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Sustaining Momentum: The Government of Canada's Third Report in Response to the Kelowna Accord Implementation Act (2010-2011)

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Introduction

On June 18, 2008, the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act* received Royal Assent. The *Act* stipulates that the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is required to submit annual progress reports to Parliament during a five-year period beginning with the 2007–2008 fiscal year. This is the third report in response to the Government of Canada's obligations under the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act*.

The *Act* states that education, skills development, employment, health care, housing and access to clean water are essential for improving the socio-economic conditions of Aboriginal people in Canada. These concerns are consistent with the Government of Canada's priorities with respect to Aboriginal issues. The priorities are part of an agenda focused on building a record of real results through concrete actions and working with willing partners.

In 2009, the Government tabled its first report – *Sustaining Momentum* – covering its efforts between 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. The second report, tabled May 2010, built on the first by organizing the Government's actions according to the five priorities on Aboriginal affairs. This third report for 2010-2011 is structured in the same manner, detailing activities and investments made to support the five priority areas:

Education	Reconciliation, Governance, and Self-Government	Economic Development	Empowering Citizens and Protecting the Vulnerable	Resolution of Land Issues
			Resolution of Land Issues	

Context

The federal government has a unique relationship with the Aboriginal people of Canada and remains committed to maintaining a relationship that empowers Aboriginal people and communities.

Over one million Canadians identify themselves as Aboriginal.

Aboriginal people face several challenges including lower health outcomes, decreased socio-economic outcomes (education levels, employment rates, income, proportion of single parent families), lower life expectancy and overall lower well-being than the broader Canadian population. The Government of Canada and its partners are working towards ensuring that Aboriginal people have a quality of life comparable to other Canadians. While progress is being made on many fronts, challenging socio-economic gaps persist.

The Government of Canada recognizes the need to clearly demonstrate concrete results. The Government has developed sophisticated tools for gathering and analysing data and other indicators to assist in designing effective policy. For example, the Community Well-Being Index, a model which mirrors the United Nations Human Development Index, helps to develop an understanding of conditions, trends and gaps. The Index measures four components: educational attainment, labour force activity, income levels and the quantity and quality of housing stock in communities. The Community Well-being varies greatly across First Nations - more so than across other Canadian communities. On average, the well-being of First Nations is improving, but the "well-being gap" has not narrowed since 2001. In comparison to 1996, the gap between First Nation and Canadian communities is widening, not narrowing. Twenty five percent of First Nation communities have scores in 2006 that are worse than those in 1996 (compared to ten percent of Canadian communities).

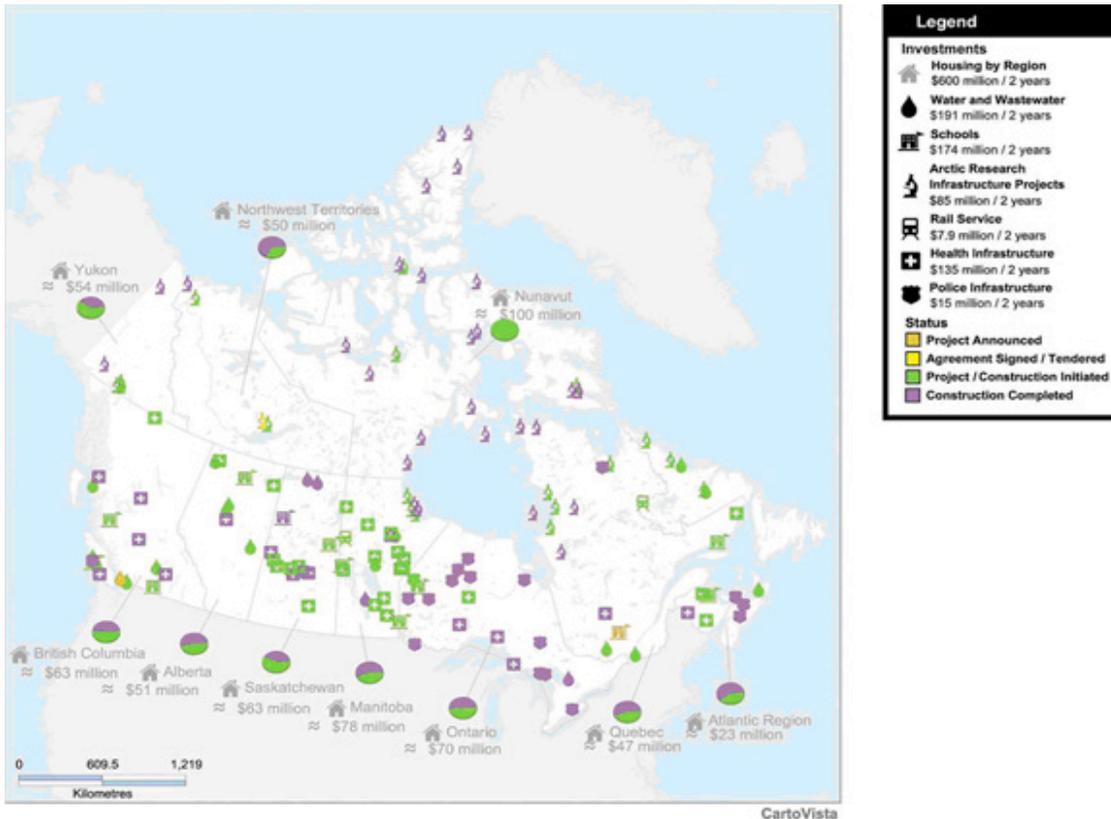
The Government of Canada provides over \$10 billion annually in programs and services directed to Aboriginal people through 34 federal departments and agencies. New funding supporting the five priorities this year includes approximately \$186 million for education, \$990 million for health services and supports, and approximately \$1.8 billion for labour market initiatives. Aboriginal people benefit from the complete array of programs and services offered by the Government of Canada, to all citizens.

