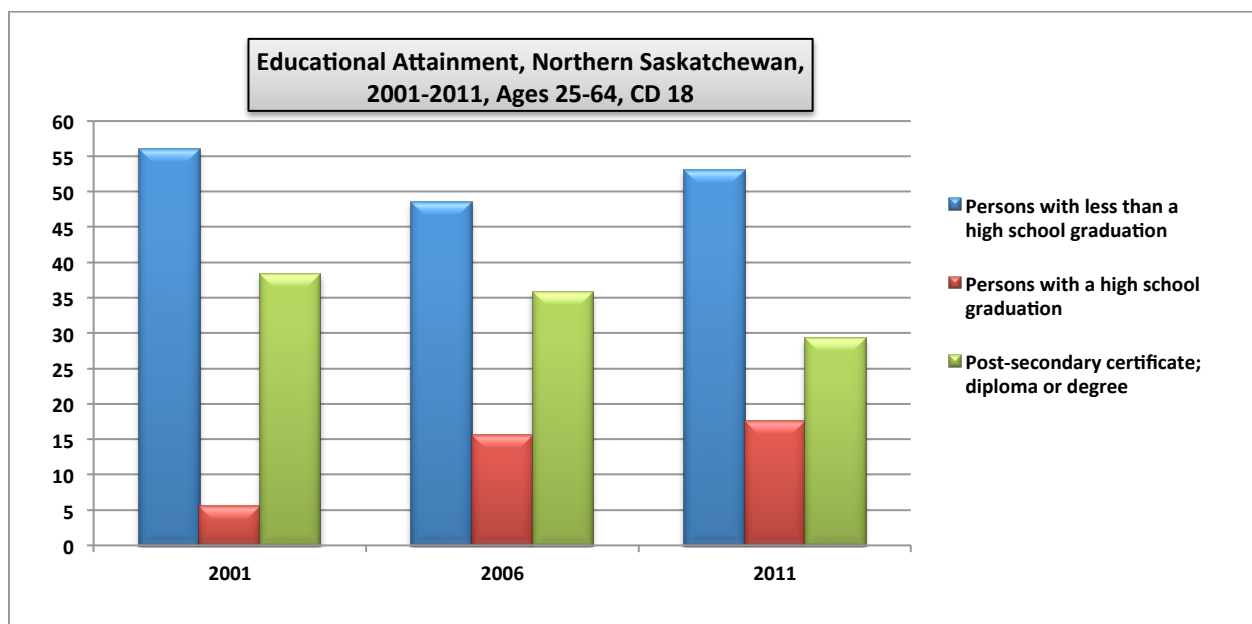


Aboriginal Demography and Labour Force Profile; Northern Saskatchewan

The following is a short demographic and labour overview of the Aboriginal community in Northern Saskatchewan (Census District 18) which demonstrates the persistent disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada at the regional level. This sets the context for our analysis and critique of the role of Aboriginal training programs in the development of the Aboriginal labour force.

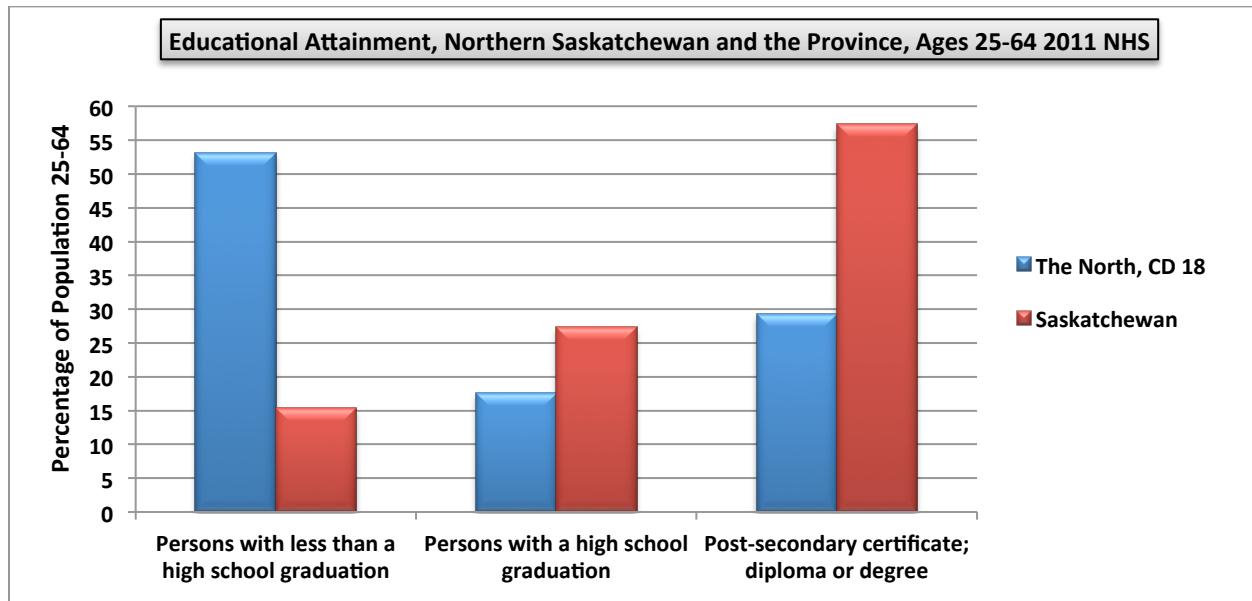
- 1) In Northern Saskatchewan the Aboriginal population accounts for 85.9% or 31,960 of 36,780 northern residents. The Aboriginal population is 77.3% First Nation and 22.4% Métis living in some 50 populated Census places as well as in CD 18 Unorganized, along with a small population of Inuit, Aboriginal multiple identities and Aboriginal not elsewhere included (n.e.i.) that add up to 0.36% of the Aboriginal population. The Registered Indian population accounted for 62.8% of Northern Saskatchewan's population. Census populated places in CD 18 comprised 23 populated Indian Reserves, 11 Northern hamlets, 11 Northern villages and the towns of La Ronge and Creighton (a suburb of Flin Flon, Manitoba) as well as the Northern settlement of Brabant Lake (population 51).
- 2) The Aboriginal population has been growing at a much higher rate than that of the Province at 9.9% between 2006 and 2011 compared to 6.7% for the Province, while the median age of Aboriginal CD 18 is 21.5 years of age compared to the provincial median age of 38.2. Since 2001 the Aboriginal population in CD 18 has increased by 19.6% or 5,240 residents, given the low to almost non-existent Aboriginal in-migration rate we now that this is primarily comprised of natural increase over death.
- 3) Dependency Ratios are alarmingly high in CD 18 when compared to Saskatchewan, with in the DR for CD 18 in 2001 being 123%, meaning that there were 123 dependents aged 0-19 and 65 years of age and over for every 100 working age adults. By 2011 this ratio had improved to 104.1%, but this still meant that there was more than one dependent for each working age adult. Saskatchewan in comparison had a DR of 79.4% in 2001 which improved to 69.3% in 2011; however the province had a much lower number of child dependents than Aboriginal CD 18 where children 19 years of age and under represented 47% of the population in 2011 compared to 26.1% in the Province. High DRs put considerable pressure on families and communities to provide basic needs and services from food through to educational and recreational programs and they limit the ability of adults to improve their savings and can impact educational opportunities.
- 4) Aboriginal Lone-parent families represent a high percentage of family units in the North with female parents (at 76% of single-parents) commonly carrying the burden of single-parenthood. This again impacts income earning abilities, educational opportunities and decreases access to the labour force for these women. In 2011, the number of Aboriginal single parent families in CD 18 totalled 3,525 or 44% of all household units (8,050), with 7,180 children living in lone parent families or just over 2 children on average per lone-parent. In contrast, lone parents accounted for 16.4% of families living in private households in Saskatchewan. In 2011 there were also 865 Aboriginal children in CD 18 who were living with grandparents with no parents present in the household.

- 5) The educational differences between the Aboriginal North and the province are profound, with little improvement occurring between 2001 and 2011 based on an assessment of the 2001 to 2011 Census and NHS data for adults 25-64 years of age. In 2001 56.1% of the adult Aboriginal population had failed to complete high school and 5.6% had completed high school but had not gone further with their education. In 2001 38.3% of the population had undertaken some level of post-secondary education which ranges from apprenticeships and trades certification through college and university education, both completed degrees as well as other levels of accomplishment such as diplomas and certificates. This number subsequently declines in 2006 to 35.8% and then in 2011 to 29.3%. So while some progress was made in increasing high school completions which rose from 5.6% in 2001 to 17.6% in 2011, the percentage of non-completions stayed high at 53.1% in 2011 after showing some improvement in 2006 at 48.6%.

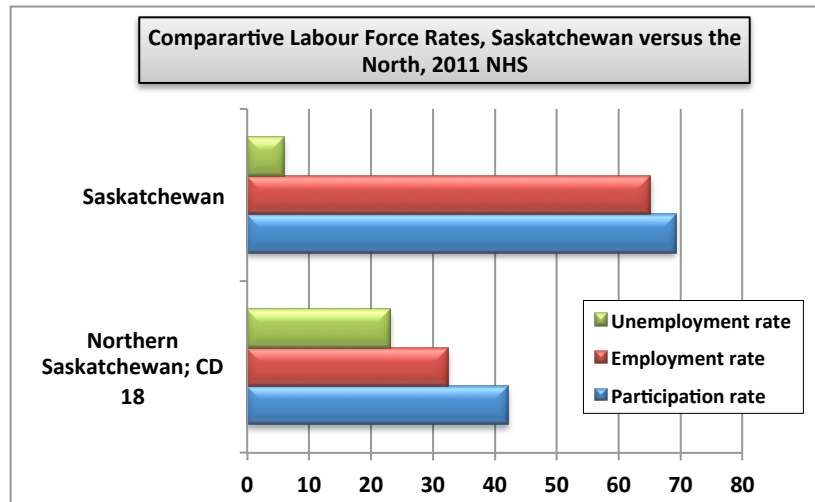


This pattern, which also plays out at the community level, especially on Indian Reserves, is similar to the brain drain that developing countries suffer as the better educated leave to find work elsewhere in the south or locally in towns and villages meaning that the capacity of the community suffers through success as there just is not applicable jobs on the reserves for the better educated population. Educational attainment also has a gender component to its story in that females tend to be more accomplished than males. In 2011, 810 males compared to 1395 females had completed high school out of a population of 2210, this is a 13.3% compared to 21.4% break. While males outnumber females in the apprenticeship programs in the trades by 925 to 435 or 15.2% of the population compared to only 6.7%, females outnumber males in higher education with 1625 females attaining college or university educations compared to 725 males. The higher educational attainment of females is reflected in their much higher median income level in 2010 of \$15,977 compared to the male median income of \$11,453. However males have slightly higher average incomes at \$22,204 to the female average income of \$21,322 probably due to the higher wages that males earn in the natural resources, mining, trades and transportation sectors.

When we compare the educational attainment of the Northern Aboriginal to the provincial counts we see two radically different outcomes with only 15.4% of the province's population 25-64 not having completed high school compared to Aboriginal North's 53.1% while 57.3% of the province's population had attained some level of post-secondary education compared to 29.3% for the Aboriginal North.



- 6) Labour Force Outcomes in 2011 were dreadfully poor for Aboriginal workers in Northern Saskatchewan with 23.1% being unemployed compared to a Provincial average of only 5.9%, one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada at that time. Clearly Aboriginal workers who were in the Labour Force and looking for work were not partaking in the booming provincial economy that drove the UR down to 5.9%. Aboriginal workers as captured by the 2011 National Household Survey had a very low participation rate at only 42.1% compared to 69.2% for the province while the



employment rate was 32.4% for Aboriginal workers while provincially the rate stood at 65.1%. We can also compare the 2011 Labour data to the 2006 Census data to see how the Aboriginal and provincial workforces reacted to the Recession of 2008. They fared poorly, with the Aboriginal workforce unemployment rate rising by 2.9 percentage points from 20.2% to 23.1% while the participation rate dropped from 50.4% in 2006 down to 42.1% in 2011. In contrast the Provincial rate for employment rose from 64.6% to 65.1% while the Aboriginal Employment rate dropped by nearly eight percentage points down to 32.4%. The recession had little impact on the provincial unemployment rate as it moved only 0.3 of a percent. If we track back to 2001 we see that the 2011 Participation rate was worse than that of 2001 which stood at 47.7%, while the employment rate had not moved between 2001 when it stood at 32.5%, while the unemployment rate appears to have dropped from 31.7% in 2001 to 23.1% in 2011. We say appears to have

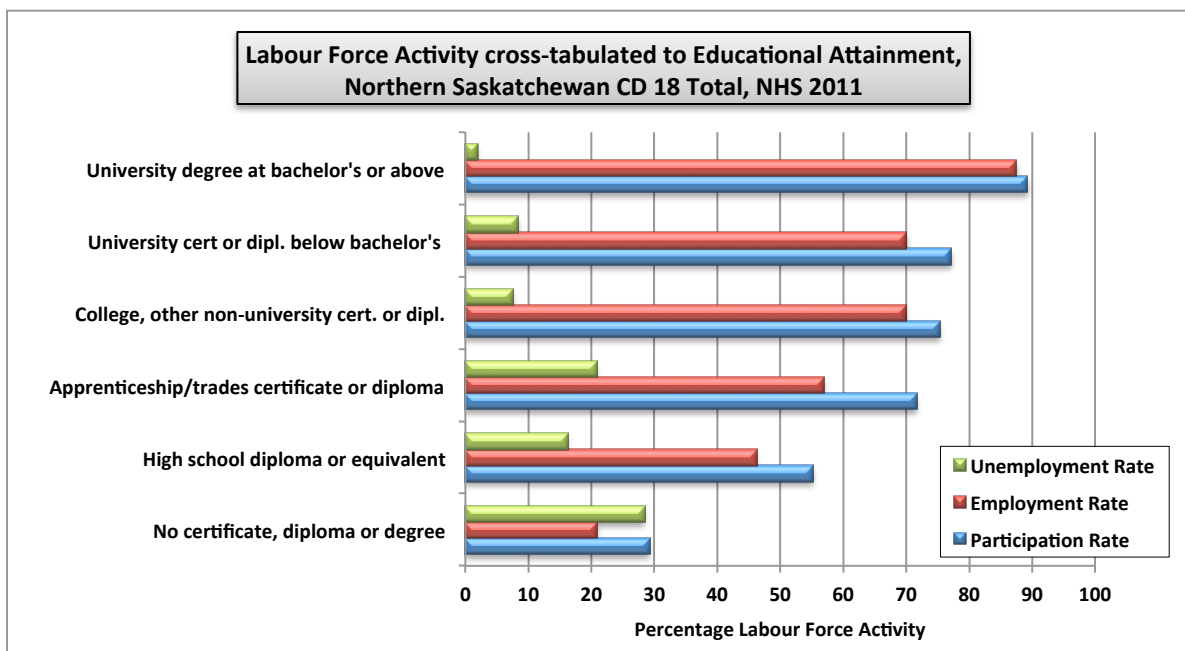
dropped, because we also need to account for the fact that by 2011 many Aboriginal workers in the North had not moved from unemployment to

Comparisons of Labour Force Dynamics 2011 and 2006, Saskatchewan and the North				
	Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan; CD 18		Saskatchewan	
	NHS 2011	Census 2006	NHS 2011	Census 2006
Participation rate	42.1%	50.4%	69.2%	68.4%
Employment rate	32.4%	40.3%	65.1%	64.6%
Unemployment rate	23.1%	20.2%	5.9%	5.6%
Sources: Statistics Canada, NHS 2011, Census 2006, Aboriginal People's Profile 2012 and 2006				


employment but to the category “Not in the Labour Force” which accounted for 50% of the labour force age population 2006 rising to 58% in 2011. These are often “discouraged workers who lack the educational and job experience required to enter the labour force. The ongoing failure of our educational system to prepare Aboriginal Youth for the Labour force is apparent when we look at the number of youth who are NILF and who failed to graduate from high school.

