



Government of the Northwest Territories Disability Action Plan 2018/19-2021/22

Final Report
October 2023

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English

Si vous voulez ces informations dans une autre langue officielle, contactez-nous.

French

Kīspin ki nitawih̄tīn ē nīh̄yawih̄k ōma ācimōwin, tipwāsinān.

Cree

Tłıchq̄ yatı k'èè. Dı wegodi newq̄ dè, gots'ō gonede.

Tłıchq̄

ʔerih̄t'is Dēne Sų́nė yatı t'a huts'elkēr xa beyáyatı theᓯᓯ ᓯat'e, nuwe ts'ēn yóttı.

Chipewyan

Edı gondı dehgáh got'je zhatıé k'éé edat'éh enahddhę nıde naxets'é edahıı.

South Slavey

K'áhshó got'jne xədə k'é hederı ʔedjht'é yerıııwę nıde dúle.

North Slavey

Jii gwandak izhii ginjık vat'atr'ijáhch'uu zhit yınohthan jı', diıts'at ginohkhii.

Gwich'in

Uvanittuaq ilitchurisukupku Inuvialuktun, ququaqłuta.

Inuvialuktun

Ć^bđ< ǀǀ^{sb}Δ^c ǀǀLJΔ^{rc} Δ^{sb}ǀǀǀǀ^cǀǀǀǀ^b, ǀǀ^cǀǀ^aǀǀ^c ǀǀ^bǀǀ^aǀǀ^{sb}ǀǀ^c.

Inuktitut

Hapkuatıtiqqat pijumagupkit Inuinnaqtun, uvaptinnut hivajarłutit.

Inuinnaqtun

Indigenous Languages:

1-855-846-9601

French:

867-767-9348

866-561-1664 Toll Free

Introduction

The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) is committed to ensuring effective supports and programs are available for persons with disabilities and strives to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities across the lifespan.

In 2018, the GNWT released the *GNWT Disability Action Plan 2018-2022* (Action Plan) which outlines the improvements and development of programs and services the GNWT would advance to better support persons with disabilities. The Action Plan was in response to gaps and barriers identified through engagement with persons with disabilities, Non-government organizations (NGOs) in the disability sector, and other stakeholders. These stakeholders provided valuable input as to what is needed to support persons with disabilities and their families. The Action Plan was built on the priorities established within the *NWT Disability Strategic Framework 2017-2027* (Framework). The Framework is designed to guide multi-departmental planning and initiatives that advance equity, accessibility, inclusion, and participation for persons with disabilities in the NWT.

The Action Plan was developed through collaboration with multiple GNWT Departments and NGOs that include:

- Department of Health and Social Services (HSS);
- Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE);
- Department of Finance (FIN);
- Department of Infrastructure (INF);
- Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA);
- Housing NWT; and the
- NGO Reference panel consisting of:
 - NWT Disabilities Council;
 - NWT Seniors Society;
 - Yellowknife Association for Community Living;
 - Hay River Committee Persons with Disabilities;
 - Canadian National Institute for the Blind; and
 - Foster Family Coalition NWT.

The Action Plan included five priority objectives that were guided by the Framework's four interconnected goals: *Person And Family Centered, Inclusion and Accessibility, Awareness, Education, and Training, and Coordination, Evaluation, and Reporting*. The Action Plan priority objectives were:

- Objective 1: Increase income security and reduce poverty
- Objective 2: Build awareness and knowledge through training and education
- Objective 3: Improve transition planning and options
- Objective 4: Encourage universal design and living options
- Objective 5: Improve access and quality of caregiver supports