The Government of Canada recognizes that results are achieved not only through funding and investments but also through innovative approaches and partnerships. The Government seeks to establish partnerships with key stakeholders and interested partners, such as our provincial and territorial governments and Aboriginal organizations. Over the past year alone, efforts have been made to finalize a number of partnership and tripartite agreements with various provincial and territorial governments and First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations. The bulk of the federal government's programs are delivered through partnership or in conjunction with Aboriginal communities, and provincial and territorial governments.

Critical to understanding the Government's recent progress on Aboriginal issues is understanding the contribution of Canada's Economic Action Plan. Canada's Economic Action Plan (CEAP) announced in January 2009, was designed to fight the effects of the global recession by providing timely, targeted and temporary stimulus to safeguard jobs and protect incomes, while making important investments to ensure Canada's long-term economic prosperity. Investments made through Canada's Economic Action Plan have provided significant support.

Over two years, \$1.4 billion (approximately \$603 million in 2009-2010 and approximately \$788 million in 2010-2011) has been dedicated to help address the needs of Aboriginal people and communities in the areas of education, skills development, health care, housing, policing, access to clean water and employment. Aboriginal people and communities have also benefited from many other CEAP initiatives, which were not targeted specifically for Aboriginal communities. Together, these actions have increased employment and procurement opportunities, improved infrastructure, and a higher level of health and family services that will assist in achieving better outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities. As demonstrated in the following map, CEAP investments have benefitted Aboriginal communities from coast to coast to coast.

CEAP Investments Across Canada



In order to provide Canadians with an update on actions underway to stimulate the economy, the Government of Canada has been tracking the progress of CEAP's impacts for Aboriginal people and communities through regular reports. These comprehensive reports are available to all Canadians at [Canada's Economic Action Plan - Budget 2009 Highlights](#).

This Report focuses on the actions and measures put in place by the Government of Canada between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011, including CEAP investments over this period. The investments and outcomes described in this report demonstrate the purposeful actions taken by the Government of Canada toward supporting the enhanced health, safety, prosperity and overall well being of Aboriginal people and communities.

Action Taken Under the Five-Point Plan

Education

The federal government has undertaken a significant number of initiatives and investments in support of Aboriginal issues across the five priority areas.

The federal government recognizes that educational attainment is critical to improving social and economic outcomes for all learners. The Government is committed to working with First Nations and provinces to ensure First Nations people receive the education required for success.

Programs for Better Education Outcomes

Since their launch in December 2008, the First Nation Student Success Program (FNSSP) and the Education Partnerships Program

In the 2009-10 fiscal year of these programs, 75% of First

(EPP) have had significant participation. The FNSSP is designed to help First Nation educators to plan and make improvements in the three priority areas of literacy, numeracy and student retention. In the 2009-10 fiscal year, 75% of First Nation band operated schools across Canada were represented under the First Nation Student Success Program (with 18 projects funded). The EPP is a program designed to support partnership development. Seventy three percent of communities benefited from funding under the EPP (with 19 projects funded).

In the 2010-11 fiscal year, 90% of First Nation band operated schools were represented under the FNSSP (for a total of 34 projects funded) and 88% of communities received funding under the EPP (for a total of 19 projects funded).

With respect to education programs the federal government has also, over the last year:

- Renewed supplementary funding of \$50 million over five years for **Aboriginal Head Start** programs on reserve and in urban and northern communities to support early intervention strategies, addressing the developmental needs of children and their families.
- Renewed the **Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative** at \$80 million over five years to promote and develop capacity through health career promotion, bursaries and scholarships, post-secondary education supports; First Nations Health Managers development; community-based workers training; and, the sharing of knowledge and best practices in Health Human Resources planning.
- Made a commitment to engaging in a **new approach** to providing support to First Nation and Inuit students for **post-secondary education**. The new approach will be effective, accountable and coordinated with other federal student support programs. We are continuing to pursue opportunities to hear from First Nations and other interested parties on ways to help First Nation and Inuit students receive the support they need to participate in post-secondary education.

These programs, 75% of First Nation Communities across Canada were represented under the First Nation Student Success Program (with 18 projects) and 73% of Communities received funding under the Education Partnerships Program (with 19 projects).

In the 2010-11 fiscal year, 16 more proposals received funding under the First Nation Student Success Program and an additional 19 proposals received funding under the Education Partnerships Program.

Partnerships for Better Education Outcomes

Since 2008, the Government has signed on to five **tripartite education agreements** (New Brunswick, Manitoba, Alberta, Prince Edward Island and Saskatoon Tribal Council). These are in addition to existing education partnerships in British Columbia and Nova Scotia. The most recent tripartite agreements are as follows:

- On August 30, 2010, the Government of Canada signed a tripartite education Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Mi'kmaq First Nations of Prince Edward Island (PEI) and the Province of PEI. The MOU provides a framework for collaboration that includes: the development and implementation of a joint education action plan in the areas of early childhood, kindergarten to grade 12, and transition to post-secondary; the development of new tuition fee agreements (based on increased tuition rates); the commitment to ensure smooth student transitions; the development and implementation of appropriate performance criteria and indicators; and, a provincial commitment to invest a portion of the tuition rate increase into First Nation educational programming.
- On October 14, 2010, the Government of Canada signed a sub-regional tripartite education Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Saskatoon Tribal Council and the Province of Saskatchewan. The MOU is characterized by such conventions as joint planning and priority setting for joint initiatives, pooling of resources and opportunities, and information sharing protocols. Priorities for partnership development include: student transition and retention (e.g. student transition supports, foundational and ongoing learning assessment, data

collection and management); family and community support (e.g. parent support programs, Elder guidance, transport and services access); and, professional and resource development (e.g. shared professional and curriculum development).