NILF and discouraged workers in 2011 is directly linked to poor educational outcomes in the North where Aboriginal youth continue to lag behind the provincial graduation rates. This becomes glaringly obvious when we cross-tabulate Educational Attainment in 2011 to Labour Force rates in CD 18 (although we do not have an Aboriginal People’s Profile for this geography on this cross tabulation). Clearly the higher one’s educational attainment the greater one’s success in the labour force, with those few holders of a Bachelor’s degree or higher having an 89% participation rate, an 87.5% employment rate and only a 1.9% unemployment rate. In contrast, not finishing high school relegates the majority of workers 15 years of age and over to unemployment rates of 28% and extremely low participation rates of 29%; with only one in five members of this group acquiring employment.

In Northern Saskatchewan the Aboriginal NILF population continued to grow as noted above and reached 13,200 potential workers out of a labour force of 24,790 with those lacking a high school matriculation accounting for 55% of the labour force but 73% of those individuals listed as NILF.



- 7) In the North considerable emphasis and planning has been put into expanding the Aboriginal labour force in the natural resource sector. The 2001 and 2006 Censuses allow us to investigate employment by industry using NAICS coding for Agriculture and Natural Resources as one category, while the NHS 2011 breaks out Agriculture from Mining, quarrying, oil and gas employment. In 2001, 14.5% of Aboriginal CD-18's experienced labour force was employed in the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector some 950 workers. By 2006 this number had grown to 1455 workers but represented a slightly lower percentage of a growing workforce at 14.2%. By 2011 we find that 875 Aboriginal workers were employed in the Mining, quarrying, oil and gas sector while 185 were working in Agriculture. In total, this represented 12.5% of the 2011 Aboriginal labour force, meaning that the sector had lost workers between 2006 and 2011 from 1455 to 1060.
- 8) Self-employed Aboriginal workers represented only 2.9% of all workers in 2011 in Northern Saskatchewan compared to a 14.7% rate of self-employment at the provincial level, indicating that Aboriginal entrepreneurs are facing greater barriers to accessing the market place and acquiring the financial support required to start their own business. Self-employment on Indian Reserves is almost non-existent, suggesting that the majority of self-employed Aboriginal people in CD 18 are of Métis heritage.
- 9) The incomes of Aboriginal people in CD 18 are substantially lower than provincial levels based on median income levels while the North had a much higher dependency on government transfers. The Aboriginal median income in 2001 stood at \$10,063 compared to the provincial median oncome of \$19,636; a difference of \$9,573 or 48.8% lower. By 2006 the Aboriginal median income in the North had risen to \$11,236 or by 12.6% however the provincial median income had rose by 21% to \$23,755; meaning that the gap between Aboriginal incomes and the provincial median was widening. We find little improvement in this situation through to 2011 when median incomes in the Aboriginal North stood \$14,053 compared to the provincial median



of \$31,408; meaning that the Provincial median income level was more than twice as high as that of the Aboriginal North. The 2011 Aboriginal median income did though rise by 25% over the 2006 level, however the Provincial median rose by 32.2% once again demonstrating the widening of the income gap between the two populations.

Aboriginal communities were also far more dependent upon government transfers than the provinces as a whole with the percentage of income in 2011 that was derived from government sources standing at 29% (and this would be much higher on Indian Reserves where transfers can account for 40 to 50% of all income) compared to the provincial average of only 11.5%. In the Aboriginal North 11% of all incomes being derived from Child Benefits while at the Provincial level child benefits accounted for only 1.6% of income.


The percentage of Aboriginal North individuals who lacked an income in 2010 was 2,495 individuals or 12.1% of potential income earners, while in the Province only 4.5% of potential income earners lacked an income. We can also look at the distribution of incomes from the Aboriginal North compared to the province and here we find that 56% of the income earners earned less than \$20,000 in 2010 compared to 32.4% of the provincial population.



Aboriginal Demography and Labour Force Profile; Nunavut

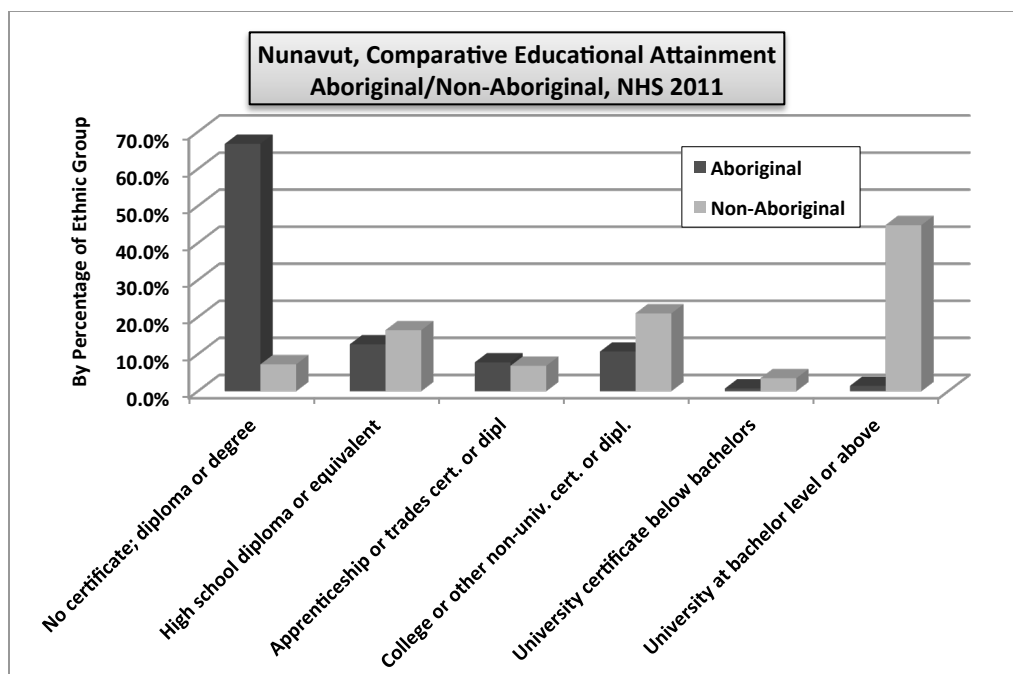
The following is a short demographic and labour overview of the Aboriginal community in Nunavut which demonstrates the persistent disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada at the regional level using data from the Censuses of 2001 and 2006 through to the data from the combined Census and National Household Survey of 2011. Where possibly more recent administrative or survey data is applied; however such data is not available for each of the northern jurisdictions due to varying sample size issues, differing geographic boundaries or the different data gathering priorities of the jurisdictions. This review sets the context for our analysis and critique of the role of training programs in the development of the Aboriginal labour force.

- 1) Nunavut has the highest Aboriginal population count of the provincial/territorial jurisdiction at 86.3% of the Territory's 31,906 residents in 2011, while the non-Aboriginal population accounted for just 13.7% or 4,340 residents (National Household Survey, 2011). While the Inuk population is dispersed across Nunavut's 24 hamlets and the City of Iqaluit, the non-Aboriginal population is concentrated in the government centre Iqaluit where 59% reside as well as in regional centres such as Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay. Across Nunavut a smattering of between 15 to 125 non-Aboriginal residents live in the hamlets, working as government administrators, teachers, police, nurses and store managers with their dependents. The Aboriginal population is predominately Inuk (Inuit) single identity which represented 98.9% of the Aboriginal population with only 130 Métis, 125 First Nations and a small scattering of Aboriginal multiple identities and Aboriginal *not elsewhere included* (n.e.i.); the latter adding up to only 0.1% of the Aboriginal population. The Census recognizes 24 occupied hamlets, the City of Iqaluit and a scattering of settlements such as Navisiviik and Bathurst Inlet which have between 0 and 10 residents. Finally, unlike Unorganized geographies in Yukon or NWT, Nunavut's three unorganized geographies recorded no population in 2011; the nature of Nunavut's stark environment just does not allow for off-the-grid living.
- 2) Nunavut's Aboriginal population grew each period from 2001 to 2011 rising from 22,720 to 24,640 between 2001 and 2006 and then to 27,360 in 2011 according to the Statistics Canada Aboriginal People's Profile. The Aboriginal population in Nunavut accounted for 85% of the population in 2001, growing to 85.8% in 2011. During this period the median age in Nunavut was one of the lowest in the western hemisphere moving from 18.1 in 2001 to 20.1 in 2006 and in 2011 to 21.3; which is similar to that of Northern Saskatchewan where the median age was 21.5 years of age in 2011. In contrast the Yukon median age stood at 39.1 years of age, while Canada's median age was 40.6 in 2011 (Census of Canada 2011, Canada Community Profile).
- 3) Dependency Ratios in Nunavut are high when compared to Canada, with a DR of 83.8% in 2011, meaning that there are 83.8 dependent youth and seniors for every 100 working age adults 20-64; while the Canadian DR in 2011 was calculated at 59.1%. In contrast the Yukon DR was lower than the national rate at 47.4%. However the picture is far more problematic when we generate the Aboriginal DR for Nunavut in 2011 which comes in at 99.5% or 99.5 dependents, most being children, for every 100 working age adults 19-64. Nunavut's Aboriginal DRs were as high as 118.8% in 2001, improving to 110.9% in 2006. High DRs place considerable pressure on families



and communities to provide basic needs and services from food through to educational and recreational programs and they limit the ability of adults to improve their savings and can impact educational opportunities.

- 4) Aboriginal lone-parent families represent a high percentage of all family units in the North with female parents commonly carrying the burden of single-parenthood. This again impacts income earning abilities, educational opportunities and decreases access to the labour force for these parents, most being women (71% in Nunavut, 76% in Northern Saskatchewan and 78% in Yukon). In 2011, the number of single parent families in Nunavut totalled 2,195 of 7,780 family units or 28.2%, with some 3,600 children living in lone parent families. Aboriginal Nunavut also had 425 children “living with grandparent(s) with no parents present” which is a new and in this case problematic metric reported by the 2011 Census. In Nunavut, Aboriginal single parent families represented 96% of the total population of 2,195 single parent family units.
- 5) The educational differences between the Aboriginal North and the Territorial Non-Aboriginal population are profound, based on an analysis of the 2011 NHS data on Educational Attainment for adults 24-65 years of age and over. In 2011, 66.7% of the Aboriginal population in Nunavut had not earned a certificate, diploma or degree of any kind (effectively had not graduated high school) compared to only 7.3% of the non-Aboriginal population. Just fewer than 13% of the Aboriginal population had attained a high school degree while just over 20% went beyond high school to acquire certification, diplomas or degrees in the trades, at colleges or universities. The major break between these two groups occurs at the university level where 44.8% of the non-Aboriginal population had a university level bachelor’s degree or higher degrees compared to a total population count of only 250 or 1.4% of the Aboriginal community. However, this comparison must be moderated by the reality that the vast majority of non-Aboriginal residents acquired their degrees outside of Nunavut and were probably hired north for their specific skills; few would be “native” non-Aboriginal Nunavummiut.



- 6) Educational limitations in Nunavut were also documented by the OECD: *The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* (PIAAC) which published its first round of analysis on the comparative measures of three foundational skill sets of Canadians in comparison to other developed or developing countries in the 2013. The data also compares provincial and territorial scores against those of Canada and other states. Of considerable interest is the new PS-TRE measure that was introduced in 2012, which provides a measure of the ability of people to operate in a *Problem Solving Technology-Rich Environment*.¹ In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, however, there is a notable difference at both high and low levels. Fewer Aboriginal people than non-Aboriginal people record scores at Level 4 or 5, (highest levels) and many more record scores at Level 1 or below (lowest level); in the three territories, the proportions at the lowest levels are at least three times higher than for the non-Aboriginal population.

The average numeracy score for the Aboriginal population across Canada is 244, whereas the score for the non-Aboriginal population is 266 (see Table). In all the seven provinces and territories oversampled, Aboriginal populations' score lower than their non-Aboriginal counterparts, but these differences vary considerably.

¹ Statistics Canada: Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division Main Building, Room 2001, Ottawa, K1A 0T6, Catalogue no. 89-555-X ISBN 978-1-100-22678-1

Among the four Canadian sub-jurisdictions shown here, the differences range from 277.2 for Yukon on literacy (above the Canadian Average) to 219.1 for Nunavut which was the lowest score recorded in the OECD international testing program. Numeracy scores again ran from 263.1 in Yukon to 200.5 in Nunavut again the lowest recorded score and when we turn to the level 1 or

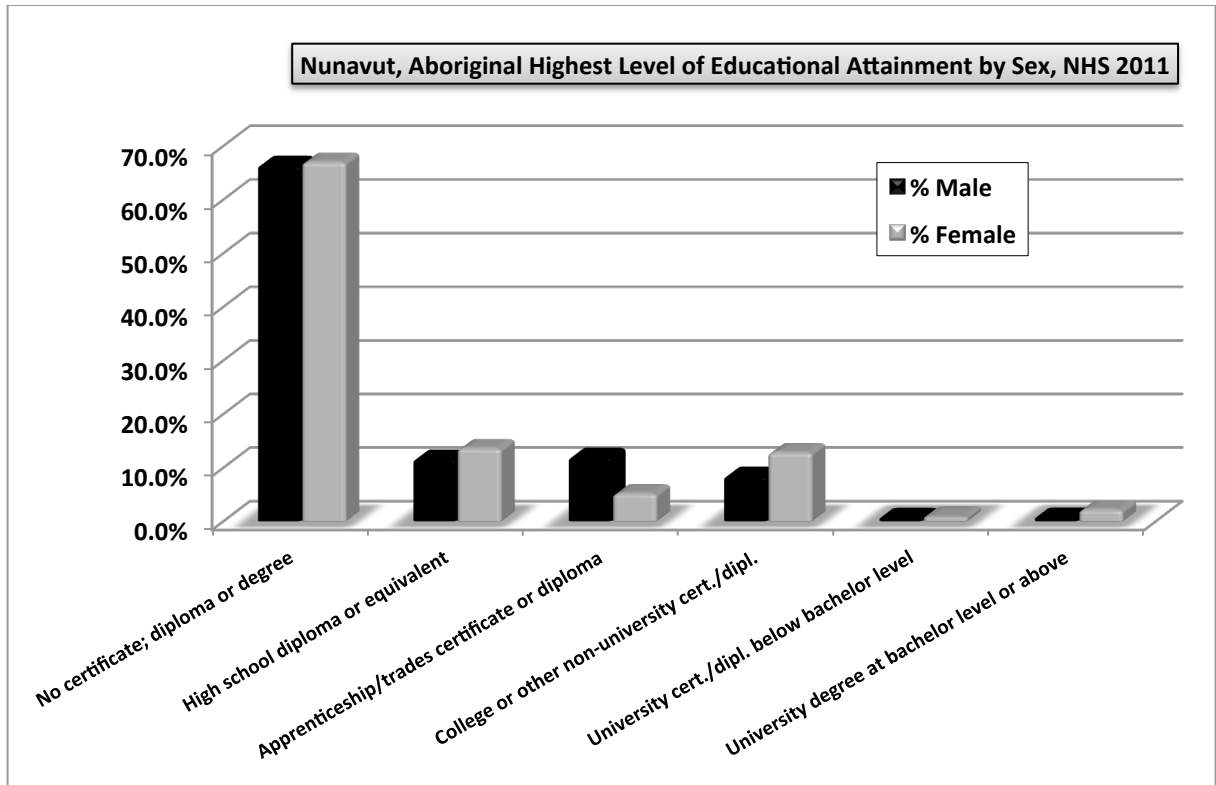
Composite PIACC Average Scores Northern Saskatchewan, Canada and the OECD, 2012			
Region	Literacy Average Score	Numeracy Average Scores	PS-TRE Average Level 1 or below and Non-respondents
OECD Countries	273.3	269.4	66.0
Canada	273.5	265.5	57.4
Yukon	277.2	263.1	64.3
NWT	253.3	239.4	71.7
Nunavut	219.1*	200.5*	88.2
Aboriginal Saskatchewan	248.2	231.6	78.7
Source: Statistics Canada: Catalogue no. 89-555-X ISBN 978-1-100-22678-1 Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Skills in Canada: First Results from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). *Lowest scores in OECD PIACC Test, 2012			

below for *Problem Solving Technology-Rich Environment Nunavut had the worse score of the Canadian jurisdictions at 88.2%, meaning that they had inadequate problem-solving skills in a technology rich environment compared to the Canadian norm of 57.4%.*

Within each province and territory, the difference is slightly larger for numeracy than for literacy. Nunavut had the lowest scores of all participating jurisdictions.