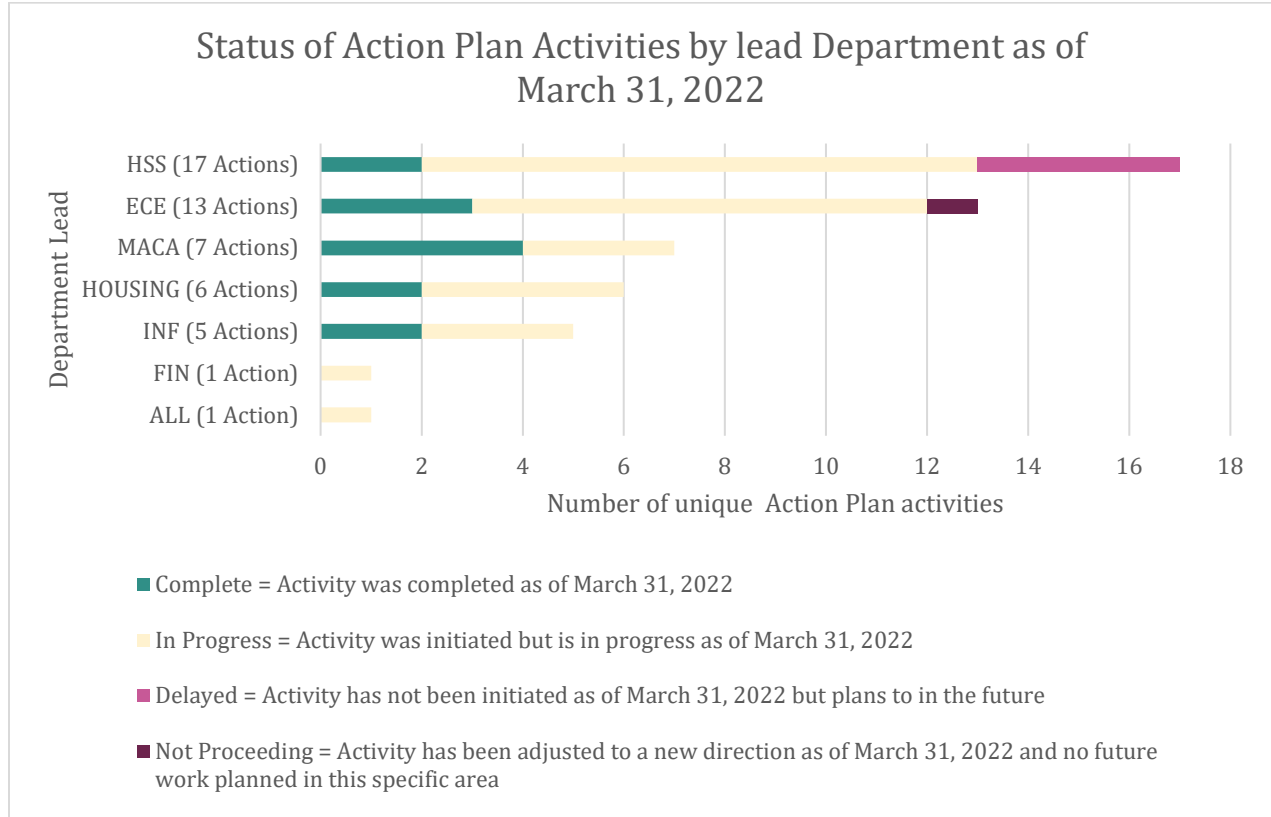
Under each of these objectives, 50 unique activities were identified, and lead GNWT Departments outlined outputs and outcomes to be achieved over the Action Plan’s five-year timeline. The Action Plan came to an official end on March 31, 2022. This final report provides an overview of the key accomplishments under the Action Plan and identifies work that continues beyond the life of the Action Plan.

Action Plan Status

At the end of the Action Plan on March 31, 2022 there were 13 (26%) unique activities completed, 32 (64%) unique activities that were in progress, four (8%) activities were delayed (have not been initiated but plans to in the future) and one (2%) activity is not proceeding. A breakdown of the unique activities under each GNWT Department and the status of each activity as of March 31, 2022 are visualized in **Figure 1: Status of Action Plan activities by lead Department as of March 31, 2022**. The legend used to determine the status of the activities is:

- **Complete** = Activity was completed as of March 31, 2022
- **In progress** = Activity was initiated but is in progress as of March 31, 2022
- **Delayed** = Activity has not been initiated as of March 31, 2022 but plans to in the future
- **Not proceeding** = Activity has been adjusted to a new direction as of March 31, 2022 and no future work planned in this specific area

Figure 1: Status of Action Plan activities by lead Department as of March 31, 2022



Additional details on the status of each activity as of March 31, 2022 are summarized in **Table 1: Detailed status of Action Plan activities as of March 31, 2022.**

Table 1: Detailed status of Action Plan activities as of March 31, 2022

OBJECTIVE 1. Increase income security and reduce poverty			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Income Assistance			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a streamlined service delivery model that will improve access to Income assistance in the NWT, including timelines and resources required. (2020/2021) 	IN PROGRESS	ECE is currently reviewing the Income Assistance (IA) programs to improve access and streamline the process. Engagement with key stakeholders was completed in March 2022. Feedback received through the engagement will be summarized in a <i>What We Heard Report</i> and will inform the changes to the new IA program for seniors and persons with disabilities. Implementation of a new IA program for Seniors and Persons Living with Disabilities is planned for 2023-24.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a streamlined service delivery model. (2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	
Increased Access to Federal Benefits			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with HSS, improve access to, and the promotion of all disability-specific federal financial benefits, including the Registered Disabilities Savings Plan (RDSP) and Disability Tax Credit (DTC). (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>ECE and HSS participate in a Federal working group with other provinces and territories, specific to federal disability benefits, to ensure the benefits are accessible for NWT residents and that NWT benefits and Federal benefits do not eliminate each other.</p> <p>Information on federal disability benefits is included in the plain language Income Assistance handbook, available online at https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/sites/ece/files/resources/income_assistance_handbook_-_aug_2019.pdf and at ECE's Regional Service Centres.</p>