The federal government has also, over the last year:

- Announced on December 10, 2010 that it is moving forward on improving education outcomes for First Nation children by targeting Budget 2010 funding of \$30 million over 2 years, for implementation-ready K-12 partnerships with First Nations in British Columbia. The investment in these partnerships in British Columbia will build on successes and focus on common goals such as alignment of programs and standards, clarifying roles and responsibilities, strong accountability, governance, and shared responsibility for First Nation student success. All First Nation schools in British Columbia will be eligible to participate in this new approach.

The Government of Canada will continue to work with First Nations in other jurisdictions on partnership opportunities to improve education outcomes for First Nation students.

Schools and Infrastructure

The Government is making significant investments to ensure that children have better places to learn. Since 2006, the federal government has invested approximately \$714 million on school infrastructure projects, which includes the completion of 94 school projects.

In addition to the 94 completed school projects, there are 93 school projects across the country receiving approximately \$91 million this year through Indian and Northern Affairs, Capital Facilities and Maintenance Program (CFMP). The CFMP funded projects include the construction of three new schools, 8 major renovation/addition projects, 9 minor school renovations, the construction and renovation of teachers' residences in 13 communities and 11 mechanical and heating system upgrades.

As of March 31, 2011, nine of twelve schools were substantially completed with funding through Canada's Economic Action Plan. Three school projects, Wabaseamong (ON), Manawan (QC) and Ahousaht (BC), will require some remedial site work this fiscal year. These activities will be addressed using funds from INAC's regular capital program. The following projects have been substantially completed:

- Birch Narrows School (SK), August 15, 2010
- Burnt Church School (NB), January 4, 2011
- Peter Ballantyne School (SK), January 31, 2011
- Penticton School (BC), March 31, 2011
- Natashquan School (QC) March 31, 2011
- North Spirit Lake School (ON) March 31, 2011
- Opaskwayak Cree Nation School (MB) March 31, 2011
- Little Red River Cree Nation School (AB) March 31, 2011
- Nuxalk School (BC) March 31, 2011.

As part of the Building Canada Plan, \$102 Million from the Gas Tax Fund (GTF) is supporting the construction of an additional six new and two major school renovations on reserve across Canada between 2009-2010 and 2011-2012. All projects are progressing at various stages of project development.

An Inuit community has also benefited from a significant educational investment. The Government of Canada provided a \$2.5 Million grant for Nunavut Sivuniksavut (NS) to purchase a new school facility at 450 Rideau Street in Ottawa. The new facility will allow NS to double its student population and increase its contribution to improved education outcomes, employability, capacity development, and a representative government in Nunavut.

Moving Forward

In December 2010, the Government of Canada, in collaboration with the Assembly of First Nations, announced the creation of a **National Panel** mandated to engage on the development of options, including legislation, to improve the governance framework, improve student outcomes and clarify accountability for First Nation elementary and secondary education. The appointment of the National Panel members was confirmed in March 2011 and the Panel will be submitting a report, with recommendations on options, to the Minister and the National Chief by the end of 2011.

This important step builds on the Government of Canada's commitment made in Budget 2010, to work with First Nations along with other partners to strengthen and improve First Nations education.

Reconciliation, Governance and Self-Government

The Government of Canada remains committed to empowering Aboriginal people and communities and building a new relationship based on reconciliation and healing for past injustices, and to strengthening Aboriginal governance and self-government. The 2008 Statement of Apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools remains a touchstone towards building this new relationship.

The Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) held its first of seven **National Events** in Winnipeg from June 16-19, 2010. This event brought together former students and their families, government, leaders of national and regional Aboriginal organizations, church groups and members of the general public. **At this event, former Minister Strahl**, announced the Government of Canada's intention to repeal provisions of the *Indian Act* that provide the authority to establish Indian Residential Schools and remove children from their homes and communities.

Continuing on this path towards healing, reconciliation and resolution, Budget 2010 announced **\$65.9M** over two years for Health Canada's **Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program**. These resources have been earmarked to respond to the increased demand for services resulting from the implementation of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program provides mental health and emotional supports for eligible former students and their families as they participate in all phases of the Settlement Agreement – Common Experience Payments, Independent Assessment Process, Truth and Reconciliation Commission events and commemoration activities.

Budget 2010 also allocated \$133.2M over two years for the continued implementation of the Settlement Agreement, including administration of Common Experience Payments and the Independent Assessment Process, as well as the disclosure of relevant documents to the TRC. To date more than **\$1.58 billion** has been distributed in **Common Experience Payments** to almost **77,000 former residential school students**. Over **9,000 former students** have received **\$1 billion** under the Independent Assessment Process. As well, some 125,000 documents have been disclosed to the TRC.

In 2010-2011, INAC allocated \$4 million through its Advocacy and Public Information Program to 20 Aboriginal organizations to disseminate information regarding the Settlement Agreement to former students and their families, as well as to the broader public. An additional \$4 million was announced in February for 2011-2012, bringing the total commitment to \$22 million since 2007.

The Government of Canada made **historic strides** in furthering a relationship based on healing, recognition and reconciliation 2010-2011 fiscal year:

- On August 18, 2010 the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, John Duncan issued a **formal apology** for **the relocation of Inuit families** from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay – a journey of more than 1,200 kilometers - during the 1950s, and for the hardships and suffering they endured as a result.
- The Government of Canada issued a Statement of Support on November 12, 2010 **endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People**. This aspirational document sets out a number of principles that should guide harmonious and cooperative

relationships between Indigenous people and States, such as reconciliation, justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination, equality, partnership, good faith and mutual respect. Canada strongly supports these principles and believes that they are consistent with the Government's approach to working with Aboriginal people.