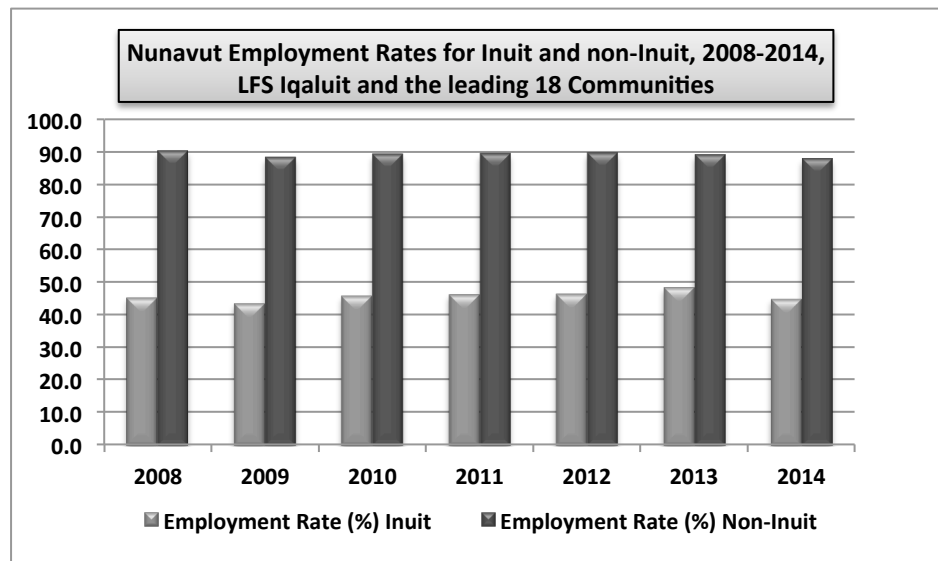
Educational attainment also has a gender component to its story in that Nunavut Aboriginal males and females both have very high and almost identical poor performance levels as measured by “no certificate, diploma or degree” at 66.5% and 67% respectively. In 2011 1,910 males or 21.8% of the population 15 and over had acquired a postsecondary certificate; diploma or degree compared to 1,675 or 19.4% of the female population.

Males tended to acquire certification or diplomas in the trades with 1,055 males compared to only 300 females, but more females than males challenged college and university programs with 190 of Aboriginal Nunavut’s 250 University degree holders being female. As befits the limited differences in educational attainment male and female median and average incomes are fairly similar with the males having a median income of \$21,009 compared to females at \$19,206 while average incomes were almost identical at \$33,494 for males compared \$33,288 for females.

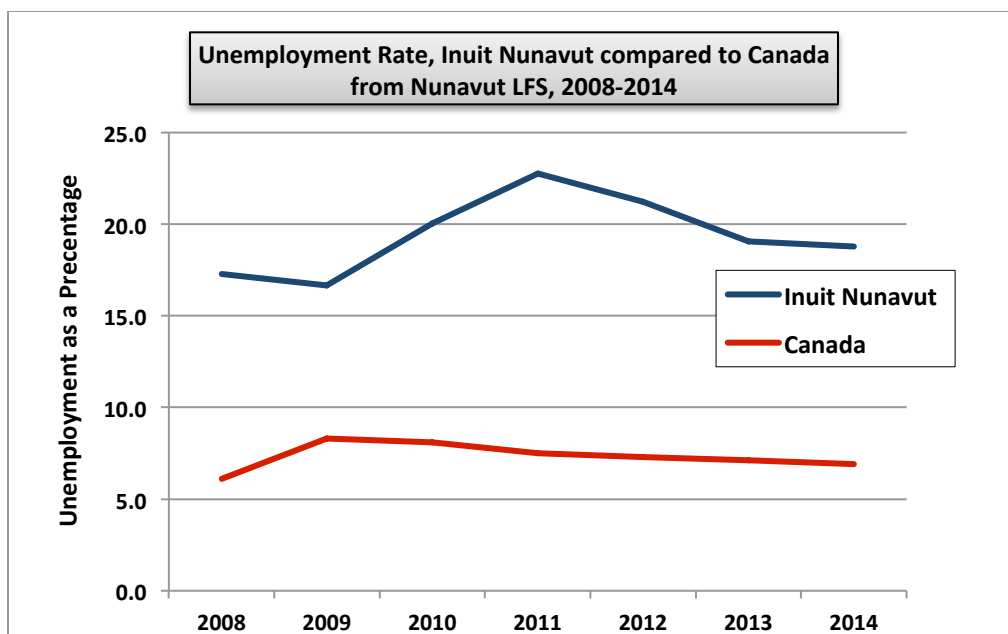


- 7) Labour Force Outcomes in 2011 were poor for Inuit workers in Nunavut with 23.3% being unemployed compared to a non-Inuit average of only 2.9%, unemployment rates in Canada at that time (NS

2011). Across Nunavut the employment rate for the Inuit averaged 45.6% compared to the non-Inuit employment rate of 89.1% for the period 2008 to 2014 covered by the Labour Force

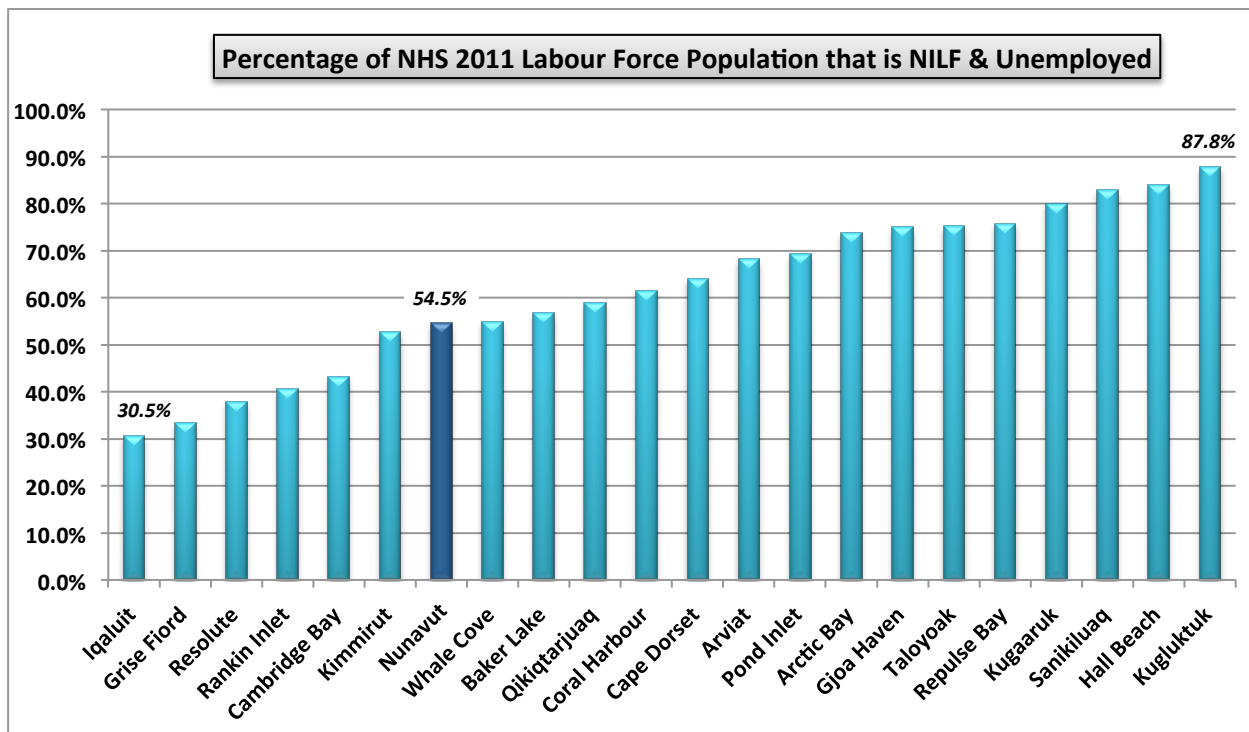


Survey for Iqaluit and the leading 18 communities (LFS). Effectively we are looking at two separate and very different labour forces, one that has been recruited to Nunavut the non-Inuit and the resident Inuit population which is poorly connected to western labour markets and economy and which exists in a mixed economy with limited access to wage labour opportunities.




The annual unemployment rate for Inuit Nunavut stood at 17.3% in 2008 dropping to 16.7% in 2009 prior to the full effects of the recession impacting the Nunavut labour force, when the Inuit rate jumped to 20% and then 22.8% in 2010 and 2011. However the Inuit UR continued to remain high throughout this period maintaining levels that were above the 2009 UR through 2014. We cannot effectively compare the non-Inuit UR for Nunavut as it was so low as to be suppressed for confidentiality reasons; we know that it stood at only 2.9% as measured by the 2011 NHS. As such, we have used the Canadian national average UR for comparison which shows the extreme difference between the national UR rate between 2008 and 2014 and the Inuit rate for Nunavut which ranged from 8.4 to 15.3 percentage points during this period. We must also take into account the fact that the Inuit unemployment rate is greatly suppressed by the fact that some 7,480 Inuit out of a labour force population 17,390 were “Not in the Labour Force or NILF” during 2011 (NHS) meaning that this group’s participation rate stood at only 57% compared to the national average in 2011 of 66%.

In 2011, we find that only five communities in Nunavut had a combined NILF and Unemployment rate that was less than 50%, these are Iqaluit (the seat of government) which was joined by Grise Fiord, Resolute, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay. The Nunavut average stood at 54.5% and all other communities exceeded this except Kimmirut, with the worse NILF and UR score being achieved by Kugluktuk at 87.8%.



- 8) In the North considerable emphasis and planning has been put into expanding the Aboriginal labour force in the natural resource sector. The 2001 and 2006 Censuses allow us to investigate employment by industry using NAICS coding for Agriculture and Natural Resources as one category, while the NHS 2011 breaks out Agriculture from Mining, quarrying, oil and gas employment. Unlike Yukon where an agricultural sector actually exists we know that farming and ranching is not an option in Nunavut; however Nunavut does have a commercial fisheries which had started to develop an Inuit training program by 2005. In 2001, 6.2% of Aboriginal Nunavut's experienced labour force was employed in the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector, some 470 workers. This was the same level of employment as Yukon's at 6.2% based on 195 workers. In the non-aboriginal community this sector accounted for 4.8% (again very similar to Yukon's 4.6%) of the experienced labour force in 2001. At this time Nunavut had three active mines: Polaris (1981-2002), Nanisivik (1976-2002) and the Lupin gold mine (1982-2006) but as noted by the Aaron Spitzer (May 18, 2001) "Polaris: The end of the mine", *Nunatsiaq News*: "of the mine's 255 workers, fewer than 20 are from the North. Most of the rest are flown up from Edmonton and Ottawa on eight-week-long shifts." As such, we should not be surprised to see such a low figure, as a high percentage of the mining labour force in the North flies-in and are not resident miners within these Nunavut Census products. By 2006 mining was down to two active mines in Nunavut with the Lupin Mine set to close in 2006 and the new and problematic Jericho Diamond mine starting up in 2006 for a short run of operations that ended in 2008. In 2006 the labour force in the natural resources sector in Nunavut stood at 585 with the Aboriginal workforce at 515 or 6.0% (almost the same as in 2001) compared to only 70 workers in the non-Aboriginal workforce or 2% of the non-Aboriginal labour force.



By 2011, when the NHS breaks out Agricultural, forestry and fisheries workers by industry (totalling 75 workers, all Aboriginal) from Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas only the Meadowbank Gold Mine, an open pit gold mine was active having opened in 2010, we find that Aboriginal employment in the sector stood at 360 employees or about 3.9% of the Aboriginal workforce. In non-Aboriginal Yukon mining, once broken out from Agriculture, reveals very few jobs with a mere ten workers out of 3,560 or less than around 0.3% of the workforce. In 2011, the Aboriginal male mine workers accounted for just under 80% of the sector labour force while just over 20% were female.

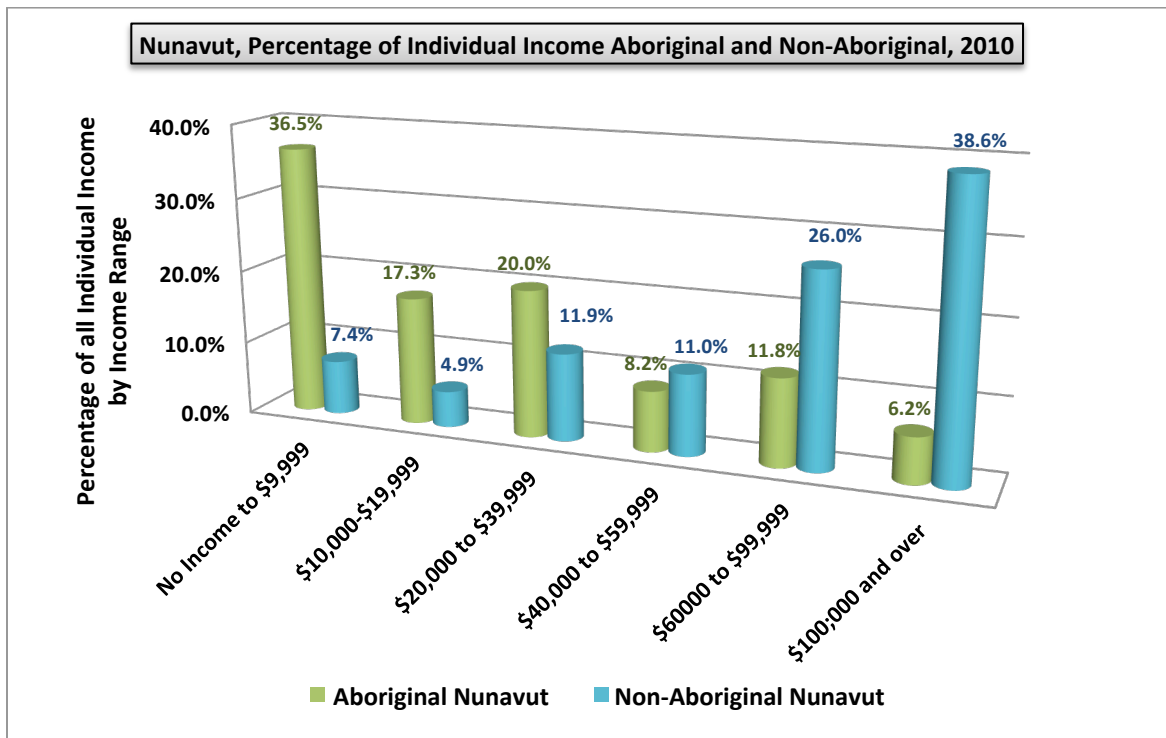
Effectively then employment in the mining sector in Nunavut as of 2011 looks to have declined since 2001 from around 470 jobs in the combined sector of Agriculture and Natural resources to 435 in 2011, in the recombined sectors. As a proportion of the labour force the combined sector shrank from 6.2% in 2001 to 3.9%. We know that the non-Aboriginal Nunavut population was not stepping into these jobs so we have to look to outside fly-in workers as the answer and we know from the Statistics Canada study (2013) that Nunavut was receiving between 2,635 to 3,563 interprovincial workers between 2004 and 2009 who were fly-in workers.² In Nunavut the highest concentrations of Aboriginal workers by industry in 2011 was in Public Administration at 27%, followed by Retail trade (12.5%), Educational Service (7.9%) with the mining sector placing eighth in the list of industry sector employers tied with real estate and rental leasing in Aboriginal Nunavut employment sectors.

