

# people partnerships possibilities



NWT Labour Force Development Framework

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Much has happened over the past four years. Although the Northwest Territories (NWT) labour market conditions remained fairly strong during the global economic recession, there were a number of challenges in ensuring opportunities were available and progress continued for all communities and individuals throughout the North.

The 16th Legislative Assembly of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) made significant investments in skills training and employment development to ensure that northern residents are able to meet the demand of northern employers. Funding was made available to enhance the NWT Literacy Strategy, especially in the areas of youth and labour market literacy. Apprenticeship programs were strengthened through funding to Aurora College and also supports to women and Aboriginal people to enter and successfully complete trades programs. New programming and supports were made available through Aurora College especially in the areas of community-based teacher education, labour market and industrial training, and student wellness. The GNWT established new programming in the area of immigration to support employers in nominating foreign workers to meet specific skill gaps. And finally a focus was put on targeted supports for community and economic development in our rural and remote communities.

The Government of the Northwest Territories is not the only player in developing the Northern labour force. No one level of government is solely responsible for training, development and employment supports. As land claims are settled and self government agreements implemented, Aboriginal governments are taking on greater responsibility. The federal government has also implemented new programs and initiatives towards the development of the Northwest Territories labour market. Industry, employers, education systems, training providers and communities all have a role to play - we all must work together.

The *NWT Labour Force Development Framework – People, Partnerships, Possibilities* is the result of Northern partners coming together to find common ground in ensuring that our people and our economy are strong now and in the future. It shows commitment in working together to achieve our goals. The Framework is a tool for working together towards improved labour market outcomes. All levels of government must continue to invest in and support this Framework so we can achieve the shared vision that we have set out. Together we can build a productive future for our people, our communities and our economy.

The Honourable Jackson Lafferty  
Minister of Education, Culture and Employment

## Introduction

The *NWT Labour Force Development Framework – People, Partnerships, Possibilities* is for all labour market stakeholders in the Northwest Territories. It was developed through open dialogue and is a tool for working together to ensure improved labour market outcomes for NWT residents.

The Framework is for business, industry, all levels of government, non-government organizations, educators, trainers, employees, the unemployed, and the under-represented in the workforce. It is built on a shared vision, guiding principles and agreed upon strategic priorities and goals. It is a guide for

decision-making, investment and making the best use of available resources.

The Framework sets a path for ongoing partnership engagement and collaboration aimed at creating an environment for individual success and sustainable labour force growth and development. Working in partnership, we can create possibilities to ensure that the people of the NWT are supported and able to achieve their full potential.

## Background

The Northwest Territories is a land of plenty – vast geography, abundant natural resources, rich culture, strong people, a variety of economic sectors and a diverse range of employment opportunities. But there is also room to grow. There are still many employers struggling to find workers with the right skill sets, and there are many NWT residents that cannot find sustainable employment to support themselves and their families.

While there have been improvements in the education and employment levels of the people of the Northwest Territories over the past ten years, there are still many challenges that need to be addressed. Low education levels in the NWT continue to be a challenge for underrepresented groups. Many people in smaller remote communities do not want to move away for work and there are not as many opportunities for long-term, full-time employment where they live. Many of the

opportunities for long-term work remain in the larger regional communities or Yellowknife. As well, the NWT continues to experience a decline in population despite strong economic growth.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), in partnership with many stakeholders, is responsible for labour force development in the Northwest Territories. In order to coordinate and work with various partners, make best use of multiple funding sources and achieve maximum results, it was determined that a Labour Force Development Framework for the NWT was needed.

Between September 2009 and October 2010, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment worked with labour force stakeholders across the Northwest Territories to define a shared vision and articulate common priorities and goals. The result



is the *NWT Labour Force Development Framework – People, Partnerships, Possibilities*. The purpose of this Framework is to provide a lens for all labour market stakeholders, strategies, and plans to work together and focus efforts to coordinate limited capacity and resources.

The Framework recognizes that there are multiple players, various funding sources, changing governance structures, and other strategies and initiatives that support labour force development. The Framework outlines a process for ongoing partnership and planning that works toward common

goals and objectives over the short and long-term. As well, the Framework will build monitoring and reporting structures in order for partners to measure success and respond collectively to emerging labour market trends and key labour force challenges throughout the NWT.

ECE will play a coordinating role to ensure that we stay on track. The strategic priorities and goals will guide labour force initiatives to ensure that the NWT is well-placed to respond to economic opportunities through 2020 and beyond.