Further examples of momentum building towards a new relationship include:

- An extensive engagement with Aboriginal groups regarding the Crown's duty to consult. Its key elements are highlighted in a *Summary Report on Federal Engagement with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit*.
- In support of the *Powley* decision, work has also continued with Métis organizations to develop objectively verifiable identification systems. The federal government held ongoing engagement sessions with provincial governments and Métis organizations with respect to accommodating Métis harvesters. The *Powley* decision refers to the Supreme Court ruling that the Métis community in and around Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario has an Aboriginal right, protected by section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*, to hunt for food. The decision established a legal test to determine the Aboriginal rights of other Métis groups. The *Powley* decision also provides guidance on the criteria for establishing Métis identity for the purposes of exercising Métis Aboriginal rights under section 35.

Regarding governance and self-government, the federal government continues to support land claims and implement self-government agreements. These agreements allow communities to better manage their relationships with other levels of government, assume greater control over, and responsibility for the well-being of their communities, and seize economic opportunities and maximize economic development initiatives.

Specific progress in concluding treaties in British Columbia more specifically:

- The Tsawwassen Final Agreement came into effect on April 3, 2009; the Maa-nulth Final Agreement came into effect on April 1, 2011; the Yale Final Agreement was ratified by the First Nation on March 12, 2011 and will now proceed to ratification by BC and Canada. Throughout BC, several other negotiations are near completion as Final Agreements and a number of other negotiations are at the advanced Agreement in Principle stage.
- On May 12, 2010 Bill C-25, the proposed Nunavut Planning and Project Assessment Act was introduced. Although this bill died on the Order Paper with the dissolution of Parliament on March 26th, 2011, its introduction illustrates the commitment of the Government to fulfill the obligations of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The Agreement requires legislation for land use planning and environmental impact assessment. This is the last outstanding legislative obligation of the federal government related to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.
- During the last year, 4 new First Nations obtained community ratification of their land codes which then became operational under the *First Nations Land Management Act*.

Aboriginal people make up nearly half the population in the three territories and play a particularly important role in Canada's North. Since 2007, the federal government has been working to advance its Northern Strategy objectives (Exercising our Arctic Sovereignty, Promoting Social and Economic Development, Protecting our Environmental Heritage and Improving and Devolving Northern Governance) through a variety of initiatives. Progress has been made on a number of these objectives, for example: a devolution of lands and resource management Agreement in Principle was signed with the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and Northwest Territory Métis Nation. The remaining five regional Aboriginal groups are not willing to sign the AiP at this time, primarily due to concerns related to land claims, self-government negotiations and financial issues. The AiP includes specific protections for existing and future Aboriginal treaty rights and settlements, and a comprehensive consultation plan to engage Aboriginal groups will be undertaken.

Through Budget 2010, the Government of Canada committed \$45 million over two years to fund Nutrition North Canada. Including existing funding, this brings the annual budget to \$60M. This

investment provides stable funding to support access to a wide range of healthy food options for Northerners, including country foods. Updates on federal actions in the North can be found at [Canada's Northern Strategy](#).

Economic Development

The Government of Canada continues to work with Aboriginal Canadians and willing partners to ensure that Aboriginal people enjoy the same opportunities for employment, income and wealth creation as other Canadians.

With a young, fast-growing and increasingly better-educated population, a significant land and resource base, and a growing business sector, Aboriginal Canadians are well-positioned to help build a vibrant Canadian economy.

The opportunities for Aboriginal economic development have never been greater. Private sector investment is increasing in every region of the country and there is a demonstrable interest on the part of the non-Aboriginal private sector to work with Aboriginal businesses and communities.

There are emerging trends and significant evidence that suggest that Aboriginal Canadians are moving toward becoming full participants in the Canadian economy, as entrepreneurs, employers and employees.

Governments and private industry are increasingly recognizing the tremendous economic potential of Aboriginal communities, particularly in the area of resource development. To realize this potential, the federal government is working closely with provinces and territories to develop memorandums of understanding to assist in fulfilling the legal duty to consult and accommodate with a focus on opportunities for inter-jurisdictional cooperation and collaboration. The federal government is also continuing to integrate Aboriginal consultation with federal activities such as environmental assessment processes and working with Aboriginal communities to develop consultation protocols that enhance coordination and efficiency.

In June 2009, former Minister Strahl announced the **Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development** that focused the federal government's actions – from programs to legislation to partnerships – to increase the participation of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in the Canadian economy and improve economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in all parts of Canada.

The Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development was launched with an investment of \$200 million over four years to increase First Nations access to lands, resources and capital as well as to improve federal procurement opportunities for Aboriginal businesses. The Framework also includes the establishment of a fund to develop strategies that will focus the resources, efforts and expertise of federal departments and agencies to support enhanced participation of Aboriginal people in key sectors of the economy: forestry, fisheries, mining, energy, and agriculture.

And, fundamental to the Framework is the recognition of the importance of investing in the development of human capital. Increasing Aboriginal participation in the Canadian labour market, and the economy more generally, is an important and effective way to address the socio-economic conditions facing many Aboriginal people, especially Aboriginal young people.

Significant investments led by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in 2010-2011 include:

- The Aboriginal Business Development Program, provided support to 436 recipients. A total of 744 Aboriginal business development projects were approved reflecting total contributions of \$42.2 million.
- The Major Resource and Energy Development Initiative approved \$10.6 million in contribution funding to support 19 major Aboriginal business projects in the resource and energy sector and to create two new Métis Business Investment Funds leveraging equity capital with private and public sector.

- The Indian and Northern Affairs Procurement Strategy for Aboriginal Business assisted the Aboriginal procurement community to access government contracts through the provision of procurement readiness sessions, networking support and assistance.