OBJECTIVE 1. Increase income security and reduce poverty			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Disability Health Benefits Program			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of supplementary health benefits programs. (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>A decision paper on supplementary health benefits programs for persons with disabilities was completed that included a jurisdictional scan, current state in NWT, and program recommendations including options and costing was submitted to senior officials.</p> <p>This paper was considered in the larger work of reviewing all GNWT supplementary health benefits programs with the intent to reduce the financial barrier to access products and services that support health and well-being for NWT residents.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop/propose a supplementary health benefit program for persons with disabilities, including: prescription drugs, medical supplies and equipment, dental care and vision care. (2020/2021) 	IN PROGRESS	
Private Market Rental Support			
HOUSING NWT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a rent supplement program that supports persons with disabilities to rent in the private market at an affordable rate. (2018/2019) 	COMPLETE	<p>The Canada NWT Housing Benefit program was introduced in April 2021 and continues to provide assistance to 150 active clients.</p> <p>The Canada NWT Housing Benefit Program is intended to assist low to moderate income families, including persons with disabilities, living in private market rental housing who are currently paying more than 30% of their gross income towards shelter costs. Eligible clients can receive up to \$800 per month to subsidize the monthly rent payment.</p>

OBJECTIVE 1. Increase income security and reduce poverty			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Renovation and Repair			
HOUSING NWT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review, evaluate and develop options to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities and their care givers in qualifying for renovation and repair programs. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	Housing NWT will complete a review of all programs as part of its strategic renewal. This review did include the Mobility Modifications Program and the Home Repair Program. Out of that review, a number of steps are being taken to streamline and simplify the application process which includes one application form for all programs, a fixed application timeline, and adjustments to program budget limits. Upcoming additional working will include a review of the income thresholds to access programs. Although these changes are not just for clients, all of the changes are such that they will benefit the clients for these programs.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise the renovation and repair programs. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop approaches for seasonal promotion and marketing of repair and renovation programs for persons with disabilities. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	As part of the Renewal Strategy, Housing NWT is increasing program awareness by advertising all home repair programs in a variety of ways, including online tools, newspaper, and posters in an effort to increase program accessibility.
Homelessness			
HOUSING NWT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop approaches to support persons with disabilities who are homeless. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	A Homelessness Strategy by Housing NWT, Department of Justice, Department of Health and Social Services and Department of Executive and indigenous Affairs is underway. The intent of the strategy is to address supporting those experiencing homelessness from different demographics, including those with disabilities. Due to the intergovernmental nature of the homelessness file, EIA is leading the work on the Homelessness Strategy and a draft document will be tabled on March 30, 2023.