## Vision

Labour force stakeholders in the Northwest Territories have defined the following vision:

***“A healthy, educated, multi-skilled, safe and innovative workforce that guides the labour market and reflects our diverse cultures.”***

If we achieve this vision we will see:

- ▶ A labour force that is representative of our people and our cultures
- ▶ More Northerners participating in all areas of the labour market, including management and leadership
- ▶ A labour market that balances social responsibility with economic development
- ▶ Communities that drive the labour market rather than just respond to it

## Guiding Principles

The following principles will be used to guide decisions, actions and investments in achieving the shared vision for labour force development in the NWT:

### Access and Opportunity

All people have access to participate in education, training and work opportunities in all NWT communities.

### Innovation and Flexibility

The training system and supports are flexible in responding to changing and emerging needs, pressures and evolving client and stakeholder requirements.

### Focus on Youth

Labour market programs prepare youth to participate fully and achieve individual potential.

### Cultural Relevance

Language and culture are valued and serve as the foundation for the development and delivery of programs and services.

### Health, Safety and Life Work Balance

People need supports to achieve and maintain wellness in order to participate actively in their communities and the labour market.

### Partnership and Collaboration

The NWT labour market system is supported by multiple stakeholders and strong partnerships will support common objectives.

### Shared Responsibility and Accountability

Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that Northerners have the skills and knowledge to participate in society. All partners are responsible for the development of joint outcomes and the timely sharing of information, communication and public reporting.



## Strategic Priorities And Goals

The Framework highlights five strategic priorities for stakeholders to focus efforts in order to achieve results. The strategic priorities are the broad constructs of building a strong, adaptable, diversified and sustainable workforce over the next ten years. Certain goals have been articulated within each priority area. The priorities and goals begin to frame out how all stakeholders can work together to develop actions in a collaborative and coordinated manner.

It is recognized that there are a number of existing and complimentary strategies and initiatives that will support the implementation and success of this Framework. These are listed in Appendix B. Wherever possible, partners will build off these to implement the Framework. If gaps are identified, stakeholders will need to come together to create new strategies and initiatives to support the Framework.

### Labour Market Information

Labour market information is key to labour force development. All stakeholders – job seekers, students, employers, communities, parents, training and education partners, employment counsellors, policy makers – need reliable information in order to make decisions.

Labour market partners in the NWT will work together to:

- ▶ Conduct timely community, business and sector needs assessments
- ▶ Share information among organizations and publicly
- ▶ Develop and distribute plain language resources that help individuals and communities make informed decisions

### Workforce Readiness

While it is the role of the education system (K-12 and public college) to prepare individuals for the work force, other supports are also needed for those that have been out of the education system. There is also a need for schools, postsecondary institutions, employers and trainers to work together towards solutions.

Labour market partners in the NWT will work together to:

- ▶ Improve literacy and essential skills programs
- ▶ Prepare youth for their futures through career development and work experience opportunities
- ▶ Deliver innovative and flexible labour market initiatives that link training to employment

### Recruitment

We need to do a better job of recruiting workers both from within the Northwest Territories and from outside. We need to find a way to get our postsecondary students to return to the North to take up jobs.

Labour market partners in the NWT will work together to:

- ▶ Promote and market territorial opportunities to all NWT communities
- ▶ Develop succession, repatriation and immigration initiatives to help grow the NWT labour market
- ▶ Target recruitment and support for underrepresented segments of the labour market

### Retention

While NWT residents may be able to find jobs, many have difficulty in maintaining ongoing employment for a number of reasons. Training and employment must be supported by health, wellness, mentorship and orientation initiatives. We must explore innovative practices to support employers and workplace programs.

Labour market partners in the NWT will work together to:

- ▶ Promote workplace best practices and ongoing professional development to support retention of employees
- ▶ Address northern settlement and integration barriers
- ▶ Promote life-work balance and active community living

### Workforce Excellence

Northern people want more than just entry level jobs. We must find a way to develop our employed workers. We must continue to support NWT businesses and employers in providing safe, innovative and stimulating workplaces where Northerners can be leaders both at home and in the global market.