In 2010-2011, the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) continued to address the socio-economic conditions many Aboriginal people face by introducing two new initiatives to address the skills and training needs:

- The **Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS)** was launched on April 1, 2010 with funding of \$1.6B over five years. ASETS is the successor strategy to the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy (AHRDS) that focuses on three strategic priorities: demand-driven skills development, fostering private sector and provincial/territorial partnerships, accountability and results. This strategy is designed to help Aboriginal people prepare for, find, and keep high-demand jobs now and in the long term. All Aboriginal people, regardless of status or location, may access its programs and services. These include: job-finding skills and training, programs for youth, programs for urban and Aboriginal people with disabilities, and access to child care. ASETS is expected to result in 14,000 to 16,500 Aboriginal people employed per year.
- The **Skills and Partnership Fund (SPF)** was launched in 2010 and is funded at \$210M over five years. SPF is a partnership-based, opportunity-driven fund that will support projects aiming to encourage innovation and partnerships, test new approaches to the delivery of employment services, and respond to small to medium sized economic partnership opportunities with targeted labour force development initiatives. SPF is expected to result in approximately 1,500 to 2,000 Aboriginal people employed per year.

In addition, HRSDC continued implementation of Canada's Economic Action Plan initiatives:

- The **Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership (ASEP)** is a nationally-managed program geared to providing Aboriginal people with the skills and training they need to participate in the labour force across Canada. ASEP helps to develop the skills of the Aboriginal workforce, maximize sustainable employment for Aboriginal people on major projects and provide lasting benefits for Aboriginal communities, families, and individuals. This initiative fosters partnerships between Aboriginal organizations, the private sector, provincial and territorial governments and others, as appropriate, to create training and employment opportunities. Through Canada's Economic Action Plan, the Government of Canada is investing an additional \$100 million over three years for ASEP projects. In total, 36 ASEP projects are well on their way to delivering results.
- The **Aboriginal Skills and Training Strategic Investment Fund (ASTSIF)** was created under Canada's Economic Action Plan with an investment of \$75M of funding from 2009-2011 to support short-term, targeted initiatives where Aboriginal people gain the specific skills required to benefit from economic opportunities, including those generated by the federal stimulus package. 74 regional projects and 12 national projects were completed by March 31, 2011.

Other CEAP investments contributing to economic development that will benefit Aboriginal Canadians and communities include:

- **Recreation Infrastructure Canada (RInC)** provided over \$500 million over two years to build and renew recreation facilities across Canada. RInC is providing some First Nation communities the ability to offer their youth and community members facilities to enhance their overall wellbeing. The program has also created employment and supported local economies. For example in Saskatchewan five First Nations benefited from RInC. A total of \$1,653,000 was invested to build and upgrade recreational facilities. The projects created 233 person months of employment for First Nation communities.
- **CanNor** - \$47 million was provided over five years for the creation of the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency (CanNor). **CanNor** is mandated to help create a prosperous economic future for Northerners.

- **Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED):** Canada's Economic Action Plan included \$90 million over five years for the renewal of the SINED program to stimulate long-term economic development in the territories. This program is being delivered by CanNor. New five-year territorial investment plans, developed with extensive stakeholder input, were approved in August 2009. As of the end of August, 2010, 83 projects representing \$11.6 million had been approved. SINED focuses on foundational investments in the economies of the territories, including geo-science projects to improve the understanding of the North's mineral and energy resources.
- **Canada High Arctic Research Station Feasibility Study:** Canada's Economic Action Plan laid the groundwork for delivering on the Government's commitment to build a new, world-class Canadian High Arctic Research Station. INAC was allocated \$2 million over two years to conduct a feasibility study for the Station. The Station will serve as a hub for scientific activity in Canada's Arctic region and will be built in Cambridge Bay, Nunavut on the Northwest Passage. Budget 2010 provided \$18 million over five years to INAC to undertake the pre-construction design phase for the Station. The Station is expected to take five to seven years to build and is targeting an opening date of 2017, in time for for Canada's 150th anniversary. Ongoing input from academic, Aboriginal, territorial, and industry stakeholders is informing the development of the Station.
- **Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund:** To support the new Canadian High Arctic Research Station, the Government allocated \$85 million over two years from the Economic Action Plan to the Arctic Research Infrastructure Fund, to upgrade 20 key existing research facilities at 46 sites across Canada's North. This investment will ensure that a robust network of infrastructure is in place across Canada's vast Arctic when the Station opens. More than half of the projects are led or co-led by Northerners. These investments have created jobs for Northerners in the short term and will improve the quality of life for Northern residents for many years to come as scientific, technological, and Indigenous knowledge are used to advance both social and economic goals. Of the 46 sites, over two thirds were substantively completed as of December 31, 2010. A number of projects have successfully incorporated green technologies into facility designs which will help to reduce the significant costs of ongoing operations in the North.
- **Broadband – South of the 60th Parallel:** In Budget 2009, as part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, \$225 million was provided to Industry Canada over three years to develop and implement a strategy to extend broadband coverage to as many un-served and underserved households as possible beginning in 2009-2010. By far the biggest component of this strategy is the *Broadband Canada: Connecting Rural Canadians* program. The program provides a one-time incentive to Internet Service Providers for the expansion of infrastructure in areas where there currently is no business case for the private sector to deploy services on its own.

As of April 1 2011, the Broadband Program had signed contribution agreements for 86 projects, representing federal investment of \$111.7M, and bringing broadband access to an estimated 209,000 rural and remote households. Of the 86 projects, 11 will serve First Nations communities. Broadband coverage will be deployed in British Columbia (3 projects), Manitoba (1 project), Ontario (4 projects), and Quebec (3 projects), and is estimated to bring high speed Internet access to 12,423 Aboriginal households. Projects are in various stages of construction and are scheduled to be completed by December 31, 2011.

- **Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan:** Under Canada's Economic Action Plan, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada received funding of \$57.4 million over 2 years to accelerate work at many contaminated sites across Canada. Increased assessment and remediation activities at federal sites have increased the demand for specialized skilled labour and trades. For example, the Hopetown Indian Reserve 10 Generator Fuel Spill Remediation on Watson Island in British Columbia has created jobs for engineers, scientists, environmental technologists, archaeologists, cultural and community experts, construction workers, labourers, assistants, etc. In addition, significant activities have been completed at the Giant Mine site in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories which supported 59 positions, with 15 of these dedicated to completing accelerated work.