- 9) Self-employed workers represented only 3.2% of Nunavut's labour force or 405 out of 12,780 workers compared to 11.7% of all Yukon workers in 2011 while the national average for self-employment stood at 10.7%. Of the 405 self-employed workers 250 were Aboriginal, while the remaining 155 were non-Aboriginal. This suggests that there are considerable barriers to self-employment facing both Inuit and non-Inuit entrepreneurs in Nunavut that are keeping them from starting their own businesses.
- 10) The incomes of Aboriginal people in Nunavut are drastically lower than non-Aboriginal incomes based on median income levels while the Aboriginal community had a much higher dependency on government transfers. The Aboriginal median income in 2010 stood at \$20,066 compared to the Territorial median income for all people of \$25,662; a difference of \$5,596 or about 22% lower. However we cannot calculate a median income for the non-Inuit population using published census data. However, we can analyze income by income ranges for Inuit and non-Inuit which are shown in the accompanying figure. The total number of Aboriginal individual income earners far outnumbered the non-Aboriginal at 17,390 to 3,865. Low income earners, those earning less than \$12,629 in a rural area in 2011³ accounted for over at least 36.5% of the Aboriginal population but only 7.4% of the non-Aboriginal (we can't breakout out the NHS categories any finer than by \$10,000 ranges). If we use say \$20,000 as a low income mark than

² See: Source: Laporte and Lu (2013), Table 1; Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table: 282-0055 and G.F. Finnegan and Jacobs, John (2015) "Canadian interprovincial employees in the Canadian Arctic: a case study in fly-in/fly-out employment metrics, 2004–2009," *Polar Geography*, DOI: [10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795](https://doi.org/10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795)

³ Low income cut-offs (1992 base) after tax, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75f0002m/2012002/tbl/tbl01-eng.htm>
We are here using the family unit of 1 as the data we have selected is for individuals not families.

53.8% of the Aboriginal population had limited incomes compared to 12.1% of the non-Aboriginal. High income earners those earning more than \$100,000/year represented 6.2% of the Aboriginal population but a massive 38.6% of the non-Aboriginal income earners. Indeed, 64.6% of the non-Aboriginal population were earning a minimum of \$60,000/year compared to only 18% of the predominately Inuit income earners.



In 2000 the Aboriginal median income of persons 15 years of age and over stood at \$13,190 while the Territorial median income was recorded at \$17,270; meaning that the gap between Aboriginal incomes and the Territorial median income at the start of the century stood at 30.9%. We find little improvement in this situation through to 2005 when median income for Aboriginal Nunavut stood \$17,959 an increase of 36.2% over 2000 compared to the Territorial of median income of \$26,848 which had risen by 55.5% since 2000. This means that the difference between the two median incomes had increased since 2000 from about 31% to 49.5% in 2005.⁴

By 2010 Aboriginal Nunavut's individual median income had risen to 20,066 or by 11.7% while the median income for the Territory had actually declined by 4.4% to \$25,662. This means that the Aboriginal median income had started to close the gap with the population as a whole improving from the widening gap of almost 50% in 2005 to 27.9% in 2010.

Aboriginal communities are generally far more dependent upon government transfers than non-Aboriginal communities as a whole with the percentage of income in 2011 that was derived from government sources standing at 18.8% compared to the Territorial average of only 12.9%

⁴ The Census reports income from the previous taxation year, so the 2001 census reports 2000 income levels.



Aboriginal Demography and Labour Force Profile; Northwest Territories

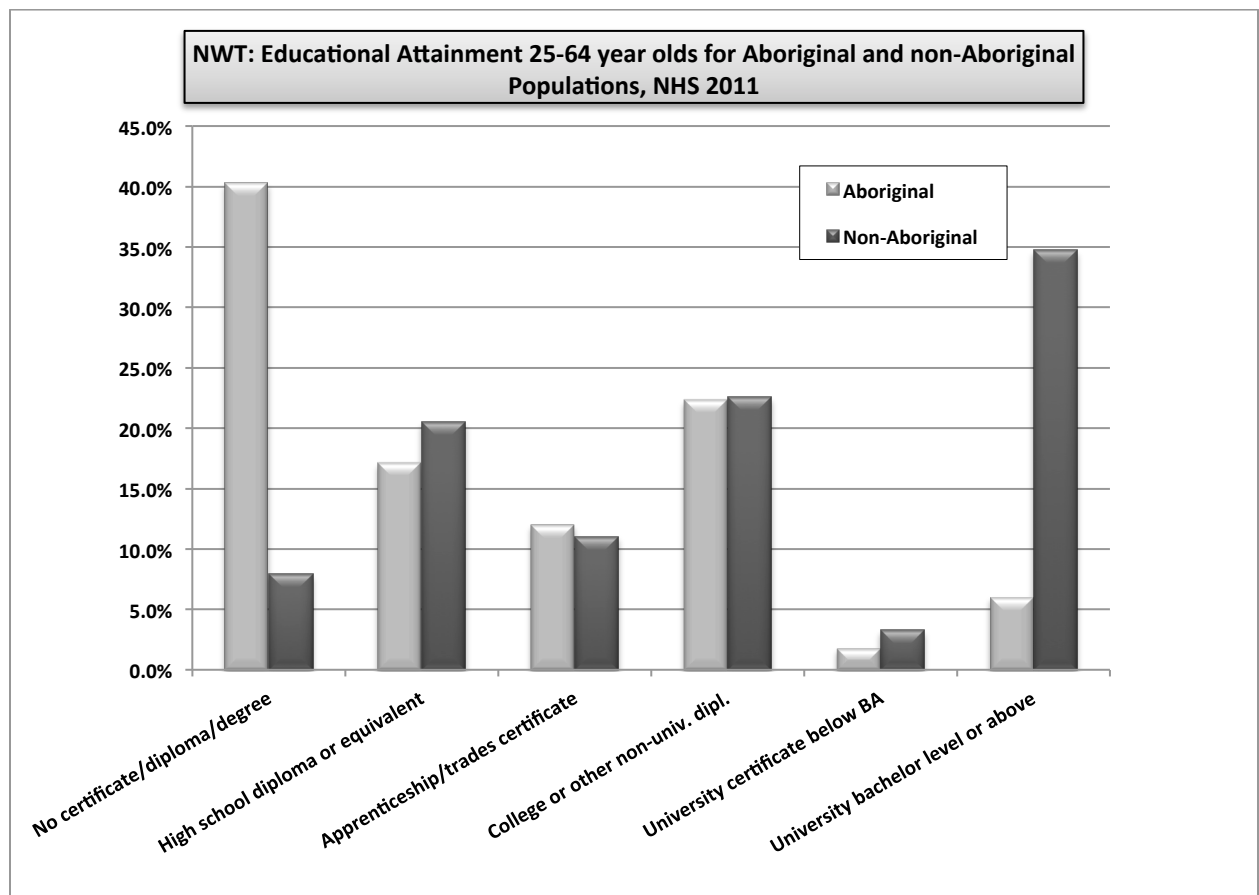
The following is a brief demographic and labour overview of the Aboriginal community in the NWT that demonstrates the persistent disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada at the regional level using data from the 2001, 2006 and 2011 Censuses as well as the 2011 National Household Survey. We have also acquired Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations in the NWT at the territorial level for the period through 2014. This sets the context for our analysis and critique of the role of training programs in the development of the Aboriginal labour force.


- 1) In NWT, the Aboriginal population accounted for 21,155 of Territory's 41,432 residents or 51.1% in 2011 (National Household Survey, 2011). This Aboriginal population breaks out as 63.3% First Nation, 20.5% Inuk and 15.3% Métis living in 32 communities along with a small population of people listed under the categories "Aboriginal multiple identities" and "Aboriginal not elsewhere included" (n.e.i.) that add up to 1.1% of the Aboriginal population. The largest communities in the NWT in 2014 were Yellowknife, the capital city, at 19,940, followed by Hay River population 3,689, Inuvik at 3,396 and Fort Smith with 2,536 and Behchokò at 2,039. Of the other 26 communities, 10 had population between 501 and 999 while the rest had less than 500 people. The Registered Indian population accounted for 94.2% of NWT's Aboriginal population.¹
- 2) Between 2001 and 2006, the Aboriginal population of the NWT increased from 18,730 to 20,635 or by 10.2% but grew by only 2.5% through to 2011 reaching 21,155 residents. As a percentage of the population the Aboriginal community represented around 50% in each census year, dropping from 50.5% in 2001 to 49.7% in 2006 before rebounding to 51.8% of the Territorial population in 2011 (Census of Canada, NWT, 2001, 2006 and 2011). In 2011, the median age of Aboriginal NWT's population was 26.4 years of age, compared to Aboriginal Yukon's median age of 30.7 years whereas the median age in Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan was much younger at 21.5 years of age. The NWT median age for the total population, in comparison stood at 32.3 years of age, while Canada's median age was 40.6 in 2011 (Census of Canada 2011, Canada Community Profile).
- 3) Aboriginal Dependency Ratios in the NWT are high when compared to Canada, with a DR of 81.7% in 2011, meaning that there are 81.7 dependent youth and seniors for every 100 working age adults 20-64. The Canadian DR in 2011 was 59.1%. In contrast, the NWT's DR (for total population) was actually lower than the national rate at 53.9%, while Yukon's DR was even lower at 47.4%. For comparison Nunavut's DR was the highest in Canada at the provincial/territorial scale at 84.8%. Aboriginal NWT's DR declined between 2001 and 2006 from 96.4% to 86.6% and continued declining through 2011 to 81.7%. High DRs place considerable pressure on families and communities to provide basic needs and services from

¹ Source: NWT Bureau of Statistics: Population Estimates As At July 1 2014, by Community and Age Group;
<http://www.statsnwt.ca/population/population-estimates/> Accessed Oct.10, 2015.

food through to educational and recreational programs and they limit the ability of adults to improve their savings and impact educational opportunities.

- 4) Aboriginal lone-parent families represent a high percentage of all family units in the North, with female parents statistically carrying the burden of single-parenthood. This again impacts income earning ability, educational opportunities and decreases access to the labour force for these parents, most being women (75% of lone parents in NWT are female). In 2011, the number of Aboriginal single parent families in Aboriginal NWT totalled 1,615 of 7,525 household units, or 21.5% of all Aboriginal households. This has been at very consistent level since 2001 when it stood at 22.3%. However, their impact is greater as they represent 30.8% of all Aboriginal children in the community; that is 2,940 children or 1.8 children per lone parent. Aboriginal NWT also had 280 children “living with grandparent(s) with no parents present” which is a new and problematic metric recorded by the 2011 Census.
- 5) The educational differences between the Aboriginal NWT and the Territorial Non-Aboriginal population are profound, based on an analysis of the 2011 NHS data on Educational Attainment for adults 25-65 years of age and over. We see that the just over 70% of the Non-Aboriginal population in NWT had participated or acquired some level of post-secondary education compared to 42.5% of the Aboriginal population. In the non-Aboriginal community only 7.9% of the Non-Aboriginal residents had no certificate, diploma or degree of any kind (effectively did not graduate high school or less) compared to 40.3% of the Aboriginal population.





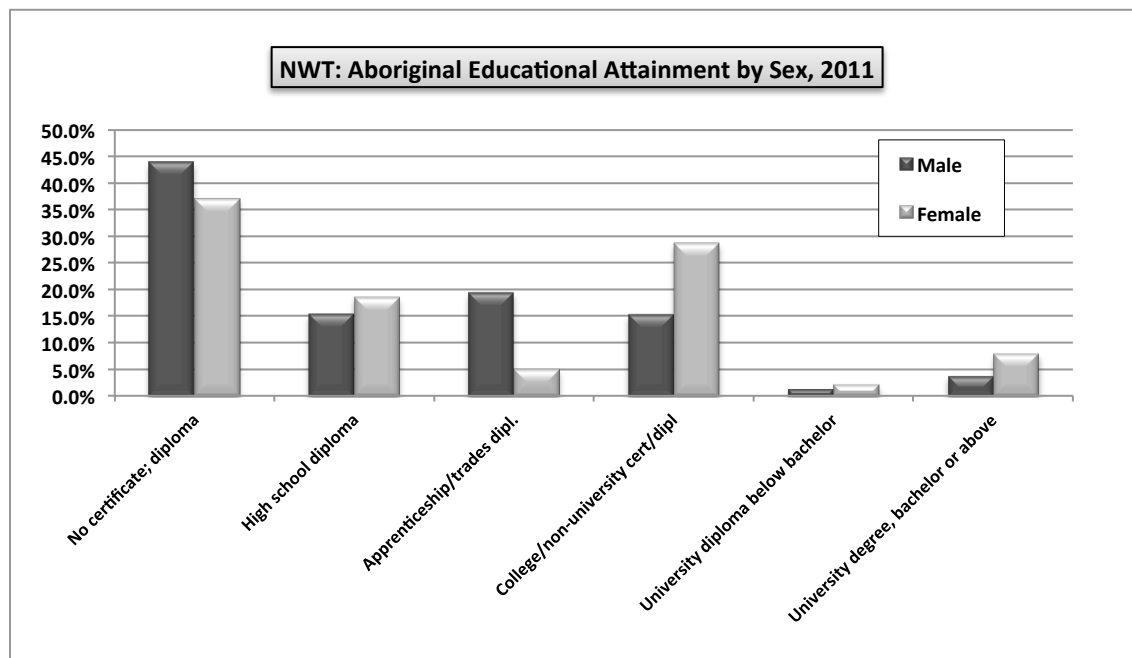
Within the postsecondary educational category, we find that Aboriginal people had a slightly higher proportion of degrees, certificate or diplomas in the Apprenticeship sector than non-Aboriginals at 12.1% compared to 11% in 2011. While in comparison earned university degrees at the Bachelor's level or higher accounted for only 6.1% of the Aboriginal population but 34.7% of the non-aboriginals living in the NWT. We should note though that the NWT government and other employers recruit heavily in the south for university-educated talent, while access to higher education in the NWT is limited to Aurora College, which offers technical programs and a couple university degrees through southern Canadian universities, such as the Education degree offered through the University of Saskatchewan. This means that Aboriginal students in NWT have to, for the most part, travel south to acquire their degrees, creating barriers to access on the one hand and many opportunities to stay in the south, where work opportunities may intervene, once one has graduated.

In 2011, 40.3% of the adult Aboriginal population had failed to complete high school and 17.2% had completed high school but had not gone further with their education, accounting for 57.5% of the adult population. For the Aboriginal population these are very poor results, but somewhat better than Northern Saskatchewan where 56.1% of the population had failed to graduate high school in the same year.

The percentage of NWT Aboriginal population 25-64 who had failed to complete high school showed some improvement between 2001 and 2006 declining from 49.5% to 42.8%, with more limited improvement through 2011 at 40.3%. When we look at those people who in 2011 had attained education in the Apprenticeships and Trades, we find that the number had dropped since 2006 to 305 from the earlier count of 345. Unfortunately, the 2001 APP Census data does not allow us to accurately breakout Aboriginal population by the trades alone. However, the drop in Aboriginal people with an education in the trades is unexpected, given the efforts made to improve educational attainment and specifically to increase Aboriginal participation in mining and other trades related sectors. In 2011, Aboriginal workers were highly underrepresented in the trades sector accounting for only 11.6% of all people 25-64 holding a trades certificate or diploma compared to 88.4% or 2,330 non-Aboriginal workers. Based on a study by the NWT Bureau of Statistics on diamond mine labour forces we know that accomplished and locally hired Aboriginal workers have a strong propensity to migrate south to urban locations, effectively moving from local hires to fly-in workers (Finnegan and Jacobs, 2015).