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
	Accessible Materials		
ALL GNWT DEPTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, distribute, and maintain user friendly materials, including paper and web-based, for GNWT programs and services. (2018/2019-2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>The <i>GNWT Programs and Services for Persons with Disabilities Inventory</i> was released in 2018 and an updated second edition was released in 2020. Paper formats available on request to: hsscommunications@gov.nt.ca</p> <p>Housing NWT updated its brand and the website to make programs easier to find. Print material has been sent to all local housing organizations and government service offices promoting the homeowner repairs programs. Housing NWT is developing a tenant handbook and plain language homeownership materials that will be available in 2023-24. Housing NWT is increasing program awareness through online tools in an effort to increase program accessibility.</p> <p>ECE has developed user-friendly guides to provide information to individuals, employers, organizations, and communities on its labour market programs. The guides include a range of information including eligibility criteria, the types of assistance and levels of support they provide, and how to apply. The guides are publicly available on the ECE website. Paper formats are available upon request.</p> <p>ECE has a plain-language Income Assistance Handbook that is available online (www.gov.nt.ca/ISP). A new handbook will be created for the new Income Assistance program for seniors and persons with disabilities when the program is launched in 2023-24.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Employment Framework			
FIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a territorial public service diversity and inclusion framework. (2019/2020-2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>GNWT Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion (GACDI) was established in 2020 and continues to meet quarterly. GACDI provides advice to the Deputy Ministers' Human Resources Committee on improving access for designated employment equity groups in the Public Service by promoting awareness within the public service; working with departments, agencies, and boards to find ways to remove and prevent barriers faced by these groups; and promote, support, and increase the diversity within the GNWT workforce. Role of GACDI and Terms of Reference can be found here: https://www.fin.gov.nt.ca/en/services/diversity-and-inclusion/gnwt-advisory-committee-diversity-and-inclusion</p> <p>A jurisdictional scan on best practices and common themes regarding public service diversity and inclusion was completed to inform the development of a territorial public service diversity and inclusion framework that has an anticipated launch in 2023-24.</p>
Employment Supports			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First introduced in 2015-2016, ECE will continue to provide increased access to the NWT's psychological/vocational adult assessment services related to education and employment (including diagnosis and identification of supports for meaningful employment). (2018/2019-2019/2020) 	COMPLETE	<p>ECE provides adult psychological assessment services related to education and employment with a contract for these services in place until March 31, 2024.</p> <p>Career Development Officers (CDOs) can refer clients for psychological assessments. The Labour Development and Standards division of ECE has a contract with a psychological assessment professional to deliver assessments on a client referral basis. Clients with undiagnosed disabilities can access Labour Market Programs and receive free psychological assessments which assist in adapting training supports and services.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Accessible Learning Environment			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of the GNWT’s capital planning process, accessibility for adult learners with disabilities will be incorporated into the design of new buildings. (2018/2019-ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>To support accessibility of adult learners with disabilities to learning environments, physical accommodation changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Polytechnic University Capital Space Standards and Guidelines have been established which incorporate accessibility/barrier free requirements in the design of future buildings for the Polytechnic. The Polytechnic University Facilities Master Plan that will be released in Sept 2022 will help guide the capital investment in new and existing buildings. Renovation and retrofits of existing school buildings are designed for barrier-free accessibility according to the GNWT’s <i>Good Building Practice for Northern Facilities</i>. Accessibility requirements have been incorporated into the design of the renovation of the Mangilaluk School in Tuktoyaktuk, which is currently in construction. Barrier-free access investments are being made in the Kakisa Lake School, the Louie Norwegian School in Jean Marie River, and the Mezi Community School in Whatì through the Department’s small capital allocation. The Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife and Łutselk’e Dene School underwent barrier-free renovations. Under ECE Labour Market Programs, persons with disabilities can access enhanced supports, such as assistive devices and transportation supports to assist them in their learning. <p>In addition, in 2019, Aurora College received a NSERC grant for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) institutional capacity building that allowed them to develop a 5-year Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Workplan, and support policy development in this area.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For all existing buildings, accessibility will be built into required mid-life retrofits or renovations. (2018/2019-ongoing) <p>This will be done in partnership with MACA, Department of Infrastructure (INF), Aurora College, and Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE) providers.</p>	IN PROGRESS	

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Flexible High School Exit Routes			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and launch the revised NWT High School Pathways and Graduation Requirements with the first grade 9 cohort, including a certificate of school completion and transition plan for students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) due to cognitive disability. (2019/2020) 	NOT PROCEEDING	<p>This action is being fulfilled through the NWT Curriculum Renewal initiative. The work on a revised NWT High School Pathways initiative has been discontinued and is no longer being actioned; instead, ECE will be working over the next number of years on transitioning to the BC curriculum, which will include new graduation requirements.</p> <p>BC curriculum is competency based (rather than outcomes based) and does not have a streamed high school curriculum.</p>
Universal Design for Learning			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aurora College, in partnership with other providers of Adult Literacy and Basic Education (ALBE), hired a contractor to deliver training on the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach. Existing adult educators have been trained. Going forward, all new staff will receive training on the UDL approach. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>The UDL approach will continue to be implemented with training provided to new staff to ensure adult learners with disabilities are provided with equitable access to flexible and customized learning environments. Learners with disabilities may also work with the applicable program manager to put in place accommodations that best support their learning needs beyond UDL.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Transitional Supports in Education			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the specific needs of adult learners with disabilities on an ongoing basis. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS	Aurora College continues to maintain and adhere to its policies that support students with disabilities and barrier free facilities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the lessons and best practices learned from cross-jurisdictional scans to identify programs to support learners with specific needs. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>In 2019, Aurora College received a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) 2-year grant to develop an internal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and process to address obstacles faced by, but not limited to, women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority/racialized groups and members of LGBTQ2+ communities. Since that time, the College has developed and plans to implement a five-year strategic plan to advance EDI principles.</p> <p>An EDI Steering Committee was formed in the Spring of 2022, comprised of members from across the College, to champion and achieve the strategic plan goals by embedding EDI principles into College policies and processes.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the accommodation needs of all learners with disabilities. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS	Aurora College continues to maintain and adhere to its policies that support students with disabilities and barrier free facilities.

