

## **2009-2010 Annual Plan**

### **Canada/NWT Labour Market Agreement**

#### **Introduction**

This annual plan is intended to guide activities of NWT's Labour Market Agreement for the 2009-2010 fiscal year. A number of potential activities have been identified for the year. However, depending on the priorities of the current labour market, projects may change.

#### **Environmental Scan**

The Northwest Territories (NWT) covers an area of approximately 1,170,000 KM (about the size of Alberta and Saskatchewan combined).

Of the 33 NWT communities, only the four largest, Inuvik, Hay River, Fort Smith and Yellowknife, have populations exceeding 2,000. Yellowknife, the capital and home to 19,155 people as of July 1, 2007, serves as the primary government and administrative centre. The NWT population of 42,637 makes up approximately half Aboriginal and half non-Aboriginal people. A large portion of Aboriginal people reside in the remote, off road communities. The NWT continues to experience a decline in population despite strong economic growth. Over the past year, the population of the NWT declined by 1.1%.

According to the NWT Labour Force Survey conducted by Statistics Canada, February 2009 report, some 21,500 persons were employed of the 31,400 residents aged 15 years of age or older, representing an overall NWT employment rate of 68.5%. This is a decrease from April 2008 when the NWT employment rate was 70.1%, and a further decrease from the previous year, April 2007, when the rate was 73.6%.

The NWT will continue to see a decline in the employment rate as various sectors have been affected by the downturn in the global economy. Of the three mines in the NWT, all have reduced the number of people employed or the length of work to address the economic downturn. Currently, there is also uncertainty of industrial development in the oil and gas sector. However, the NWT continues to plan and prepare for the Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline in hopes that it will be approved and provide further employment opportunities for NWT residents.

Despite decreases in the NWT employment rate and population, the NWT labour market conditions remain fairly strong. There are a number of large projects scheduled over the next few years that will continue to demand skilled workers, such as the Deh Cho Bridge, NWT Affordable Housing Initiative, upgrades to local schools, etc. However, there continues to be barriers to employment for many NWT residents due to a number of factors. Low education levels in the NWT continue to be a challenge for underrepresented groups. Many people in smaller remote communities don't 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.

Similar to the rest of Canada, the NWT continues to face critical occupational shortages in the areas of health professions, engineers and pilots, hospitality and service industry, and trades (mining, oil and gas).

### **Targeted Priority Clients**

In 2009-2010, the NWT will be accessing the Strategic Training and Transition Fund through its Labour Market Agreement. The focus will be on non-EI eligible clients. For the first year of this Agreement, the NWT will provide programs and services for all underrepresented groups and may redefine these based on identified need in coming years:

- Aboriginals
- Income Security Clients
- Low-skilled/Low literacy
- Youth (19-29)
- People in small remote communities
- Low-skilled employed
- Persons with Disabilities
- Females
- Immigrants

### **Programming Priorities and Objectives**

The Department of Education, Culture and Employment's (ECE) vision is 'Northern people leading fulfilled lives and contributing to a strong and prosperous society'. ECE has the mandate to ensure NWT residents have access to high quality programs and services in early childhood, education, training and employment, labour market, certification and financial supports. In keeping with priorities of Northern leaders and elders, an appreciation of the eleven official languages, culture and heritage of Northern peoples forms the foundation for our programs and services.

As part of the many programs and services, ECE delivers employment benefits under the NWT Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) to assist Employment Insurance (EI) eligible clients to gain work experience, start new businesses, and develop their job skills. Therefore, the NWT Labour Market Agreement (LMA) will focus on delivering programs and services to Non-Employment Insurance clients and LMDA eligible clients will not be eligible to receive LMA programming. LMA projects will also focus on building strong partnerships and will reflect the importance of language, culture and heritage of the NWT.

Each region of the NWT has varying needs and reflects different cultures and languages. A number of program options will be available and each region will determine what programming to deliver based on specific regional and community needs. The program options can be one or a combination of the following various programs:

## Regional Programming Priorities

### *Skills Development*

The NWT will support eligible clients to develop essential employability skills, participate in training programs at accredited institutions, and upgrade their skills and knowledge to the demands of an ever changing labour market. Supports to individuals may include: course and tuition costs, books, travel and living allowances, special equipment and supports, childcare, license or certificate fees, and client assessment. Eligible skill development programs include but are not limited to: Building Essential Skills, Ready to Work North, Adult Literacy and Basic Education, Pre-employment, Community Skills for Work.

### *Self Employment*

The NWT will support eligible clients in pursuing self employment as a career choice and in starting their own business. Supports to individuals may include: travel and living allowances, course costs, childcare, and special equipment and supports. The NWT will also pay for business mentoring expenses by a qualified business expert.

### *Work Experience*

The NWT will engage employers in developing a productive workforce and providing work and learning opportunities for eligible clients. Training on the job and work experience projects will support youth, unemployed and underemployed in entering or transitioning in the labour market. Supports to employers may include: wage subsidies, course costs, special equipment and supports, job coaching and mentoring.

### *Community Initiatives*

Working with partners, the NWT will be able to support community and regionally focussed activities aimed at engaging underrepresented groups in the labour market. Examples of community initiatives include: course purchase of training programs, supporting workplace education programs, community projects such as Construction Boot Camp and Trades Awareness programs and labour market partnerships to identify, develop and implement labour force adjustment and human resource strategies to improve capacity.

It also includes and employment assistance services such as job coaching, counselling, labour market information

## Building Capacity

The NWT will also focus on building capacity through targeted projects that support territorial wide programming. This may include research and curriculum development. During the 2009-2010, ECE will focus on a promotional campaign highlighting the importance of education and work, specifically targeted to income assistance clients and youth.

## **Forecast of Program Expenditures**

The NWT has re-allocated its 2009-2010 LMA funding to future years and will be expending solely Strategic Training and Transition Fund resources as follows:

Regional Programming Priorities	1,100
<i>Skills Development</i>	200
<i>Self Employment</i>	50
<i>Work Experience</i>	300
<i>Community Initiatives</i>	550
Building Capacity	220
Administration	147
TOTAL	1,467

## **Consultations**

The ADM, Advanced Education and Careers meets on a monthly basis with all Regional Superintendents of the Beaufort-Delta, Sahtu, Deh Cho, North Slave and South Slave Regions and the Directors of Income Security and College and Career Development. During the branch meetings, plans for advanced education and careers are discussed and developed. The Regional Superintendents meet with regional representatives on a regular basis to determine regional priorities. Many regions have regional training committees or partnerships made up of GNWT – both elementary/secondary and advanced education representatives, Aurora College, Aboriginal Governments, community organizations and other stakeholders involved in education and training that meet on a regular basis to discuss regional priorities.

As this is a new agreement, ECE will continue to consult with organizations throughout the NWT and also spend time promoting the new programs.

## **Expected Results**

The NWT has identified the following outcomes as a result of this Labour Market Agreement:

- Higher participation in the NWT labour market by underrepresented groups
- More local residents filling longer term jobs in communities
- Increased community partnerships in training and employment
- Increase in number of employed NWT residents overall
- Decreased number of income assistance clients
- Increased opportunities for NWT residents to participate in education and training, specifically for non-EI clients
- More parents encouraging and motivating children to stay in school

Specifically in 2009-2010, the NWT sets out the following targets for its LMA expenditures

- 40 unemployed clients through individual and employer supports
- 150 eligible clients served through 15 community initiatives
- 40% of clients will have less than high school at the beginning of the intervention
- 50% of clients will be Aboriginal
- Locally designed programs to address specific barriers and gaps to employability identified by regional partners