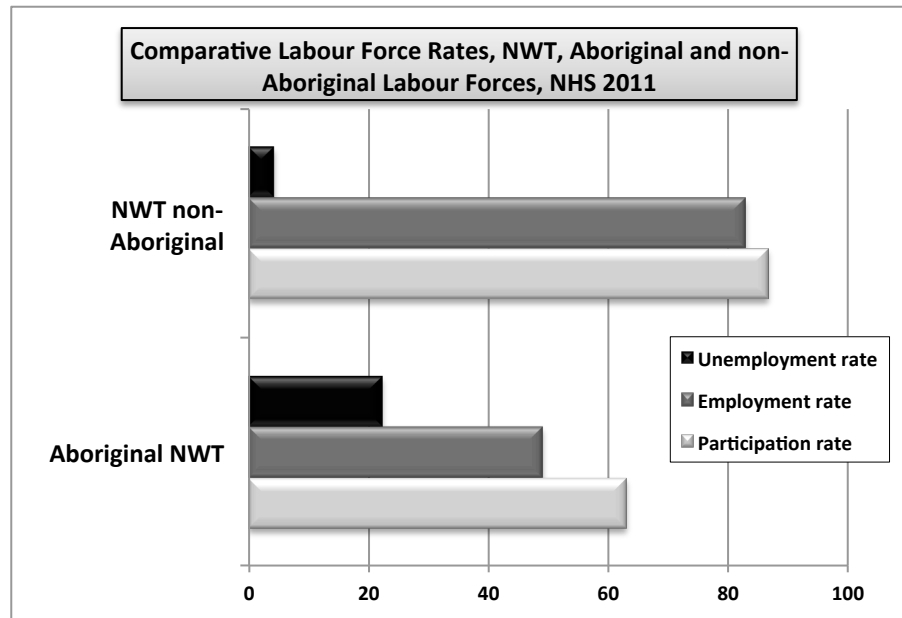
Is this a trend? One of declining of postsecondary educated Aboriginal NWT residents? Have they left the Territory for jobs in the south? This pattern also plays out at the community level and is similar to the brain drain that developing countries suffer, as the better-educated leave to find work in the south, or in the City of Yellowknife. This out-migration weakens the capacity of the First Nation community's suffer through success as there just are not applicable jobs in the First Nation settlement for the better educated population.

Educational attainment also has a gender component to its story with NWT Aboriginal females more accomplished than males; they also outnumber them in the 25-64 age cohorts with 450 more females. In 2011, 43.9% of males had not completed high school or its equivalency compared to 37.1% of the female population. Slightly more females completed high school and did not go onwards with their education at 18.7% compared to 15.5% for males, while far more males completed apprenticeship programs or trades by at 19.5% of the male population compared to only 5.2% for females. In contrast, females far outnumber males in when it came to college and/or university educational experience. As of 2011, 1,985 females had attended college or university compared to only 960 males, with 410 females achieving a degree at the Bachelor's level or higher while only 180 males had completed a Bachelor's degree or higher.



Unfortunately, the higher educational attainment of females is not reflected in their median income level, which in 2010 stood at \$23,058 over two thousand dollars lower than the male median income of \$25,278. Males also had higher average incomes at \$40,625 compared to \$36,248 for females. In contrast, there were more women with incomes and more men without incomes in the NWT, while males with incomes of over \$100,000/year in 2010 numbered 695 compared to 440 females suggesting that males are paid higher incomes, probably in the mining and natural resource sectors.

- 6) Aboriginal workers in NWT had poor Labour Force outcomes when compared to the non-Aboriginal workers based on the labour metrics from the NHS 2011, with 22.2% being unemployed compared to a Provincial average of only 4.3%, which would have been one of lowest unemployment rates in Canada at that time. Clearly, Aboriginal workers who were in the Labour Force and looking for work were not partaking in the booming Territorial economy that drove the non-Aboriginal UR below the 6% level which is considered full employment.



The participation rate (PR) for the Aboriginal population was also considerably below that of the non-Aboriginal labour force at 63% compared to 86.6%, meaning that many of the Aboriginal aged workers 15 and over were in the NILF category (or Not in the Labour Force) which included in 2011 more than one-third of the population 15 plus at 5,595 people. The ER, or employment rate, for non-Aboriginals was also incredibly high at 82.9% compared to the Aboriginal ER, which was below fifty percent at 49.1%.

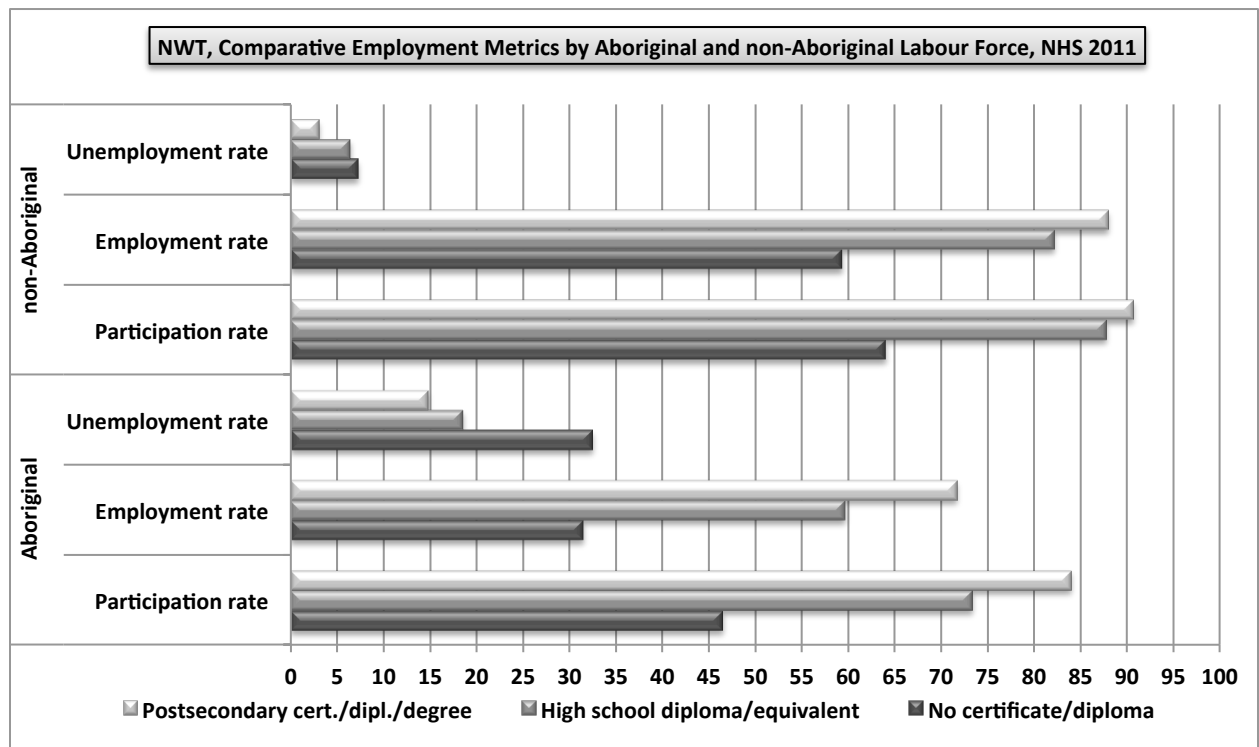
We can also compare the 2011 labour force data to the 2006 Census data to see how the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workforces reacted to the recession of 2008. Surprisingly there was only a small decline in the Aboriginal labour force rates between 2006 and 2011, with unemployment running marginally increasing from 20.1% to 22.2%, with the PR declining by 2.4% and the ER declining from 52.2% to 49.1%.

Comparisons of Labour Force Dynamics 2011 and 2006, in NWT				
	Aboriginal NWT		Non-Aboriginal NWT	
	NHS 2011	Census 2006	NHS 2011	Census 2006
Participation rate	63%	65.4%	86.6%	86.2%
Employment rate	49.1%	52.2%	82.9%	82.8%
Unemployment rate	22.2%	20.1%	4.3%	3.5%
Sources: Statistics Canada, NHS 2011, Census 2006, Aboriginal People's Profile 2012 and 2006				

There was almost no change in the rates for the non-Aboriginal population with a low UR and high ER and PR as recorded in 2006.

Gender also comes into play when we breakdown Aboriginal male and female labour force rates in NWT with females having higher employment rates at 50.3% compared to 47.7% for males


and lower unemployment rates at 17.7% compared to 26.6% for males; but with more females being in the NILF category, as is normally the case.



Universally, higher educational attainment equates with better job opportunities and certainly with greater adaptability and proven learning capacity. However, Aboriginal labour force members, regardless of their educational attainment, had higher levels of unemployment (UR), and lower levels of employment (ER) and participation (PR) than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. For example, non-Aboriginal early school leavers who did not attain a certificate, diploma or degree at any level had an UR of 7.3% while Aboriginal suffering from the same educational limitations suffered an UR of 32.5%. Meanwhile Aboriginal workers who had achieved some level of apprenticeship through to university degree had an UR of 14.8% while the non-Aboriginal UR was a mere 3.1%, an incredibly low unemployment rate for any segment of the population and more than four times lower than the Aboriginal rate.

In the apprenticeship programs the 1,445 Aboriginal workers with certification, diplomas or degrees in 2011 had an 81% participation rate, but an employment rate of only 63.3% and a very high unemployment rate of 22.2%. The Non-Aboriginal trade's population of 1,740 workers had, in contrast, a participation rate of 87.6%, an employment rate of 82.8%, with only 5.2% experiencing unemployment. At the higher end of the educational attainment scale, there were no earned medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry degree, or earned doctorates among Aboriginal workers compared to 160 in the non-Aboriginal population.

- 7) In the North, there has been considerable emphasis and planning placed by government agencies and the mining sector on expanding the Aboriginal labour force in the natural resource

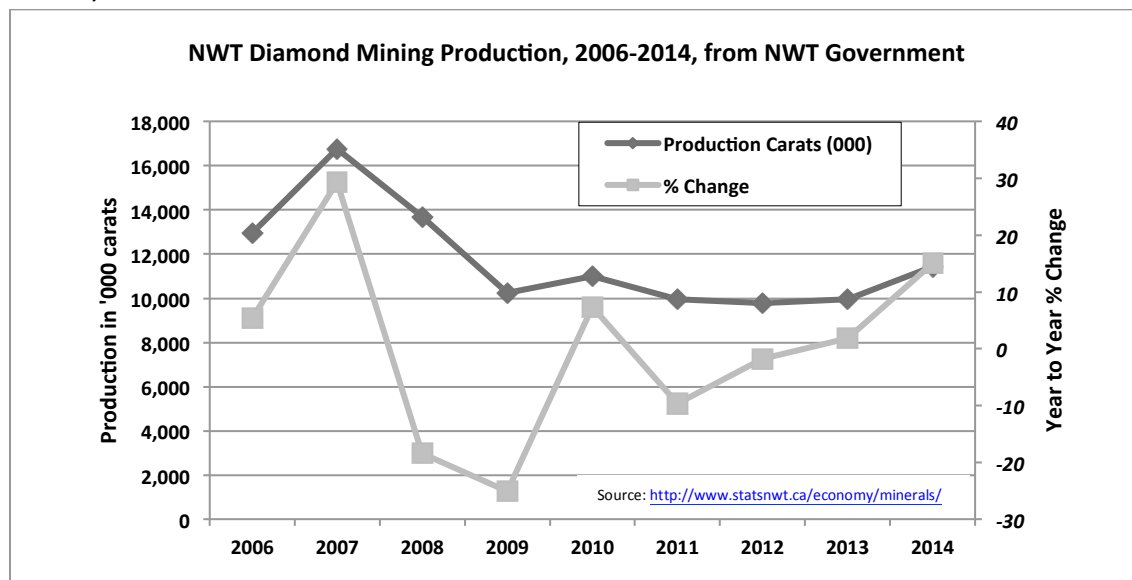


sector. The 2001 and 2006 Censuses allow us to investigate employment by industry using NAICS coding for Agriculture and Natural Resources as one category, while the NHS 2011 breaks out Agriculture from Mining, quarrying, oil and gas employment. In the NWT, we are moderately sure that jobs in this combined natural resources sector would not have been in agriculture and that the commercial lakes fisheries would have been a small percentage. A very considerable 13.2% of Aboriginal NWT's experienced labour force was in the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector, some 1,020 workers. In the non-aboriginal labour force, this sector accounted for 8% of the experienced labour force with 1010 workers. In comparison, the Aboriginal Yukon rate of employment in this sector was only 6.2%. At this time mining and mineral exploration was very active in the NWT with three mines open, the Ekati diamond mine and the Con and Giant gold mines while considerable exploration in the diamonds sector and other sectors was occurring (NWT Geology Division, Exploration Overview, 2001). However, we must also remember that a high percentage of the mine labour population in the North are considered fly-in and are not resident miners within these NWT Census products. By 2006, the NWT had three active diamond mines, as well as one other open mine, which translated to a small increase in the number of workers in the Agriculture and Natural Resources industrial category which rose to 2,130 workers or by 5%. However, the Aboriginal labour force in this sector rose from 1020 to 1210 or by 18.6% while the resident NWT non-Aboriginal labour force dropped to 920 or to 6.4% of the non-Aboriginal labour force. We know that the NWT in 2006 was importing some 7,253 workers from outside of the Territory, predominately to work in the NWT's four operating mines and in mineral exploration (Laporte and Lu, 2013, Table 1; Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table: 282-0055).

By 2011, when the NHS breaks out Agricultural workers by industry from Mining, quarrying and oil and gas, and in a period when the same four mines as in 2006 were open but in which mineral exploration was weak, we find that Aboriginal employment in the sector stood at 660 employees or about 6.9% of the Aboriginal workforce. We can also now see the proportion of the natural resources sector in NWT that was not in mining and oil and gas was a very small 135 jobs or about 17% of what would have been the combined total in 2006 and 2001, assuming that the labour force breakouts being proportional in these earlier years. In non-Aboriginal NWT, mining broken out from Agriculture reveals fewer jobs than might have been expected at 790 workers out of 13,630 or just around 5.8% of the workforce. In 2011, male Aboriginal workers in the mining and oil and gas sector accounted for 74% of the sector labour force with females representing 24%. In contrast the Non-Aboriginal breakout by sex being more heavily skewed towards males at 81.5%, meaning that Aboriginal women had a higher presence in mining and oil and gas than non-Aboriginal females at 18.5%.

Effectively then employment in the mining sector in NWT as of 2011 had declined in numbers and in percentage of total employment since 2001 dropping from 1,020 jobs in the combined sector of Agriculture and Natural resources to 795 in 2011; once we recombine the two sectors. This mirrors the drop in production through the recession years, which saw production plummet from its height in 2007 of 16,773,000 carats to its nadir in 2009, followed by an uneven recovery

circa 2010-2011, through to a steady improve since 2012-13. The low point for production was actually in 2012 at 9,769,000 carats.