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Social Inclusion			
MACA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop recreation planning and support tools for community and NGO programs and services to educate recreation staff on inclusive programming for children and youth living with disabilities. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>Accessibility of sport and recreation programs, including adaptations, will be supported through the Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation (SPAR) Framework. MACA is building on stakeholder engagement in 2018-19, and conducting further engagement in 2022-23 to inform the SPAR Framework, with implementation planned for 2023-24.</p> <p>The SPAR Framework is intended to be a living document to guide the GNWT's support for sport, physical activity, and recreation to reflect GNWT priorities of inclusion and incorporate the spirit and intent of calls for action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
Emergency Planning			
MACA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the NWT Emergency Plan to include guidelines on how to better assist vulnerable populations during an evacuation. (2019/2019 – 2019/2020) 	COMPLETE	NWT Emergency Plan has been reviewed and updated to include guidelines on how to better assist vulnerable populations during an evacuation. The plan is updated on an on-going basis.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Community Emergency Response Plan template, Community Emergency Plan Instruction Manual, and workshop materials to reflect community evacuation guidelines. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>The Territorial Emergency Plan (TEP) includes consideration for vulnerable populations.</p> <p>Updating the Community Emergency Plan template and instruction manual are underway and include guidelines on pre-registering residents ahead of an evacuation to be able to identify and plan for special considerations in assisting vulnerable populations.</p>

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Accessible Design in Community Governments			
MACA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and disseminate materials to support community planning. (2019/2020 – 2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	A webinar was developed to promote how accessibility can be integrated into community planning by-laws. The webinar is titled <i>Planning for Healthy and Accessible Communities</i> and will be delivered through the MACA School of Community Government. Additional efforts are being coordinated through the Community Planning Framework Initiative which will include the development of a series of guides to support the community plan review process, which includes accessibility.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide advice and assistance to community governments in the development of community plans that promote accessibility and healthy lifestyles. (2018/2019 – 2021/2022 and ongoing) 	COMPLETE	Advice and support are provided on community capital planning and infrastructure project implementation, and accessibility is discussed as a part of this standard support to community governments.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the Capital Planning checklist to assist community governments in identifying any public infrastructure in need of a retrofit for accessibility purposes during the annual capital planning process. (2019/2020) 	COMPLETE	The annual Capital Planning checklist that is provided to community governments was updated to aid in identifying accessibility improvements.

OBJECTIVE 2. Build Awareness and Knowledge through Training and Education

LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Accessible Design in Community Governments			
MACA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As financial resources become available, ensure that information is provided to community governments on funding opportunities available to them to finance retrofits for existing infrastructures. (2019/2020 and ongoing) 	COMPLETE	MACA's Community Public Infrastructure Funding may be used to retrofit existing structures for accessibility. MACA regularly keeps community governments informed of new infrastructure programs and additional funding opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3. Improve transition planning and options

LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Education and Career Counselling			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement a model for providing increased educational and career counselling services in J-K to Grade 12 schools. (Beginning phase-in as of 2018/2019) 	COMPLETE	<p>The Career and Education Advising Team created a new Service Delivery Model for use with all NWT students in Grades 9 – 12 following a two-year pilot.</p> <p>8 of the 9 Career and Education Advisor (CEA) positions are filled and the team has been working with Grades 9-12 students in every region in the NWT. With the last CEA position anticipated to be filled in August 2022, every school in the NWT with students in Grades 9-12 will receive equitable service from a CEA.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide increased educational and career counselling to all schools in the NWT (pilot/phased in approach). (2019/2020 and ongoing) 	COMPLETE	

OBJECTIVE 3. Improve transition planning and options			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Transitional Supports in Education			
ECE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the specific needs of adult learners with disabilities on an ongoing basis. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS*	Aurora College continues to maintain and adhere to its policies that support students with disabilities and barrier free facilities.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the lessons and best practices learned from cross-jurisdictional scans to identify programs to support learners with specific needs. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS*	<p>In 2019, Aurora College received a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) 2-year grant to develop an internal Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and process to address obstacles faced by, but not limited to, women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority/racialized groups and members of LGBTQ2+ communities. Since that time, the College has developed and plans to implement a five-year strategic plan to advance EDI principles.</p> <p>An EDI Steering Committee was formed in the Spring of 2022, comprised of members from across the College, to champion and achieve the strategic plan goals by embedding EDI principles into College policies and processes.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the accommodation needs of all learners with disabilities. (ongoing) 	IN PROGRESS*	Aurora College continues to maintain and adhere to its policies that support students with disabilities and barrier free facilities.