- \$17 million allocated for accelerated construction of a **small craft harbour in Pangnirtung**, Nunavut to provide improved infrastructure to the existing commercial fishery, provide a basis to further develop the inshore fisheries, and support other community marine interests.

Although the economic situation in 2010-2011 required focus and attention, the Government took many other concrete steps to support Aboriginal economic development, including:

- On June 29, 2010, Royal Assent was given to Bill C-24, the *First Nations Certainty of Land Title Act*. This Act amends the *First Nations Commercial and Industrial Development Act* and enables First Nations across Canada to develop commercial real estate on reserve land. The *First Nations Certainty of Land Title Act* permits the registration of on-reserve commercial real estate development in a system that replicates the provincial land titles or registry system. Such action will help make the value of on-reserve properties, including housing, stores, offices and other buildings, comparable to equivalent properties on off-reserve land.

Throughout 2010-2011, the Government of Canada, via the **Urban Aboriginal Strategy**, continued to make federal programs more accessible and seamless while at the same time improving alignment with provincial policies and programs on urban Aboriginal issues.

- In 2010-2011 the Government of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg made a major commitment to improve the socio-economic circumstances of local Aboriginal people with the signing of a Memorandum of Collaboration. This Memorandum of Collaboration was the result of the successful partnerships the Government of Canada was able to achieve through its Urban Aboriginal Strategy. Under this plan three levels of government will work collaboratively and partner with the Aboriginal community and other key stakeholders to identify common issues, better align programs and combine resources to maximize investments made by all levels of government in the aboriginal community.

The year 2010 was The Year of the Métis. To recognize this, the Government of Canada unveiled a commemorative medallion and contributed to the Veterans Garden located at the Batoche Historic site in honour of Métis Veterans. In addition to other achievements, the Government of Canada contributed \$5 million to the Clarence Campeau Development Fund to establish the Métis Energy and Resource Program and another \$3.7 million over three years to the Westcap Management Limited to support Métis and First Nations participation in major energy projects.

The Honourable John Duncan, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, met January 19, 2011 with Métis Nation leaders, the Aboriginal Affairs Ministers from the five western-most provinces and industry representatives to launch the second **Métis Economic Development Symposium (MEDS)**, which took place January 20 and 21 in Vancouver. MEDS presented an opportunity for participants to make note of the significant progress made over the year and to discuss, among other topics, successful approaches to economic development and practical ways to strengthen entrepreneurship among Métis women.

The meetings of Ministers and Métis leaders stem in part from the Métis Nation Protocol, signed in 2008 between INAC and the Métis National Council (MNC), committing the two parties to work on a range of issues, and the [Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development](#), which represents a fundamental change in how the Government of Canada supports Aboriginal economic development.

In addition, in late March, the federal government announced its support for two major projects for the Métis which will help improve Skills and Training opportunities for Métis in British Columbia and help boost the heritage/tourism industry at Métis Crossing in Alberta.

Empowering Citizens & Protecting the Vulnerable

The federal government is committed to assisting those in greatest need, particularly through initiatives such as child and family services, improved housing, access to safe drinking water and health programs. Through CEAP, concrete investments have been made in these areas and the federal government has demonstrated its commitment to working with partners to provide safer

communities and conditions that help members lead healthy and fulfilling lives including:

- \$305 million over two years (\$170 million in 2010-2011) was provided to strengthen current health programs (Non-Insured Health Benefits and Primary Care nursing services) and improve health outcomes for First Nations and Inuit individuals.
- \$20 million over two years was also provided to ensure further progress on the federal government's new province-specific, prevention-focused tripartite approach for First Nations child and family services on reserves that will also ensure more effective information gathering and enhanced accountability. These additional resources are part of a series of investments focused on an enhanced prevention approach to child welfare that have been made to date in six jurisdictions, reaching 68% of on reserve First Nations children and their families. When fully implemented, the total additional ongoing investments represent more than \$100 million annually.

CEAP announced \$515 million over two years to support First Nations community infrastructure projects in three priority areas: schools; water and wastewater projects; and critical community services infrastructure, such as health and police services facilities. These investments are sparking job creation on-reserve as well as the surrounding areas.

With respect to infrastructure investments, CEAP targeted the following areas:

- \$400 million over two years to support the construction of **new on-reserve housing**, renovations of existing social housing and for complementary housing activities. Funds are flowing through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (\$250 million) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (\$150 million)
 - Overall, close to 500 First Nations communities across Canada have benefitted from more than 3,000 CEAP housing projects.
- \$200 million over two years for the renovation and construction of **social housing units** in the territories.

In terms of critical **community services infrastructure**, CEAP also invested:

- \$15 million allocated for remediation of critical **policing infrastructure**. Remediation initiatives are cost-shared between the Government of Canada (52 percent) and provinces (48 percent). Seventeen projects have been completed and an additional three are underway.
- \$135 million for the construction and renovation of **health facilities** infrastructure on reserves. Funding has helped to build new, replace, expand or otherwise improve First Nations health facilities, such as health centres and nursing stations. Forty major construction projects and numerous minor renovation projects to existing health facilities have been completed to help ensure that First Nations continue to have access to safe and effective health facilities, which house needed health programs and services.
- \$7.9 million over two years to support **rail projects** for Keewatin Railway Company in Manitoba and Tshuëtin Rail Transportation in Quebec and Labrador. Completed projects include a new passenger waiting station in Pukatawagan, which provides shelter for passengers and their luggage, as well as a new locomotive, track maintenance equipment, and rail line maintenance and rehabilitation. CEAP support for these projects has aided efforts by Keewatin Railway and Tshuëtin Rail and has contributed to the safety, reliability, and improvement of these passenger rail services.
- \$190 million for **water and wastewater** projects across Canada. With these funds Indian and Northern Affairs Canada invested in 23 water and wastewater projects for First Nation communities. These investments on reserve will directly benefit approximately 44,000 First Nation residents.