As a proportion of the labour force, the combined sector shrank from 13.2% to 8.4% as Aboriginal employment grew from 7,750 to 9,520. We know that the non-Aboriginal population was not stepping into these jobs, so we have to look to outside fly-in workers as the answer. In 2013, Statistics Canada found that the NWT was receiving some 5,900 workers who were fly-in workers during 2009, the last year for which we have accurate fly-in numbers.² By 2011 the highest concentrations of Aboriginal workers by industry in 2011 was in Public Administration at 2265 workers a full 28%, followed by Construction (9.6%), Retail trade (8.2%), Health and Social Services (7.7%) and then Mining and Oil & Gas at 6.9%. This means that the mining sector placed fifth in the list of industry sector employers in Aboriginal NWT, far from the often-quoted misperception that it is the leading employer of Aboriginal people in the NWT.³ As noted by the CBC “Northerners only made up 37 per cent of the mine’s workforce —much less than the 60 per cent target,” in a Dec 18, 2012 post.⁴

- 8) In the NWT we can also breakout the Labour Force Survey data by ethnicity providing a time series of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal employment metrics. Between 2003 and 2014, the Aboriginal unemployment rate rose from 14.3% to 17.4% after having shown considerable improvement between 2004 and 2009. The post 2008 recession clearly affected Aboriginal workers far more than non-Aboriginal workers, with the UR rising by 4.7% points between 2009 and 2014. In contrast, the non-Aboriginal rate moved marginally from an unbelievably low 1.3%

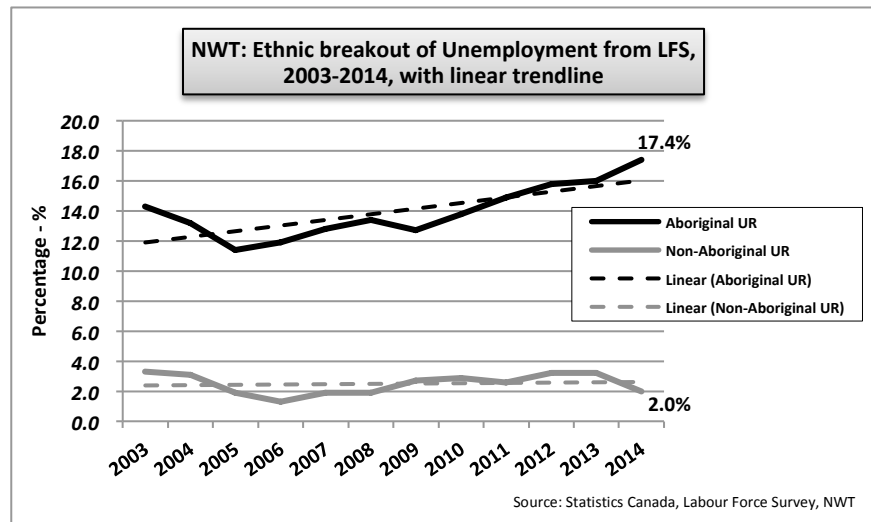
² See: Source: Laporte and Lu (2013), Table 1; Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table: 282-0055 and G.F. Finnegan and Jacobs, John (2015) “Canadian interprovincial employees in the Canadian Arctic: a case study in fly-in/fly-out employment metrics, 2004–2009,” *Polar Geography*, DOI: [10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795](https://doi.org/10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795)

³ For example see: https://ykchamber.com/sites/default/files/mining_is_essential_to_our_economy.pdf; accessed October, 10, 2015

⁴ Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/n-w-t-mines-fall-short-on-northern-workforce-targets-1.1198343>; accessed Oct 10, 2015

in 2006 to 2.7% in 2009 and to 3.2% in 2012-13, before coming to rest at only 2% in 2014, some 15.4% points below the Aboriginal rate.

- 9) Self-employed workers represented only 5.8% of all NWT workers in 2011 compared to 11.7% in Yukon, with the break being 335 self-employed Aboriginal workers compared to 1,015 non-Aboriginal workers, or 3.8% of the Aboriginal labour force compared to



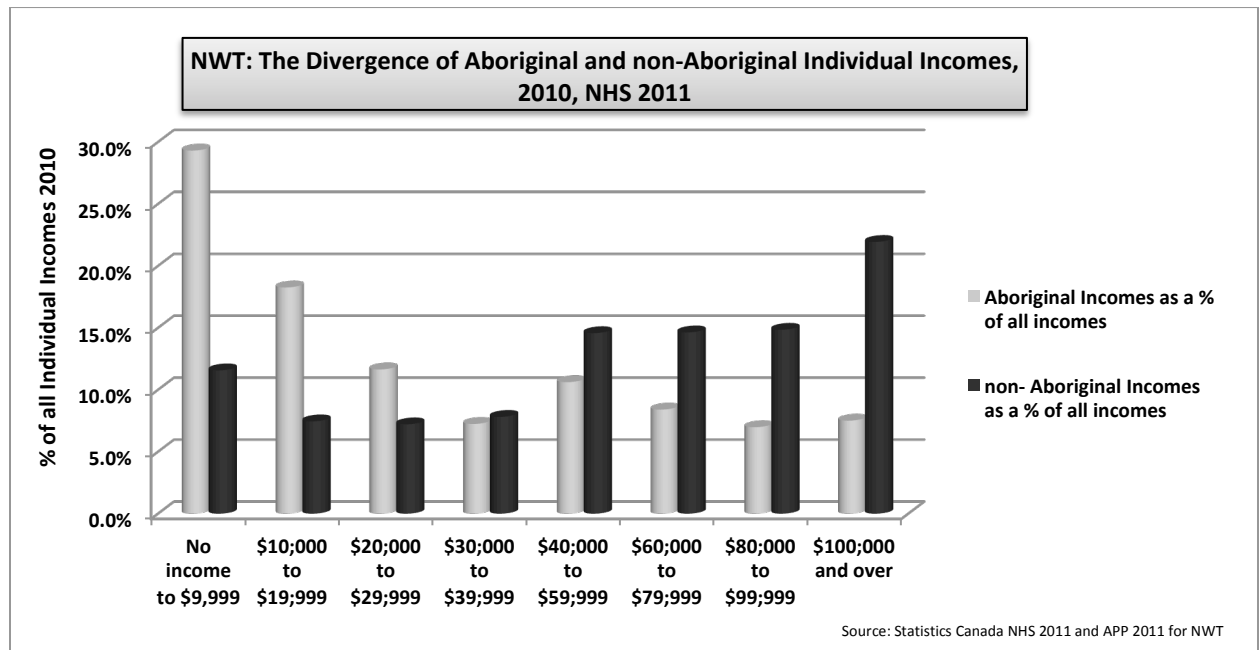
4.4% of the non-Aboriginal labour force. This suggests that there are considerable barriers to self-employment facing both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal entrepreneurs in the NWT that is keeping them from starting their own businesses. In Yukon, self-employed non-Aboriginal workers total 2,200 members of the labour force or 14.3%.

- 10) The incomes of Aboriginal people in the NWT are lower than provincial levels based on median income levels while the Aboriginal community had a slightly higher dependency on government transfers. The Aboriginal median income in 2000 stood at \$16,641 compared to the Territorial median income for all people of \$29,030; a difference of about 75% (we cannot breakout the non-Aboriginal Territorial income given the Census profiles available). By 2005 the Aboriginal median income had risen to \$20,080 or by 21.9%, however the Territorial median income had risen by 20.6% to \$35,006; meaning that the gap between Aboriginal incomes and the Territorial median income stayed pretty much the same. We find little improvement in this situation through to 2010, when median income for Aboriginal NWT stood \$23,992, an increase of 19.5% over 2005 compared to the Territorial of median income of \$44,186, which had risen by 26.2% since 2005. This means that the difference between the two median incomes had increased since 2000 from about 75% to 84.2% in 2010; this is certainly evidence of two very different economies.⁵ In comparison, the difference between Aboriginal median incomes and the Territorial median in Yukon moved from about 25% to 38% over the same period.

Aboriginal communities are generally far more dependent upon government transfers than non-Aboriginal communities as a whole with the percentage of income in 2011 that was derived from government sources standing at 14.7% compared to the Territorial average of only 7.7% (we cannot calculate the Non-Aboriginal levels given that the NHS uses percentages in reporting). In contrast, Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan had a government dependency rate of 29%.

⁵ The Census reports income from the previous taxation year, so the 2001 census reports 2000 income levels.

The percentage of Aboriginal NWT residents (15 and over) who lacked an income in 2010 was 6.5%, or 990 out of 15,115, or just slightly higher than Aboriginal Yukon's rate of 4.9%. This compares favourably with Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan where the corresponding figure was 12.1% of potential income earners while the non-Aboriginal population rate in NWT stood at 3.0% of the population with no income (Yukon's non-Aboriginal rate being 3.4%).



We can also look at the distribution of incomes from Aboriginal NWT compared to the Non-Aboriginal NWT as well as to Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan for comparison. In 2010, 47.6% of Aboriginal NWT individuals had income of less than \$20,000 which is a poor outcome but which compares favourably to the 56% level in Northern Saskatchewan among Aboriginal income earners. Juxtaposed to this, only 19.1% of non-Aboriginal NWT incomes came in at below \$20,000. At the other end of the income scale non-Aboriginal individual incomes of above \$80,000 accounted 36.7% of all incomes, while high income Aboriginals accounted for only 14.5% of all Aboriginal incomes. The Aboriginal income profile shown above demonstrates a strong negative skew, while the non-Aboriginal profile shows a positive skew; the disparity in the two outcomes is very apparent, they are clearly experiencing different economies within the same jurisdiction.



Aboriginal Demography and Labour Force Profile; Yukon

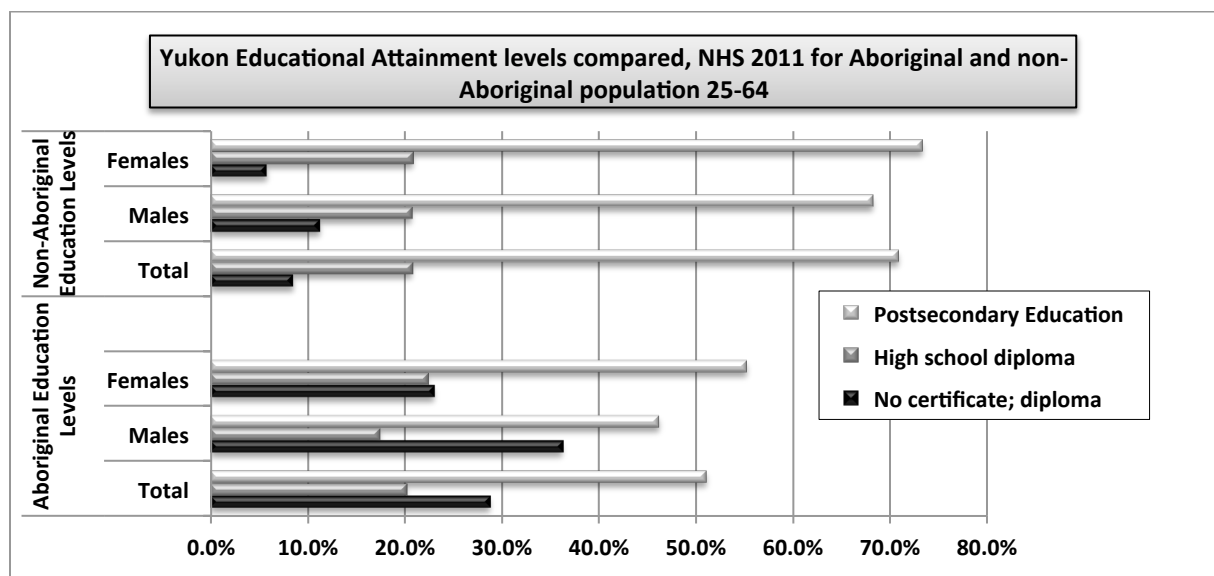
The following is a brief demographic and labour overview of the Aboriginal community in Yukon which demonstrates the persistent disparity between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Canada at the regional level using data from the 2001, 2006 and 2011 Censuses as well as the 2011 National Household Survey. We have also acquired Labour Force Survey (LFS) data for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations in the Yukon at the territorial level for the period 2008-2014. This sets the context for our analysis and critique of the role of Aboriginal training programs in the development of the Aboriginal labour force.

- 1) In Yukon, the Aboriginal population accounted for 23.1% or 7,710 of Territory's 33,320 residents in 2011 (National Household Survey, 2011). This Aboriginal population breaks out as 85.5% First Nation and 11% Métis living in 16 major populated Census places along with a small population of Inuit, Aboriginal multiple identities and Aboriginal not elsewhere included (n.e.i.) that add up to 3.5% of the Aboriginal population. The Registered Indian population accounted for 86.6% of Yukon's Aboriginal population living in fourteen First Nation communities, eleven of which are self-governing.¹
- 2) The Aboriginal population grew each period from 2001 to 2011 rising from 6,545 to 7,580 between 2001 and 2006 and then to 7,710 in 2011, however the Aboriginal population as a percentage of the population dropped between 2006 and 2011 from 25.1% to 23.1% of the Territorial population (Census of Canada, Yukon, 2001, 2006 and 2011) due to high in-migration of non-Aboriginals. In 2011 the median age of Aboriginal population was rather higher than in many other Aboriginal communities in the North at 30.7 years of age whereas in Northern Saskatchewan the median age was 21.5 years of age. The Yukon median age in comparison is stood at 39.1 years of age, while Canada's median age was 40.6 in 2011 (Census of Canada 2011, Canada Community Profile).
- 3) Aboriginal Dependency Ratios in the Yukon are high when compared to Canada, with a DR of 72.4% in 2011, meaning that there are 72.4 dependent youth and seniors for every 100 working age adults 20-64; while the Canadian DR in 2011 was calculated at 59.1%. In contrast, the Yukon DR (for total population) was lower than the national rate at 47.4%. For comparison Nunavut's DR was the highest in Canada at the provincial/territorial scale at 84.8%. Aboriginal Yukon's DR declined between 2001 and 2006 from 79.1% to 72.3% and remained effectively the same through 2011. High DRs place considerable pressure on families and communities to provide basic needs and services from food through to educational and recreational programs and they limit the ability of adults to improve their savings and can impact educational opportunities.
- 4) Aboriginal lone-parent families represent a high percentage of all family units in the North, with female parents statistically carrying the burden of single-parenthood. This again impacts income earning abilities, educational opportunities and decreases access to the labour force for these parents, most being women (78% in Yukon). In 2011, the number of Aboriginal single parent families in Aboriginal Yukon totalled 840 of 3,145 family units or 26.7%, but 47% of the

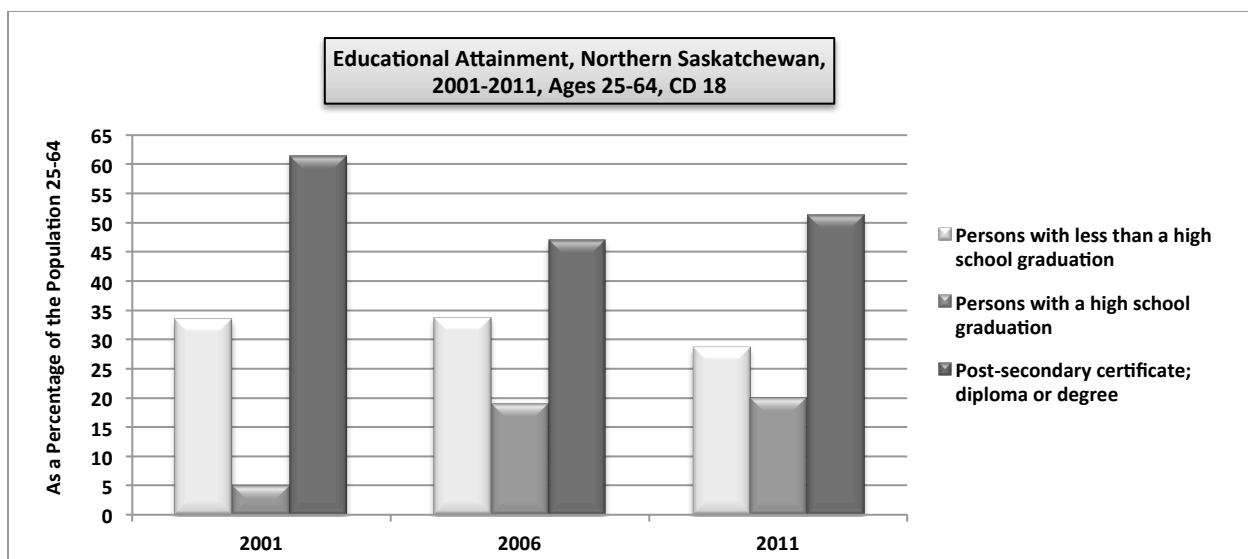
¹ On self-government and employment see: G.F. Finnegan, Analyzing The Role Aboriginal Public Administration in Yukon – The Survey of Employment and Payroll Hours, *aboriginal policy studies*, Vol. 2 no. 2, 2013; pp. 88-107.

community's 3,000 children were living in these lone parent families. Aboriginal Yukon also has 160 children "living with grandparent(s) with no parents present" which is a new and problematic metric recorded by the 2011 Census. In Yukon, single parent families represented 20.5% of the 1,915 family units, meaning that a disproportionate 44% of all single parent families were of Aboriginal origin, while Aboriginal people represented only 23.1% of the population.