Labour market partners in the NWT will work together to:

- ▶ Develop and implement employment, occupational and safety training standards to meet industry needs
- ▶ Enhance research, post-secondary and speciality training
- ▶ Work with employers on succession and developmental planning

		Priorities				
		LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION	WORKFORCE READINESS	RECRUITMENT	RETENTION	WORKFORCE EXCELLENCE
Goals	Conduct timely community, business and sector needs assessments	Improve literacy and essential skills programs	Promote and market territorial opportunities to all NWT communities	Promote workplace best practices and ongoing professional development	Develop and implement employment, occupational and safety training standards	
	Share information among organizations and publicly	Prepare youth for their futures through career development and work experience	Develop succession, repatriation and immigration initiatives to grow the NWT labour market	Address northern settlement and integration barriers	Enhance research, post-secondary and specialty training	
	Develop and distribute plain language resources	Deliver innovative and flexible initiatives that link training to employment	Target recruitment and support for underrepresented segments	Promote life-work balance and active community living	Work with employers on succession and developmental planning	



## IMPLEMENTATION

### Regional Training Committees

ECE, through its regional Service Centres, will coordinate regional training committees. Each region will develop annual or multi-year plans in collaboration with its partners to support the Framework's strategic priorities and goals. Plans will be based on identified local community and industry needs. Regional training committees will foster clear communication and identify ways to make the best use of resources.

The regional committees create a mechanism for regional coordination of program delivery, development of local partnerships and networks, and strengthen linkages among stakeholders to ensure a continuum of skill development. Each regional committee will closely align its plans to support the interests of Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) partners.

Regional Training Partners may include:

- ▶ GNWT Departments
- ▶ Aurora College
- ▶ Aboriginal Governments and Organizations
- ▶ Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy Partners
- ▶ Local Employers
- ▶ Non-Government Organizations
- ▶ Federal Government Departments
- ▶ Business Development Corporations
- ▶ Divisional Education Councils

### Territorial Coordination

While Regional Training Committees will be the key players in implementing the Framework by delivering labour market programs and supports, there will be a need for territorial coordination and collaboration. The Department will work with territorial labour market partners and stakeholders to coordinate efforts and to champion the *NWT Labour Force Development Framework*. This could involve the development of a territorial coordinating body. It may also mean the development of cross-sectoral or territorial task teams to address specific priorities and goals of the Framework.

As part of the implementation process, the Department will consult with key partners to determine the best method for territory-wide coordination of the Framework.

Territorial Labour Force Stakeholders may include:

- ▶ GNWT Departments
- ▶ Federal Government Departments
- ▶ Aboriginal Governments and Organizations
- ▶ Aurora College and Other Training Providers
- ▶ NWT Associations and Professional Regulatory Authorities
- ▶ Business, Industry and Sector Representatives

### Labour Force Development Symposium

In partnership, the Department will undertake to facilitate an annual NWT Labour Force Development Symposium over the lifespan of the Framework as a mechanism to bring together stakeholders, share labour market information, promote new programs, services or initiatives, provide information on best practices, and report on results.

The first symposium will be used to launch the Framework, identify key priorities, goals and objectives for action, and to foster a culture of partnership and collaboration. In future years, the symposium will also function as a forum to spearhead regional labour force development planning for the upcoming fiscal year.

The territorial partners and regional training committees will have direct input into each symposium.

### Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

To ensure the continued alignment of labour force priorities, goals and objectives, and accountability of strategic initiatives, it will be important to build structures of monitoring and reporting to track and measure success, hold partners accountable to action, and respond to emerging labour market trends and key labour force challenges in the NWT.

The Department will work with the territorial partners and the regional training committees to develop reporting and accountability mechanisms for strategies and activities that support the Framework.

This will include the identification and collection of relevant data on the results of training delivered through partnerships, and regular analysis information collected to assess the success of adult and post-secondary education and training in the NWT.

Strategic outcomes and performance measures will be established as part of the implementation processes.

## WORKING TOGETHER

*NWT Labour Force Development Framework—People, Partnerships, Possibilities* is the beginning. It is a roadmap towards improved labour market outcomes. Stakeholders in the NWT came together to articulate a common vision, guiding principles and strategic priorities. Now we must come together to achieve results.

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment will take a lead role in coordinating and communicating the Framework. ECE will align its current investments in training and labour force

development with the strategic priorities and goals of the Framework. ECE will also work with partners to monitor and report publicly on results.

The Framework's success relies on the contributions and commitment by all partners to implement actions towards the shared vision, guiding principles, priorities and goals. Together we can achieve our vision of a strong and sustainable labour force that reflects our diverse cultures and responds to the ever changing labour market needs in the Northwest Territories.



## APPENDIX A – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

From September 2009 to October 2010, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment engaged in discussions with labour force stakeholders across the Northwest Territories in the development and validation of this Framework.