In addition to CEAP measures, the Government of Canada announced on October 29, 2010, \$10

million over two years to improve community safety and ensure that the justice system and law enforcement will better respond to cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.

Canada has also targeted improvements in Aboriginal communities through a number of other initiatives, including drinking water:

- Health Canada has increased overall **capacity to sample and test drinking water** quality in First Nations communities to protect public health. All First Nations community sites now have access to a trained Community Based Water Monitor (CBWM) or an Environmental Health Officer to sample and test drinking water quality. While more drinking water advisories have been issued in First Nations communities since 2003, overall these advisories are resolved in about one-tenth the time it took before 2003 (median duration of advisories in effect was 307 days before 2003 and 35 days since 2003). After 2003, the percentage of advisories in effect for 7-12 months were halved, dropping from 14 percent to 7 percent, and those remaining in effect for more than a year dropped from 43 percent to 24 percent. Since 2006, INAC and Health Canada have engaged with First Nations, First Nations organizations and Provincial and Territorial officials in each province on the development of a legislative framework.
- On May 26, 2010 Bill S-11, The Safe Drinking Water for First Nations Act, an Act respecting the safety of drinking water on First Nation lands was introduced in the Senate. Although this bill died on the Order Paper with the dissolution of Parliament on March 26th, 2011, its introduction illustrates the commitment of the Government to improve the drinking water quality in First Nation communities. The bill provided for the development of federal regulations governing the provision of drinking water, water quality standards and the disposal of wastewater in First Nations communities. Importantly, the bill also established that federal regulations developed in this regard may incorporate, by reference, provincial regulations governing drinking water and wastewater in First Nations communities.

The Government has continued to make progress on other health issues:

- Over 300 projects have been funded and implemented in all provinces and territories through the **Aboriginal Health Transition Fund (AHTF)** (2005-2006 to 2010-2011). First Nations, Inuit and Métis organizations have worked in partnership with federal, provincial and territorial governments to improve access to existing health services through the improved integration and adaptation of health services. Projects have directly involved Aboriginal stakeholders in the integration and adaptation of health services, with nearly 75 percent of projects led by Aboriginal people.
- Examples of specific projects include:
 - In British Columbia, AHTF funding has helped to guide Aboriginal people through an often complex health care system by supporting the use of Aboriginal patient navigators and Aboriginal doulas (para-professionals that support pregnant women and their families).
 - In Saskatchewan, the File Hills-Qu'Appelle Tribal Council has worked with its provincial and 11 First Nation partners to improve access to prenatal services. Since the project began in 2007, access to prenatal services has increased by an average of 10 new clients per month and access to women's health care services has increased by an average of 50 new clients per month from an off- and on-reserve population of 10,000. In addition, services such as provincially funded midwifery, nurse practitioner and ultrasound services are now offered closer to home for expectant mothers.
 - In Nova Scotia, the federal home care program for thirteen First Nations communities in the province is being integrated with home care services provided by the provincial government. As a result of this AHTF project, the province has extended the bed loan and respite care programs to First Nations communities, and the new provincial caregiver allowance program is also now available to First Nations communities. The project has created a trilateral continuing care forum and is working towards the

implementation of an improved hospital discharge process.

- In Ontario, the AHTF project at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto has successfully adapted its men's residential treatment program to establish an ongoing Aboriginal-specific and culturally appropriate treatment approach for addictions/mental health. Given the demonstrated success of the men's residential treatment program, the CAMH will not only be continuing the men's program, but will also establish an Aboriginal women's cycle set to begin in 2011.

The Government of Canada announced \$285 million over two years in Budget 2010 to support the renewal of key Aboriginal health programs that were due to sunset on March 31, 2010. Subsequent Government decisions have provided an additional three years of funding, bringing the total funding for these programs to \$730 million over five years (2010-2011 to 2014-2015), which includes:

- \$275 million for the Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative;
- \$170 million for the Maternal Child Health Program;
- \$50 million in additional support for Aboriginal Head Start programs (On Reserve and in Urban and Northern Communities);
- \$75 million for the National Aboriginal Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy;
- \$80 million for the Aboriginal Health Human Resources Initiative; and,
- \$80 million for the Health Service Integration Fund (formerly known as the Aboriginal Health Transition Fund).

These programs are delivered in partnership with Aboriginal communities and leadership to promote healthy living, mental wellness, early childhood development, increased participation of Aboriginal people in health careers, and closer integration of federal and provincial health services accessed by First Nations and Inuit.

The Government continues to support other essential social and community-related initiatives through the development of important legislation:

- On December 15, 2010 Royal Assent was given to Bill C-3, the *Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act*. This Act was introduced on March 11 2010 and it responds to the 2009 decision by the Court of Appeal for British Columbia in the matter of *McIvor v. Canada (Registrar of Indian and Northern Affairs)*. The legislation enables eligible grandchildren of women who lost their registered Indian status as a result of marrying non-Indian men to become entitled to registered Indian status in accordance with the *Indian Act*.
- The federal government continued to press ahead with Bill S-4, the Family Homes on Reserves and Matrimonial Interests or Rights Act, with its introduction in the Senate on March 31, 2010. The proposed legislation consisted of a substantive federal matrimonial real property regime combined with a mechanism for First Nations to develop their own culturally-specific matrimonial real property laws. Bill S-4, as amended, was passed by the Senate on July 6, 2010. Although this bill died on the Order Paper with the dissolution of Parliament on March 26th, 2011, its introduction illustrates the commitment of the Government to empower citizens and protect the vulnerable.