**These activities are presented previously in Objective 2 therefore are not included in the total tally of unique activities.*

OBJECTIVE 3. Improve transition planning and options			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
	Improve Transition Processes		
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify gaps in existing HSS programs and services relating to transitions. (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	Preliminary identification of HSS service areas where transitions occur were identified, including the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) where the need was identified for a more streamlined approach to Guardianship application for youth who are transitioning out of the care of Child and Family Services and who are in need of a court appointed guardian to ensure health and personal decision-making support.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to enhance and improve transition processes for youth with disabilities within existing and any emerging HSS programs and services. (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	A jurisdictional scan of youth to adult transition planning best practice models was conducted and a summary report with recommendations was completed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement a transition model to ensure integrated transition from adolescence to adulthood within HSS programs. (2020/2021 – 2021/2022) 	DELAYED	An objective of the NWT Supported Living Review includes exploration into how care and supports are coordinated during the critical transition points of youth to adulthood, and as support needs change over time. The NWT Supported Living Review is underway with a target completion date of September 2022.

OBJECTIVE 4. Encourage universal design and living options			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
	Supported Living Review		
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a comprehensive territorial review of supported living services (SLS) for persons with disabilities. (2018/2019) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>In May 2021, a contractor was hired to conduct a review of Supported Living services within and outside the NWT to identify gaps in service and provide recommendations to establish a person and family-centered, culturally safe Supported Living Model for the NWT.</p> <p>Deliverables completed to date include engagement activities (stakeholder interviews, public survey and public engagement sessions), current state data collection and jurisdictional scan.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define a person and family-centered Supported Living Model in the NWT (2019-2020/ 2020-2021) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>Remaining work includes compiling and validating all results into a final report. Target completion date is September 2022.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize a decision paper with options and costing for consideration by senior officials. (2019/2020-2020/2021) 	DELAYED	<p>Delayed, awaiting the completion of the Supported Living Review that is underway with a target completion date of September 2022.</p>

OBJECTIVE 4. Encourage universal design and living options			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
	Accessible Design for the Built Environment		
INF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standard (B651-12) (R2017) Accessible Design for the Built Environment, along with codes, practices and guidelines from other jurisdictions are constantly being consulted for potential adoption and implementation by the GNWT. Future projects will include enhanced aspects as a result of this comprehensive review. 	COMPLETE	To increase knowledge and understanding of implementing and adopting accessible design standards, the <i>Good Building Practice for Northern Facilities</i> guidelines have been updated to include information about accessibility.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of the design guidelines on: Renovation project (3rd Floor Stuart M. Hodgson renovation). (Project completion will be in fiscal year 2018/2019) 	COMPLETE	A renovation project on the Stuart M. Hodgson building in Yellowknife was completed using new design guidelines that had an increased focus on accessibility.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot implementation of the design guidelines on: New construction of an Air Terminal Building in Inuvik. (Project completion will be in fiscal year 2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	The design of the new Air Terminal Building in Inuvik was completed using the design guidelines which include enhanced accessibility requirements. Construction is scheduled to be completed in 2025.