- 5) The educational differences between the Aboriginal Yukon and the Territorial Non-Aboriginal population are profound, based on an analysis of the 2011 NHS data on Educational Attainment for adults 24-65 years of age and over. We see that the over 70% of the Non-Aboriginal population in Yukon had participated or acquired some level of post-secondary education compared to 51% of the Aboriginal population and with only 8.5% of the Non-Aboriginal residents having no certificate, diploma or degree of any kind (effectively did not graduate high school or less) compared to 28.7% of the Aboriginal population.



Within the postsecondary educational category we find that Aboriginal people had a slightly higher proportion of degrees, certificate or diplomas in the Apprenticeship sector than non-Aboriginals at 15.6% compared to 12.6% in 2011. While in comparison earned university degrees at the Bachelor's level or higher accounted for 9.6% of the Aboriginal population but 29.6% of the non-aboriginals living in the Yukon. We should note though that the Yukon government and other employers recruit heavily in the south for university educated employees, while access to higher education in the Yukon is limited to Yukon College which offers only a smattering of university degrees through southern Canadian or Alaskan university programs. This means that Aboriginal students in Yukon have to, for the most part, travel south to acquire their degrees, creating barriers to access on the one hand and ample opportunities to stay in the south, where work opportunities may intervene, once one has graduated.



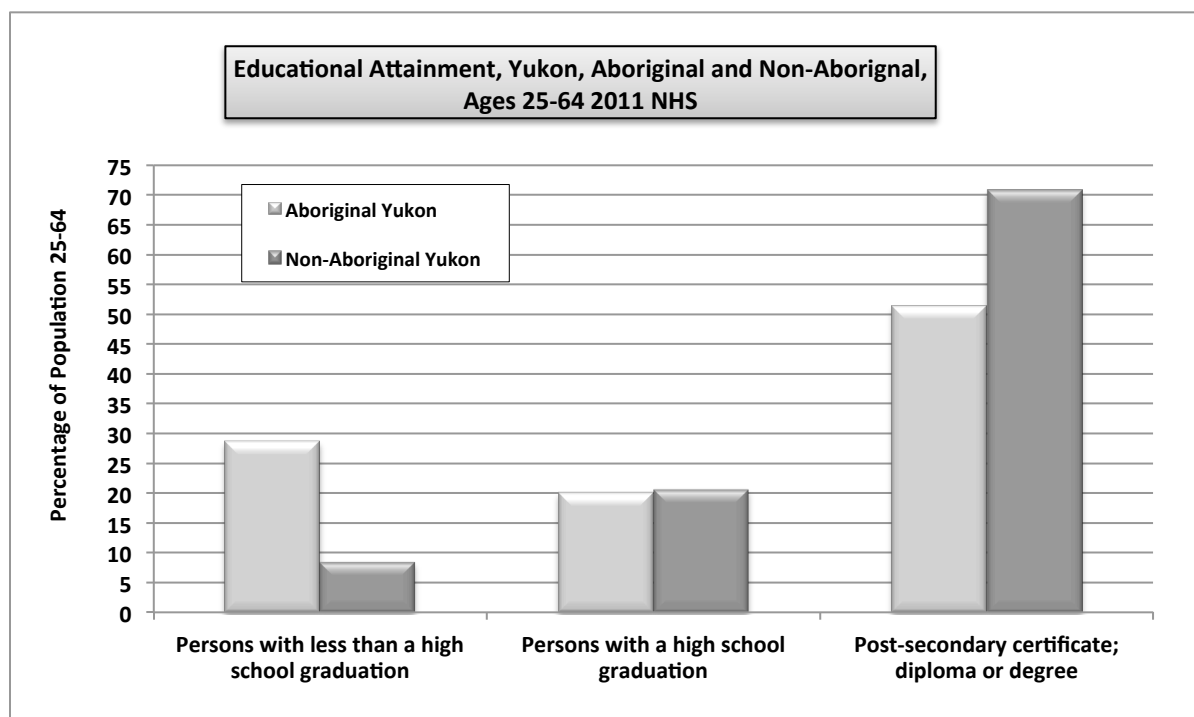
In 2001, 33.5% of the adult Aboriginal population had failed to complete high school and 5.1% had completed high school but had not gone further with their education, while a very high 61.4% of the population had undertaken some level of post-secondary education ranging from apprenticeships and trades certification through college and university education, both completed degrees as well as other levels of accomplishment such as diplomas and certificates. These were reasonably good results for the population given that in Northern Saskatchewan 56.1% of the population had failed to graduate high school in the same year.

The percentage of Yukon Aboriginal population 25-64 who had failed to complete high school effectively stayed the same between 2001 and 2006 at 33.5% to 33.8% but does decline in 2011 to 28.7%. So while some progress was made in increasing high school completions which rose from 5.6% in 2001 to 19.1% in 2006 and then to 20.1% in 2011, the percentage of non-completions stayed relatively high when compared to non-aboriginal educational attainment which saw only 8.5% of its population without a high school graduation in 2011. What is disturbing is the decline in the population achieving some level of postsecondary education which fell from 61.4% in 2001 to 47% in 2006 before rebounding to 51.3% in 2011. Based on a study by the NWT Bureau of Statistics on diamond mine labour forces we know that accomplished and locally hired Aboriginal workers have a strong propensity to migrate south to urban location, effectively moving from local hires to fly-in workers (Finnegan and Jacobs, 2015).

Could this be the trend we are seeing here in the decline of postsecondary educated Aboriginal Yukoners between 2001 and 2006, have they left the Territory for jobs in the south? This pattern also plays out at the community level, and is not dissimilar to the brain drain that developing countries suffer, as the better educated leave to find work in the south, or in the City of Whitehorse, meaning that the capacity of the First Nation community's suffer through success as there just are not applicable jobs in the First Nation settlement for the better educated population. As on 2006, the Yukon Bureau of Statistics found that 24% of Yukon First

Nation members lived in Canadian jurisdictions outside of Yukon, while in some instances more members lived outside their community than within it as is the case of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation of Old Crow. The Vuntut Gwitchin numbered 450 citizens in the 2006 Census population count of which 44.4% lived in Old Crow, 22.2% lived in elsewhere in Yukon (primarily Whitehorse) while 150 or 33.3% lived outside of the Yukon.²

Educational attainment also has a gender component to its story in that Yukon Aboriginal females tend to be more accomplished than males; they also vastly outnumber them in the 25-64 age cohorts with 2,110 females to only 1,700 males. That is a ratio of 1.24 females for every male. In 2011, 785 males compared to 1,165 females had completed high school out of a population of 3,810; this is a difference of 20.6% males compared to 30.6% females. While males outnumber females in the apprenticeship programs and trades by 425 or 175 or 25% of this cohort's population compared to only 8.3%. In contrast females far outnumber males in when it came to university educational experience. As of 2011, 420 females had attended university with 295 achieving a degree at the Bachelor's level or higher while only 110 males had attended university, with only 70 completing a Bachelor's degree or higher.



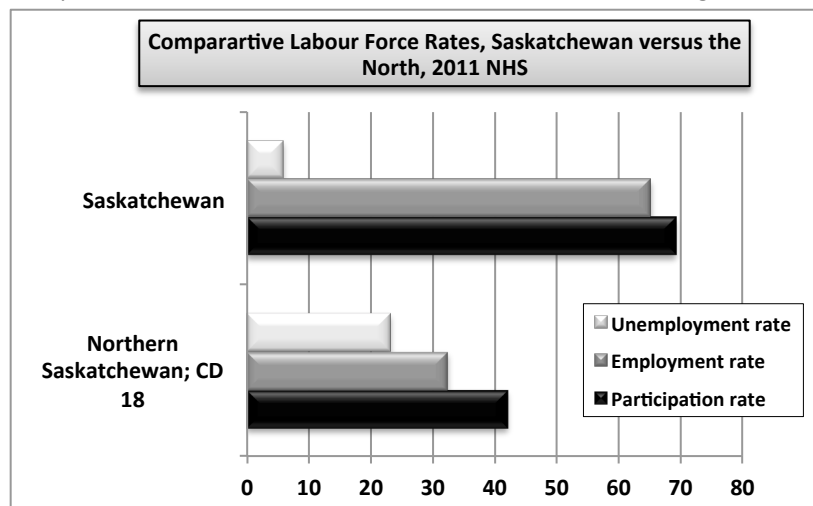
The higher educational attainment of females is reflected in their higher median income level in 2010 of \$28,311 compared to the male median income of \$22,674. However, males have slightly higher average incomes at \$35,142 to the female average income of \$34,513 probably due to the higher wages in the natural resources, construction and possibly transportation

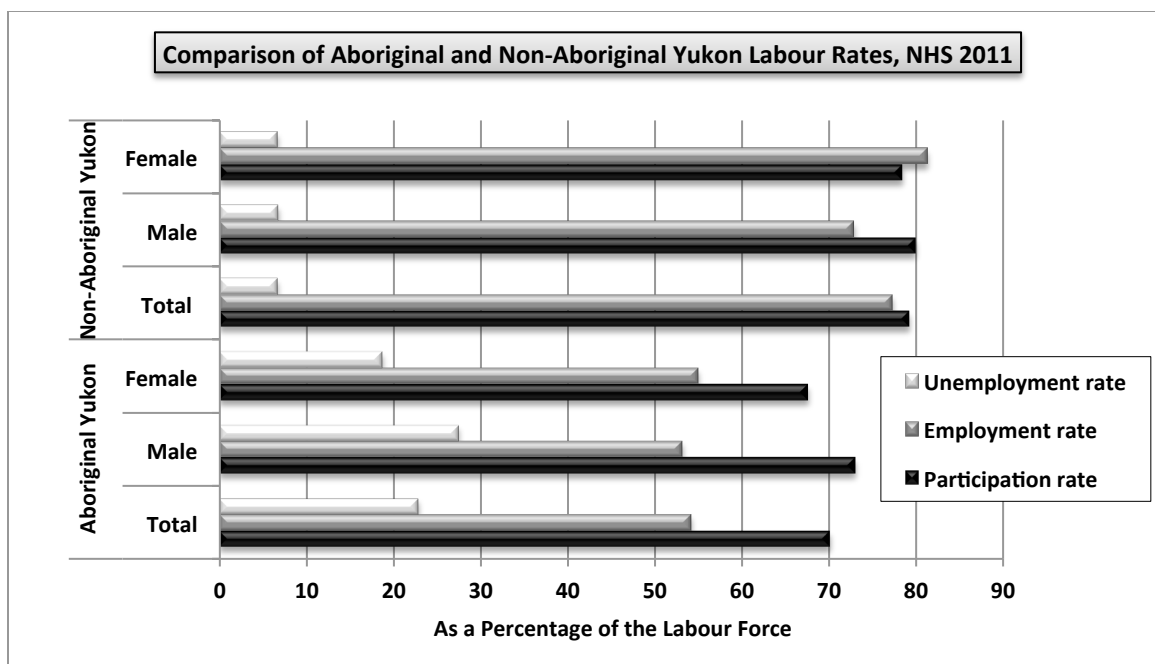
² See Yukon Bureau of Statistics: http://www.eco.gov.yk.ca/pdf/FN_Com_Profile_CTFN_LH_ed.pdf; accessed Sept, 28, 2015.

sectors. In 2011, for example, 125 males reported incomes in excess of \$100,000 compared to only 60 females, while more females were earning incomes at 2,995 than males at 2,500 with more females having incomes in the \$40,000 to \$99,999 range at 1,005 compared to 690 for males.

When we compare the educational attainment of the Aboriginal Yukon to the non-Aboriginal Yukon counts we see substantially different outcomes with only 8.5% of the Territory's population 25-64 not having completed high school compared to 28.7% for the Aboriginal population, while 70.8% of the non-Aboriginal population had some level of postsecondary certificate; diploma or degree compared to only 51.3% for Aboriginal Yukon. We should however note that the Aboriginal population in the Yukon had much better educational outcomes than Northern Saskatchewan for example where 53.1% of the Aboriginal population had not acquired a High School graduation and where only 29.3% had acquired some level of postsecondary certificate; diploma or degree.

- 6) Aboriginal workers in Yukon had poor Labour Force outcomes in 2011 with 22.8% being unemployed compared to a Provincial average of only 6.7%, one of the lower unemployment rates in Canada at that time. Clearly Aboriginal workers who were in the Labour Force and looking for work were not partaking in the booming provincial economy that drove the UR down to 6.7%.





However, Aboriginal workers, as captured by the 2011 National Household Survey, had a high participation rate at 70.1%, only nine percentage points below the non-Aboriginal rate and far in advance of the very poor Aboriginal participation rate in Northern Saskatchewan which came in at 42.1% in 2011. This means that Yukon Aboriginal workers were actively participating in the labour force, either working or looking for work, and that they had not fallen into the Not in the Labour Force (NILF) category that appears to capture so many Aboriginal workers across the North. The non-Aboriginal labour force in Yukon demonstrates a very high level of success with low unemployment, high participation rates and high employment rates; for example the Female employment rate exceeded 80% in 2011. Aboriginal female workers had a considerably lower unemployment rate than males at 18.7% compared to 27.4%, while non-Aboriginal females recorded an UR of only 6.7%. Participation rates for males were slightly higher than females at 73% compared to 67.7%, probably due to the fact that women are more commonly involved in domestic care giving activities that take them out of the labour force.

We can also compare the 2011 labour data to the 2006 Census data to see how the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal workforces reacted to the recession of 2008. Surprisingly there was little difference between

Aboriginal labour force rates between 2006 and 2011, with unemployment running at 21.9% in 2006 prior to the recession improving

Comparisons of Labour Force Dynamics 2011 and 2006, Saskatchewan and the North				
	Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan; CD 18		Saskatchewan	
	NHS 2011	Census 2006	NHS 2011	Census 2006
Participation rate	42.1%	50.4%	69.2%	68.4%
Employment rate	32.4%	40.3%	65.1%	64.6%
Unemployment rate	23.1%	20.2%	5.9%	5.6%

Sources: Statistics Canada, NHS 2011, Census 2006, Aboriginal People's Profile 2012 and 2006

to 18.7 % in 2011. This is possibly due to the insulation that the Yukon Aboriginal labour force has achieved over the past decade plus through its high levels of employment in self-government which rose from 1,073 in 2002 to 1,426 in 2011 (Finnegan, 2013).

