



Employment and  
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# Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis

Summary of What We Heard: Discussions on Inuit Government  
Employment with Stakeholders in Iqaluit  
and Kitikmeot, Nunavut

Executive Summary

Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement Report

August 2019



This report is a component of the ongoing Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis conducted by Employment and Social Development Canada. The Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis is an obligation under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement* intended to inform Government of Canada and Government of Nunavut Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans.

This report is complemented by a report summarizing discussions held with Nunavut Sivuniksavut students in November 2018, *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut*.

**Key findings of these reports will be integrated into the 2020 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Summary Report.**

Findings from Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis stakeholder engagement sessions conducted in 2017 in Iqaluit and the Kivalliq region of Nunavut are found in: *Summary of What We Heard: Challenges, Suggestions and Best Practices in Inuit Government Employment: Nunavummiut Perspectives from Nunavut Stakeholder Engagement Sessions*. Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017.

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# 1. List of Acronyms

CV	Curriculum vitae
ESDC	Employment and Social Development Canada
FANS	Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students
GN	Government of Nunavut
IEP	Inuit employment plan
ILDp	Inuit Learning and Development Program
IsET	Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program
NILFA	Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis
NMTO	Nunavut Municipal Training Organization
NS	Nunavut Sivuniksavut
NTI	Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated
PTP	Pre-employment training plan

## 2. Executive Summary

### 2.1 About this Report

This report presents a summary of “what we heard” during Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis (NILFA) stakeholder engagement discussions conducted between November 2018 and June 2019 in Iqaluit and three communities in the Kitikmeot region of Nunavut (Gjoa Haven, Cambridge Bay, and Kugluktuk). These discussions were held to broaden our understanding of Inuit interest, preparedness and availability for government employment. This report is part of the ongoing NILFA, which is an obligation under Article 23 of the *Nunavut Agreement*, and is intended to support the development of Inuit employment plans and pre-employment training plans. It also builds upon previous NILFA stakeholder discussions conducted in Iqaluit and the Kivalliq region in 2017.<sup>1</sup>

Discussions were held with stakeholders, including Inuit government employees, training providers, Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program agreement holders in Nunavut, Nunavut Arctic College students and instructors, municipal governments, and regional Inuit associations. In addition, we met with skills development organizations that offer programming in Nunavut. Approximately 150 individuals participated in the discussions.

The purpose of the discussions were to:

- Share 2018 NILFA report findings with relevant stakeholders (through workshops, tradeshow/career fair attendance, and stakeholder discussions);
- Learn about youth perspectives on government employment and factors that affect their educational and employment goals; and
- Support science-related initiatives by exploring occupational needs as well as challenges and lessons learned in building preparedness and filling vacancies in these positions.

The discussions were semi-structured to allow participants to be able to discuss topics related but not limited to interest, preparedness and availability for government employment.

### 2.2 Key findings from NILFA Stakeholder Engagement Discussions

The following are key findings, suggestions and best practices from NILFA stakeholder engagement discussions related to:

- hiring and recruitment;
- interest in and awareness of government employment among Inuit students;
- retention;
- advancement and promotion;
- high school and post-secondary education

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<sup>1</sup> Findings from those discussions are available from: *Summary of What We Heard: Challenges, Suggestions and Best Practices in Inuit Government Employment: Nunavummiut Perspectives from Nunavut Stakeholder Engagement Sessions*; Employment and Social Development Canada, 2017.

- government training and skills development; and,
- pre-employment training.

## **Hiring and Recruitment**

- Stakeholders with hiring responsibilities identified that science-related occupations requiring university or specialized training were the most difficult to fill (e.g., health care practitioners, information technology positions, social science researchers, biologists, wildlife technicians, and environmental technicians). A few stakeholders identified that recruiting Inuit for entry-level positions and providing skills development opportunities might help fill positions requiring advanced education or technical skills.
- Nunavut Arctic College students were frequently interested in internships and work experiences at government workplaces, which is consistent with what was heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, stakeholders suggested that continuing to support or expanding these opportunities in government may help increase Inuit representation.
- Stakeholders identified a number of lessons learned in helping to design job postings to encourage more Inuit applicants, including making postings more concise, visually appealing, identifying benefits, and using less technical job titles. Highlighting opportunities for fieldwork or outdoor work in science-related job postings may help attract more Inuit applicants since these types of activities were highly desirable for Inuit in science-related education and jobs.
- Greater outreach on job postings (on community radio, Facebook, through Inuit organizations and personal referrals) and on the types of jobs available targeting Inuit youth to inform career decision-making and education or skills development choices was suggested by stakeholders. Attending career fairs and having Inuit role models speak about their experiences were identified as the most effective methods of raising awareness of government careers among Inuit youth.