OBJECTIVE 4. Encourage universal design and living options			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Accessible Design for the Built Environment			
INF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An accessibility toolkit to be developed for general purpose office space design for GNWT buildings. 	IN PROGRESS	An accessibility toolkit for general office space design for GNWT Buildings has been drafted. It will be finalized after the post-occupancy analysis of the Stuart M. Hodgson renovation.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> INF will include a session on universal accessibility design at all future Project Management Conferences. (Bi-annually - Fall 2019) 	IN PROGRESS	In the Fall 2019 Project Management Conference a session on Accessibility was included. Subsequent conferences have been delayed due to the pandemic. The next conference is planned for Fall 2023.
OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Rehabilitation Supports for Children			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce additional rehabilitation resources (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology and audiology) within the Beaufort Delta and Stanton Territorial Hospital rehabilitation teams. (2018/2019 - 2019/2020, ongoing) 	COMPLETE	<p>To support more families of children with complex needs and to increase opportunities for families to learn strategies and skills to support their children, additional rehabilitation resources have been introduced into the Beaufort Delta and Stanton Territorial Hospital Rehabilitation teams.</p> <p>This has included resources specifically dedicated to support children and families with FASD and Autism, an additional Child Development Team coordinator, and additional rehabilitation service providers.</p> <p>HSS and HSSAs are currently working to refine performance indicators for rehabilitation services as a program area. This will provide a baseline to measure the impact of enhancements.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Mental Wellness for Children with Disabilities			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure mental wellness services for children with disabilities in the Child and Youth Mental Wellness Action Plan are relevant and incorporated into the seamless care pathway model. (2018/2019 – 2020/2021) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>To support mental health needs of children with disabilities in program services and policies, initial meetings determined the need for a training program for service providers (e.g. school staff, rehabilitation and mental health service providers) and caregivers to recognize when children with developmental disabilities require mental supports, and training for mental health service providers to ensure assessment and intervention services meet the needs of children and youth who have a developmental disability.</p> <p>An initial literature review and jurisdictional scan have been completed to identify opportunities for in person and online training that would be appropriate in a Northern context.</p> <p>Work will build on the Child and Youth Care Counseling program (CYCC) - an established service in all youth schools, and Stronger Families Institute (SFI) service options - a distance service for families, children and youth experiencing mild to moderate mental health and/or child behavioural conditions.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Housing Support Worker			
HOUSING NWT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot a Housing Support Worker Model to support families in maintaining stable housing by providing training and support in budgeting, maintenance and other activities supporting good tenancy. (2018/2019 – 2019/2020) 	COMPLETE	<p>The Northwest Territories Housing Corporation (NWTHC) initiated the Housing Stability Worker Pilot in Behchokò in Fall 2018.</p> <p>The Housing Stability Worker directly supports tenants by providing training and support in budgeting, maintenance, and other activities supporting good tenancy.</p> <p>This pilot ended in 2020 due to implications from the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently the Tłıchǝ government and Housing NWT are in discussion about continuing the program. Funding is to be determined.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Integrated Service Delivery			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using lessons learned from the Integrated Case Management Pilot, develop a project proposal, including options and processes, to establish an integrated, coordinated approach to service delivery for adults with complex needs who typically experience access barriers. (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>The GNWT is advancing work on Integrated Service Delivery (ISD) across GNWT Departments to better support individuals with complex needs and who access services of multiple Departments. This work will leverage lessons learned by the Department of Justice Integrated Care Management (ICM) program.</p> <p>To support improved access to case management and a coordinated approach to service, the number of Adult Service Worker - Case Managers positions have been increased across the NWT to better support adults with service needs, including adults with disabilities.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In consultation with Health and Social Services Authorities, pilot the integrated, coordinated approach service delivery model in select regions. (2020/2021 – 2021/2022) 	IN PROGRESS	

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Assessment and Diagnostic Services for Adults with Cognitive Disabilities			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the current assessment and diagnostic process for adults with cognitive disabilities. (2018/2019) 	COMPLETE	<p>To improve access for adults with disabilities to assessment and diagnosis services, funding was obtained to initiate an Adult FASD Diagnostic clinic and establish an Adult FASD coordinator in the NWT.</p> <p>The first Adult FASD Diagnostic clinic took place in January 2020. The clinic provides monthly diagnostic clinics and supports up to twelve assessments per year.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize a decision paper with options and costing for consideration by Senior Officials to implement improvements related to assessment and diagnosis for adults with cognitive disabilities. (2018/2019 – 2020/2021) 	IN PROGRESS	<p>Review of the Adult FASD Diagnostic clinic process and the demand for assessment and diagnostic services for adults with cognitive disabilities (unrelated to FASD) within the NWT has been initiated.</p>

OBJECTIVE 5. Improve access and quality of caregiver supports			
LEAD	ACTIVITIES & TIMELINES	STATUS AS OF MARCH 31, 2022	NOTES
Informed Decision-Making			
HSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with Justice, conduct research on best practice models of person and family centered supported and informed decision-making (IDM) options to get a better understanding by providers of IDM options on how to support individuals and family members. (2019/2020) 	IN PROGRESS	To support individuals, families, and service providers in supported decision-making options, research on best practice models in other jurisdictions has been initiated to improve the process of the Office of Public Guardian and to develop a flexible model that reflects the continuum of supported and informed decision making.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop guidelines and tools on supported decision making. (2019/2020 – 2020/2021) 	DELAYED	This work will be initiated following the completion of fulsome research on supported and informed decision making.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training to support service providers on guidelines and tools developed on supporting and informed decision-making. (2020/2021 – 2021/2022) 	DELAYED	