Resolution of Land Issues

Governments and private industry are increasingly recognizing the tremendous economic potential of Aboriginal communities, particularly in the area of resource development. To realize this potential, the federal government is working closely with provinces and territories to develop effective approaches and processes to fulfill the legal duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate when the Crown contemplates conduct that might adversely impact potential or established Aboriginal or Treaty rights. In addition, the Government of Canada continues to work to settle outstanding grievances, such as specific claims.

A **specific claim** is a claim made by a First Nation against the federal government relating to the administration of land and other First Nation assets and to the fulfillment of Indian treaties. Since

1973, the federal government has pursued the settlement of these grievances through negotiations.

- Between April 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011, Canada addressed **a total of 132 specific claims** across the country, including:
 - 18 claims settled through negotiation;
 - 95 claims that were not accepted for negotiation on the basis that the claims did not give rise to any outstanding lawful obligations;
 - 31 claims were accepted for negotiation; and
 - 19 claims that were addressed by means of file closure (either the claim did not fall within the scope of the **Specific Claims** Policy, the First Nation decided to withdraw the claim, or it was referred to an administrative remedy such as the Additions to Reserve (ATR) Process. (Through the ATR process an additional parcel of land is added to the existing land base of a First Nation.)
- In 2010-2011, the Government of Canada added 130,367.734 acres of land to reserves and advanced 37 files through the Treaty Land Entitlement/Additions to Reserve process. Treaty Land Entitlement (TLE) claims are intended to settle the land debt owed to First Nations who did not receive all the land they were entitled to under historical treaties signed by the Crown and First Nations or from whom part or all of that land was illegally taken.)

Other examples of momentum on land claims issues include:

- A Memorandum of Understanding on the Former Canadian Forces Base Rockcliffe was signed by INAC and the Algonquins of Ontario on September 22, 2010. This will allow the Algonquins to work with the Canada Lands Company and participate in the redevelopment of the Rockcliffe base.
- An Agreement was ratified by the Cree of Eeyou Istchee (Quebec) in March 2010 which concludes a 35-year-old claim to the islands of James Bay and southern Hudson Bay. Canada and the Cree signed the Agreement on July 7, 2010. Federal implementing legislation is required before the Agreement can come into effect.
- Former Minister Strahl, announced on March 26, 2010 that Canada is moving towards the creation of a new forum for talks between the Innu residing in both Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador regarding their overlapping claims. A federal Ministerial Representative was appointed to help bring the parties together and discussions have been progressing well.
- It is important to note that through the Treaty Process in British Columbia, much of the progress on Land Claims also supports progress on Self-Government; these achievements are captured in this Report's section on "Reconciliation, Governance and Self-Government."

Conclusion

The Government of Canada is committed to reporting back to Canadians on its actions. In addition to the annual reporting requirements of the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act* and other reporting mechanisms, the Government will make available to all Canadians a report on progress and impacts of the Aboriginal-specific programming through Canada's Economic Action Plan. These reports are available at: [Canada's Economic Action Plan - Budget 2009 Highlights](#).

As illustrated in this Report and others, the Government of Canada continues to make great strides in developing and implementing a practical and results-driven vision for Aboriginal policy. Recognizing that there is no easy solution or quick fix, the Government remains focussed in its approach. Many of the challenges facing Aboriginal people are long-standing, multi-faceted and complex; any proposed solution must correspond well to these challenges.

In 2007, a clear framework for action on Aboriginal issues was established:

- Education
- Reconciliation, governance and self-government
- Economic development
- Empowerment and protecting the vulnerable
- Resolution of land issues

The Government will continue to work with willing partners to achieve real results in these areas. Many of the initiatives highlighted throughout this Report were successful due to the whole-of-government approach in addressing issues that affect Aboriginal people. Continued progress and success depends on the willingness of all interested partners to work together to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal children, families and communities. No single federal department, nor any one government or organization, on its own holds exclusive policy responsibility for resolving issues that affect Aboriginal people.

The actions taken by Government since 2007 provide the platform to help build a better Canada for Aboriginal people and communities right now and for the future. Critical groundwork is underway; conditions are in place for successes to occur. In moving forward, the Government of Canada is committed to "sustaining momentum" by partnering with others to achieve meaningful results for these communities and the country as a whole.

Annex A: Kelowna Accord Implementation Act

On June 18, 2008, the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act* received Royal Assent.

An Act to implement the Kelowna Accord Whereas Parliament recognizes that narrowing and ultimately eliminating the troubling gaps between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal Canadians that exist in the areas of education, skills development, health care, housing, access to clean water and employment, as provided for in the Kelowna Accord, are essential to improving the socio-economic conditions of aboriginal people in Canada;

And whereas the Government of Canada entered into the Kelowna Accord with the Government of Canada's provinces and territories and with Canada's aboriginal leadership, and it is incumbent upon the Government of Canada to honour its word and its commitments;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows;

1. This Act may be cited as the *Kelowna Accord Implementation Act*.
2. The Government of Canada shall immediately take all measures necessary to implement the terms of the accord, known as the "Kelowna Accord", that was concluded on November 25, 2005 at Kelowna, British Columbia, by the Prime Minister of Canada, the first ministers of each of the provinces and territories of Canada and the leaders of the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Métis National Council, the Native Women's Association of Canada and the Congress of Aboriginal People.
 - i. At the end of the fiscal year beginning on April 1, 2007, and at the end of each of the next four fiscal years, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development shall prepare a report

reviewing the progress made by the Government of Canada in fulfilling its obligations under the Kelowna Accord during that fiscal year, and shall cause the report to be laid before each House of Parliament within sixty days after the end of the fiscal year or, if that House is not then sitting, on any of the first fifteen days next thereafter that the House is sitting.

Annex B: CEAP Report

- [Implementing Canada's Economic Action Plan: Impacts for Aboriginal and Northern Communities](#)
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