## **Interest and Awareness of Government among Inuit Students**

- Nunavut Arctic College and Nunavut Sivuniksavut students<sup>3</sup> were frequently interested in government jobs, however, knowledge of the nature of government jobs and the nature of the opportunities available seemed limited. Expanding outreach to students in high school and colleges could help enhance interest in government careers and potential applicants.
- Nunavut Arctic College students were more likely to be interested in jobs that match their post-secondary field of education.

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<sup>2</sup> Findings from the Nunavut Sivuniksavut student discussions are found in: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

<sup>3</sup> For more information, see: *Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Stakeholder Engagement: What we heard from Nunavut Sivuniksavut students*. Indigenous and Northern Analysis Division, Economic Policy Directorate, Employment and Social Development Canada. May 2019.

## **Retention of Inuit Government Employees**

- Flexible schedules, regular opportunities for team-building, personal interaction and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days were identified as ways to help Inuit employees feel more welcome and enhance employee retention.
- Developing a trauma-informed workforce (by educating managers and employees on the subject) was suggested in order to ensure that workplaces are better able to support employees who may be experiencing personal challenges.

## **Advancement and Promotion of Inuit Government Employees**

- Many Inuit stakeholders highlighted the importance of having Inuit in leadership and management roles in government. Opportunities to gain exposure to supervising or managing were valued by Inuit employees (e.g., Sivuliqtiurnimut Ilinniarniq Leadership Training program).
- Several regional managers ensure that a more junior-level employee always comes on outreach trips to the communities. This helps to build the experience and knowledge of the more junior employees and build capacity of Inuit staff to take advantage of opportunities such as vacancies or acting positions during leaves.
- Many Inuit stakeholders identified the value of having managers who are focused on employee growth, regularly discussing future career plans with employees, and encouraging employees to take skills and training opportunities in order to nurture employee advancement and development.
- Inuit employee networks and peer support were found to be effective at assisting Inuit employees with career development, sharing training opportunities, and dealing with challenging situations.

## **Government Training and Skills Development**

- Most Inuit government employees in the Kitikmeot communities preferred to take training in their home communities due to family and community responsibilities and because the large distances between communities makes travel expensive and difficult. Employers could consider more local training opportunities, where possible. Participants wanted more health occupation training in Nunavut communities in order to help support expanded Inuit representation in these occupations (e.g., x-ray technicians, long-term care, home care, nurses).
- Experiential learning was the most preferred method for science-related skill development (e.g., fieldwork). Stakeholders identified the Environment and Climate Change Canada Inuit Field Training and Mentor Program as an effective science-related experiential learning initiative.

- Several stakeholders identified taking an apprenticeship approach to workplace skills development as a best practice to enhance Inuit employment. In this approach, entry-level employees are provided with skills development and training experiences to take on positions that are more senior, and are mentored by senior employees.
- Having a circle of support for Inuit learners, including mentors, tutors and peers were found to be most effective in helping to create successful learning outcomes according to Inuit government employees.

## **High School and Post-Secondary Education**

- Several stakeholders suggested ways to use Nunavut high schools to build interest among Inuit youth for government employment. Stakeholders discussed the value of career counsellors, career fairs and fostering relationships between high school staff, future employers and post-secondary institutions in building interest in government employment and ensuring students take the necessary steps to be successful in future careers.
- Several stakeholders suggested courses that they thought should be offered in high school to ensure that Inuit can be successful in future studies and careers. These courses include science, Nunavut/Inuit history, accounting and business administration.
- Stakeholders suggested measures for helping Inuit transition from high school to post-secondary education. These measures include ensuring access to upgrading courses, fostering peer support, and providing trauma-informed environments for learners.

## **Pre-Employment Training and Skills Development**

- Several stakeholders identified the value of connecting Inuit traditional knowledge and experiential learning in the local physical environment in helping to build interest and knowledge in science skills. Therefore, future pre-employment skills development opportunities targeting science-related skills development could benefit from finding ways to incorporate Inuit knowledge and experiential learning.
- Recent graduates of the Inuit Learning and Development Program (ILDLP) identified the program as an effective mechanism to learn about government departments and jobs and inform career-decision making. ILDP is a pre-employment and job training initiative aimed at helping Nunavut Inuit develop skills for potential jobs in the federal public service in Nunavut through rotating work placements.

## **2.3 Next Steps**

In order to bring both qualitative and quantitative new NILFA findings together in one document, for IEP and PTP developers, key findings from this report will be integrated into the 2020 Nunavut Inuit Labour Force Analysis Summary Report.