Activities Completed in 2022-2023

The Action Plan ended on March 31, 2022 but progress on activities within the Action Plan continued, with 6 additional activities completed in 2022-2023. Highlights of these activities are outlined below:

Objective 1: Increase income security and reduce poverty

Housing NWT completed three additional activities under this objective in 2022-23:

Renovation and Repair

- *Review, evaluate and develop options to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities and their caregivers in qualifying for renovation and repair programs (2018/2019).*
- *Revise the renovation and repair programs (2018/19).*
- *Develop approaches for seasonal promotion and marketing of repair and renovation programs for persons with disabilities (2018/2019).*

Housing NWT has completed a review of all programs as part of its strategic renewal. As part of the Renewal Strategy, Housing NWT increased program awareness by advertising all home repair programs in a variety of ways, including online tools, newspaper, and posters in an effort to increase program accessibility. Additional work in 2023-24 will include a review of the income thresholds to access programs.

Objective 2: Build awareness and knowledge through education and training

The Department of Finance completed one additional activity under this objective in 2022-23:

Employment Framework

- *Develop and implement a territorial public service diversity and inclusion framework (2019/2020 – 2021/2022).*

The Department of Finance developed the Diversity and Inclusion Framework to help GNWT Departments review current programs, policies, and resources to identify and address any systemic barriers that may prevent employees from reaching their full potential or prevent people from accessing opportunities within the GNWT. The Framework's goals will be integrated into business practices through an implementation plan that will support Departments in recognizing and incorporating diversity and inclusion practices into policies, programs, training, and services. The Diversity and Inclusion Framework, along with other GNWT Diversity and Inclusion initiatives, is intended to further diversify the public service and work toward the full inclusion of all people. The Framework was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 30, 2023.

The Department of Municipal and Community Affairs completed one additional activity under this objective in 2022-23:

Emergency Planning

- *Update the Community Emergency Response Plan template, Community Emergency Plan Instruction Manual, and workshop materials to reflect community evacuation guidelines (2018/2019).*

The Community Emergency Plan template and Instruction Manual were completed in December 2022. This includes guidelines on pre-registering residents ahead of an evacuation to be able to identify and plan for special considerations in assisting vulnerable populations.

Objective 3: Improving transition planning and options

No further activities were complete in 2022-23.

Objective 4: Encourage universal design and living options

The Department of Health and Social Services completed one additional activity under this objective in 2022-23:

Supported Living Review

- *Conduct a comprehensive territorial review of supported living (SL) services for persons with disabilities (2018/2019).*

The Department of Health and Social Services completed a review of Supported Living (SL) services to identify gaps in service, future demand, and best practices to support adults with disabilities. Stakeholders, including SL clients and families, persons with disabilities, Indigenous governments, and service providers were engaged. The NWT Supported Living Review (Review) was finalized in September 2022 and the Department tabled the Review and the Department Response on March 1, 2023. The report highlights the broad range of SL needs of adults with disabilities and the gaps and challenges of current SL services in meeting these needs. The Report makes 33 recommendations to improve SL services to better meet the needs of adults with disabilities in an effort to reduce reliance on out-of-territory SL placement resources. More information can be found here: <https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/supported-living-review-final-report.pdf>.

Objective 5: Improve access and quality of caregiver supports

No further activities were complete in 2022-23.

Conclusion

The Action Plan provided a mechanism for GNWT Departments to advance the Framework's four interconnected goals of: *Person and Family Centered, Inclusion and Accessibility, Awareness, Education, and Training, and Coordination, Evaluation, and Reporting*. As of March 31, 2022, of the 50 unique activities in the Action Plan, 13 (26%) were completed and 32 (64%) were underway. Beyond the lifespan of the Action Plan, there were 6 additional activities completed in 2022-2023 bringing the total number of completed Action Plan activities to 19.

A factor that influenced the implementation of the Action Plan was the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in territorial and national public health restrictions beginning in March 2020. The pandemic impacted the capacity and resources of the GNWT to advance Action Plan activities, as many GNWT staff were redeployed into new roles to support the Public Health emergency. For this reason, most activities were delayed from their original timeline. Despite this, Departments were able to achieve a number of important activities to enhance programs and services for persons with disabilities.

Future work and continued engagement with stakeholders will ensure the GNWT's continued efforts to improve supports and programs and reduce barriers for persons with disabilities across the lifespan.