### Sessions were held in the following locations:

- ▶ Deton Cho Training and Conference Centre (September 15, 2009)
- ▶ Explorer Hotel, Yellowknife (June 9-10, 2010)
- ▶ Sahtu Regional Training Committee Meeting, Norman Wells (August 17, 2010)
- ▶ South Slave Regional Training Committee Meeting, Hay River (September 1, 2010)
- ▶ NWT Stakeholder Session, Yellowknife (September 28, 2010)
- ▶ North Slave Regional Training Committee Meeting, Yellowknife (October 5, 2010)
- ▶ Deh Cho Regional Training Committee Meeting, Fort Simpson (October 6, 2010)
- ▶ Beaufort-Delta Regional Training Committee Meeting, Inuvik (October 8, 2010)
- ▶ Written submissions and online feedback (August-October 2010)

### The following organizations participated in one or more of the above noted sessions that contributed to the development of this Framework:

- ▶ Akaitcho Territory Government
- ▶ Aurora College
- ▶ Beaufort-Delta District Education Council
- ▶ BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.
- ▶ Building Inuvialuit Potential Society
- ▶ Canadian Federation of Independent Business (NWT Chapter)
- ▶ Conseil de développement économique des TNO
- ▶ De Beers Canada Inc.
- ▶ Dechinta Centre for Research and Learning
- ▶ Deh Cho First Nation
- ▶ Deh Cho Futures Society
- ▶ Rio Tinto - Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.
- ▶ Government of the Northwest Territories
  - Education, Culture and Employment
  - Health and Social Services
  - Human Resources
  - Industry, Tourism and Investment
  - Municipal and Community Affairs
- ▶ Gwich'in Tribal Council
- ▶ Imperial Oil
- ▶ Inuvialuit Regional Corporation
- ▶ Local Government Administrators of the Northwest Territories
- ▶ Mackenzie Gas Project
- ▶ Native Women's Association of the Northwest Territories
- ▶ North Slave Métis Alliance
- ▶ NWT Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ NWT Federation of Labour
- ▶ NWT Housing Corporation
- ▶ NWT Literacy Council
- ▶ NWT Métis Nation
- ▶ NWT Mine Training Society
- ▶ Registered Nurses Association of the NWT/NU
- ▶ Samuel Hearne Secondary School
- ▶ Service Canada
- ▶ Skills Canada-NWT
- ▶ Status of Women Council of the NWT
- ▶ Tlicho Community Service Agency
- ▶ Tlicho Government
- ▶ Yellowknife Association for Community Living
- ▶ Yellowknife Chamber of Commerce
- ▶ Yellowknives Dene First Nation

## APPENDIX B – SUPPORTING STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

The following are some existing strategies and initiatives that will support the implementation and success of the Framework:

- ▶ Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy
- ▶ Aboriginal Student Achievement Initiative
- ▶ Agreement on Internal Trade, Chapter 7 (Labour Mobility)
- ▶ BHP-GNWT Socio-Economic Agreement
- ▶ Canada-NWT Agreement on Provincial Nominees
- ▶ Canada-NWT Immigration Portal Contribution Agreement
- ▶ Canada-NWT Labour Market Agreement
- ▶ Canada-NWT Labour Market Development Agreement
- ▶ Canada-NWT Targeted Initiative for Older Workers Agreement
- ▶ Canada's Northern Strategy
- ▶ Come Make Your Mark in the NWT
- ▶ De Beers Socio-Economic Agreement
- ▶ Diavik Diamond Mines - GNWT Socio-Economic Monitoring Agreement
- ▶ Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development
- ▶ Mackenzie Gas Project Socio-Economic Agreement
- ▶ MOU on Northern Mining Workforce
- ▶ Northwest Territories Aboriginal Languages Plan, A Shared Responsibility (October 2010)
- ▶ Pan-Canadian Framework on Foreign Credential and Qualification Recognition (2010)
- ▶ Strategy for Teacher Education in the Northwest Territories: 2007-2015
- ▶ Tourism 2015
- ▶ Towards Literacy: A Strategy Framework – 2008-2018

Photos from GNWT files unless noted. **Cover:** Middle banner – Rory Voudrach, Aurora College Bottom banner – Sunset, Kristin Prendergast, GNWT **Page one:** Welcome, Deb Bain, GNWT **Page four:** Aerial – Deb Bain, GNWT **Back page:** Sunset, Kristin Prendergast, GNWT



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