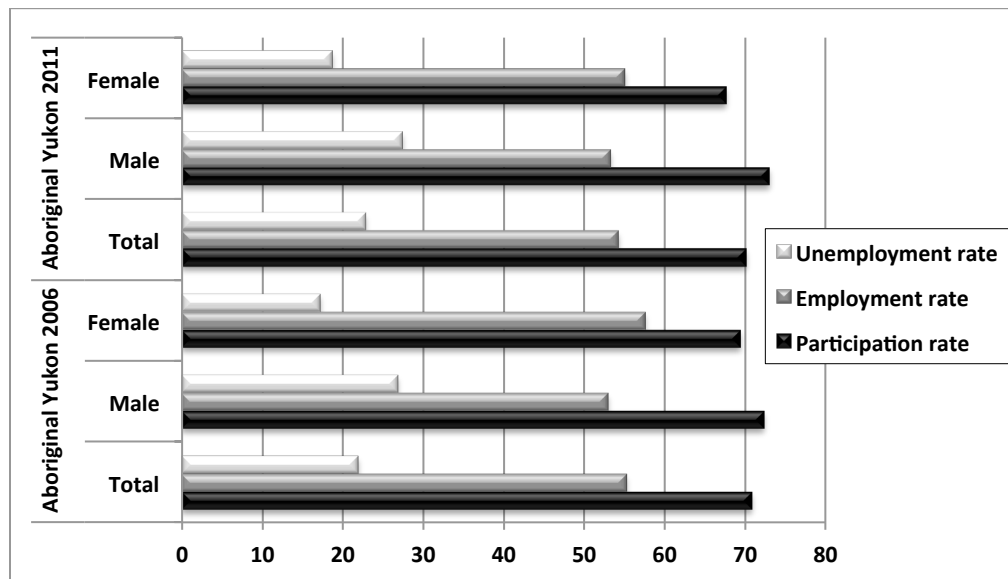
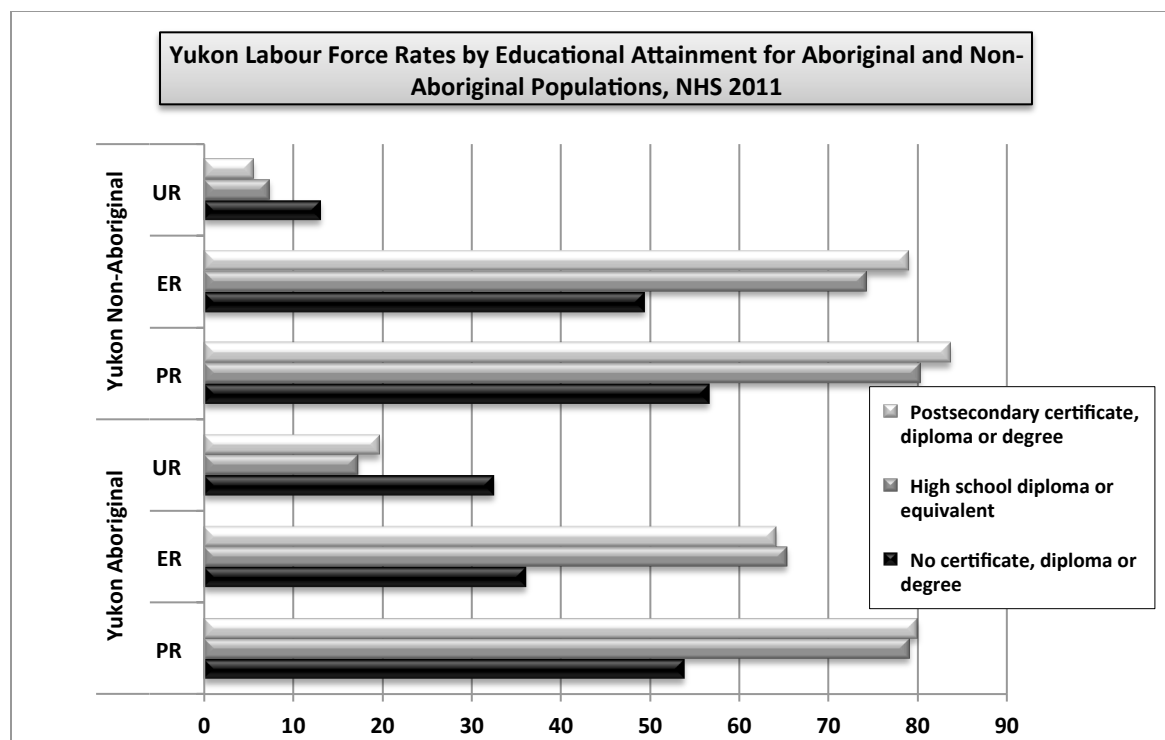


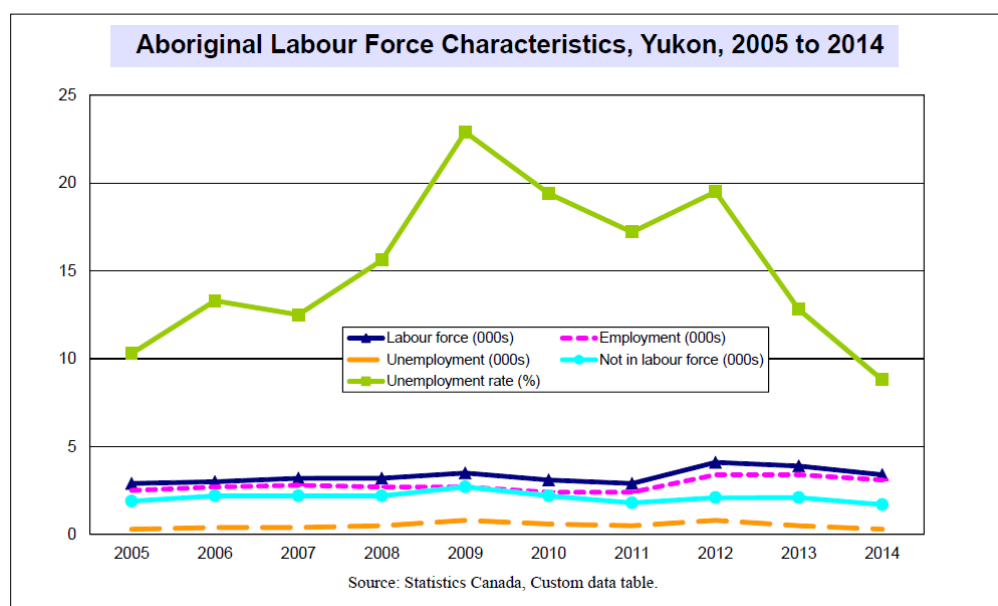
Figure: Yukon Aboriginal Labour Force Rates Consistency, 2006 to 2011


Universally, higher educational attainment equates with better job opportunities and certainly with greater adaptability and proven learning capacity. However, Aboriginal Yukoners regardless of their educational attainment had higher levels of unemployment (UR), and lower levels of employment (ER) and participation (PR) than non-Yukoners. For example, non-Aboriginal early school leavers who did not attain a certificate, diploma or degree at any level had an UR of 13.1% while Aboriginal suffering from the same educational limitations suffered an UR of 32.57%. Meanwhile Aboriginal workers who had achieved some level of apprenticeship through to university degree had an UR of 19.7% while the non-Aboriginal UR was below 6%, or more than three times lower.

In the apprenticeship programs the 730 Aboriginal workers with certification or diploma/degrees in 2011 had an 82.9% participation rate, but an employment rate of only 56.8% and a very high unemployment rate of 30.6%. The Non-Aboriginal trade's population of 2,200 workers had in contrast a participation rate of 78.1%, an employment rate of 74.8%, with only 4.4% suffering unemployment. At the higher end of the educational attainment scale there were no earned medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine or optometry degree, or earned doctorates among Aboriginal workers compared to 215 for the non-Aboriginal population.



- 7) In Yukon and the NWT we can also break out Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal labour forces using the Labour Force Survey (LFS) conducted monthly by Statistics Canada which provides Territorial scale estimates of the Aboriginal Labour forces in these jurisdictions. Between 2007 and 2012 the Aboriginal segment of the Yukon Labour force was particularly impacted by the recession of 2008, with increases in the unemployment rate being recorded as early as 2008 when the UR jumped above 15%, a rate it did not again see until 2013 when it dropped to 12.8%. In contrast the Yukon's UR, including both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal never dropped below 7.2% unemployment and for the period 2008-2013 averaged





only 6.1% suggesting that through the recession period the Aboriginal labour force was disproportionately impacted by the downturn within Yukon.

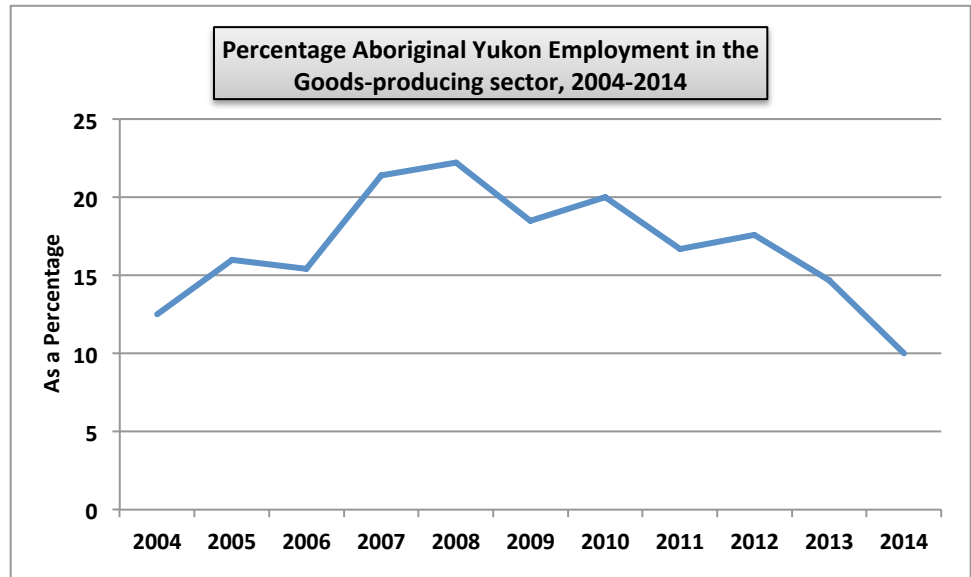
- 8) In the North considerable emphasis and planning has been put into expanding the Aboriginal labour force in the natural resource sector. The 2001 and 2006 Censuses allow us to investigate employment by industry using NAICS coding for Agriculture and Natural Resources as one category, while the NHS 2011 breaks out Agriculture from Mining, quarrying, oil and gas employment. In 2001, 6.2% of Aboriginal Yukon's experienced labour force was employed in the Agriculture and Natural Resources sector some 195 workers. In the non-aboriginal community this sector accounted for 4.6% of the experienced labour force. At this time mining and mineral exploration was at a low point in Yukon so we should not be surprised to see such a weak returns, but we must also remember that a high percentage of the mine labour population in the North flies-in and are not resident miners within these Yukon Census products. By 2006 mineral exploration was picking up in Yukon, but the first mine to open, the Minto Mine, did not do so until February 2006. The experienced industrial labour force, once again including agriculture with natural resources stood at 235 for the Aboriginal workforce or 6.2% (same as in 2001) compared to 725 of workers in the non-Aboriginal workforce or 4.8%. By 2011, when the NHS breaks out Agricultural workers by industry from Mining, Quarrying and Oil and Gas, and in a period when mines were opening and mineral exploration was strong, we find that Aboriginal employment in the sector stood at 225 employees or about 5.5% of the Aboriginal workforce. In non-Aboriginal Yukon mining once broken out from Agriculture reveals very few jobs at 555 workers out of 17,055 or just around 3.3% of the workforce. In 2011 Aboriginal male mine workers accounted for 70% of the sector labour force while just under 30% were female; with the Non-Aboriginal breakout by sex being very similar.

Effectively then employment in the mining sector in Yukon as of 2011 had grown very little since 2001 rising from around 195 jobs in the combined sector of Agriculture and Natural resources to 235 in 2006 and then to 255 in 2011 if we recombine the two sectors. As a proportion of the labour force the combined sector shrank from 6.2% to 5.9% as Aboriginal employment grew. We know that the non-Aboriginal population was not stepping into these jobs so we have to look to outside fly-in workers as the answer and we know from a 2013 Statistics Canada study, that Yukon was receiving some 2,500 workers who were fly-in workers during the period 2007 to 2009.³ The highest concentrations of Aboriginal workers by industry in 2011 was in Public Administration at a full 35%, followed by Construction (10.8%), Retail trade (7.3%), Food and Accommodations (6.7%) and Health and Social Services (6.2%); meaning that the mining sector placed sixth in the list of industry sector employers in Aboriginal Yukon.

³ See: Source: Laporte and Lu (2013), Table 1; Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table: 282-0055 and G.F. Finnegan and Jacobs, John (2015) "Canadian interprovincial employees in the Canadian Arctic: a case study in fly-in/fly-out employment metrics, 2004–2009," *Polar Geography*, DOI: [10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795](https://doi.org/10.1080/1088937X.2015.1034795)

In Yukon we can also acquire data on Aboriginal employment by labour force sector from the Labour Force Survey with Aboriginal breakouts. Here we find that the goods-producing sector, within which we would find mining, oil and gas as well as forestry and agriculture and manufacturing, provides us with an Aboriginal labour force of between 300 and 600 workers in the period 2004 to 2014. In 2004, goods producing workers accounted for 12.5% of the Aboriginal labour force or 300 workers, this rose to 22.2% of the labour force in 2008 just when the recession hit

beginning a long decline to just 10% of the labour force in 2014. For a period between 2004 and 2008 it appeared that Aboriginal workers were making inroads into the goods producing sector, however as the



mining sector was hit by lower commodity prices and the drop in demand for many of Yukon's key minerals which had just started to come to market the jobs were lost. By 2014, 300 Aboriginal workers were once again employed in the Goods Producing sector, the same as in 2004. The Yukon's frontier Boom and Bust mining economy is clearly illustrated in this scenario with 300 jobs gained and lost within the decade.

- 9) Self-employed workers represented 11.7% of all Yukon workers in 2011 with the break being 220 self-employed Aboriginal workers compared to 2,220 non-Aboriginal workers, or 5.8% of the Aboriginal labour force compared to 14.3% of the non-Aboriginal labour force. This suggests that there are considerable barriers to self-employment facing Aboriginal entrepreneurs that are keeping them from starting their own businesses. The Labour Force Survey also captures self-employment and again it suggests that this is actually a declining opportunity for Aboriginal workers. The LFS in Yukon has a small sample size, as such we have used a two-year moving average to better estimate and track the self-employment trends in then following graphic. The "zero" registered in 2010 is likely a sampling issue with the survey. Regardless of how we play with the data the trend is negatively inclined; self-employed Aboriginal workers in the Yukon are actually on the decline dropping by 50% from some 400 workers to 200 over this period.

10) The incomes of Aboriginal people in the Yukon are lower than provincial levels based on median income levels while the Aboriginal community had a slightly higher dependency on government transfers. The Aboriginal




median income in 2000 stood at \$16,223 compared to the Territorial median income for all people of \$21,680; a difference of \$5,457 or about 25% lower. By 2005 the Aboriginal median income had risen to \$20,690 or by 27.5%, however the Territorial median income had risen by 44.6% to \$31,352; meaning that the gap between Aboriginal incomes and the Territorial median income was widening. We find little improvement in this situation through to 2010 when median income for Aboriginal Yukon stood \$25,133, an increase of 21.5% over 2005 compared to the Territorial of median income of \$40,391 which had risen by 28.8% since 2005. This means that the difference between the two median incomes had increased since 2000 from about 25% to 38% in 2010.⁴

Aboriginal communities are generally far more dependent upon government transfers than non-Aboriginal communities as a whole with the percentage of income in 2011 that was derived from government sources standing at 17.8% compared to the Territorial average of only 9.2% (we cannot calculate the Non-Aboriginal levels given that the NHS uses percentages in reporting). In contrast, Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan had a government dependency rate of 29%.

The percentage of Aboriginal Yukoners (15 and over) who lacked an income in 2010 was only 280 individuals or 4.9% this compares favourably with Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan where the corresponding figure was 12.1% of potential income earners and is not far off the rate for the Yukon's non-Aboriginal population that stood at 3.4% of the population with no income.

We can also look at the distribution of incomes from Aboriginal Yukon compared to the Non-Aboriginal Yukon as well as to Aboriginal Northern Saskatchewan for comparison. In 2010, 38.2% of Aboriginal Yukon individuals earned less than \$20,000 which compares favourably to

⁴ The Census reports income from the previous taxation year, so the 2001 census reports 2000 income levels.



the 56% level in Northern Saskatchewan among Aboriginal income earners but is substantially worse than the 22% level for low incomes that occurs in non-Aboriginal Yukon.



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