

## **4. The Costs and Benefits of Investing in Literacy in the NWT**

The costs and benefits of investing in literacy and adult basic education (ABE) in the NWT have not been determined. This chapter provides a model for estimating the costs and benefits of investing in literacy and ABE. The cost-benefit model is based on limited quantitative and qualitative information and would be enhanced by more complete and/or accessible information on:

- the inputs and the outputs of literacy and ABE programs. For example, annual investments in literacy and ABE are based on delivery costs rather than enrolment. This hinders direct linkages between investment inputs and outputs.
- the characteristics of adult learners. For example, data are not maintained or managed in a manner to readily discern overall literacy levels at entry, learner academic and employment goals, learner academic and skill needs, completion time and support needs. As such, it has been necessary to make certain assumptions that may not account for the wide variety of student circumstances and costs.

The cost-benefit model would also be improved with longitudinal data examining the relationship of short-term investments in literacy and ABE to longer-term impacts in daily living activities.

### **4.1 The Costs**

As discussed in Chapter 2, all adults (15 or more years of age) who have not completed grade 12 are considered to have literacy needs. The 1999 NWT Labour Force Survey enumerated 9,429 NWT adults with literacy needs. To meet these needs, it is estimated that over \$25 million is invested annually in education, literacy and ABE programs. The distribution of literacy and basic education funding gives priority to younger adult learners.

The annual public investment in literacy and basic education programs is:

- \$22.3 million to NWT community schools to meet the literacy and basic education needs of young adult learners (persons age 15-24 years). An estimated 3,686 young adult learners are

served by these resources. This represents approximately 39% of the potential adult literacy need in the NWT.<sup>75</sup>

- \$2.93 million in literacy and ABE to Aurora College and community-based programs. These funds are targeted at 5,743 adults with literacy needs who are 25 or more years of age.<sup>76</sup> This represents approximately 61% of the potential literacy need in the NWT.

The annual public investment in Aurora College and community-based literacy and ABE programs supports:

- adult learners at three NWT campuses, up to 15 full-time community learning centres and various part-time programs in other NWT communities.
- instruction for an enrolment of 285 full-time equivalents (FTE) in ABE (184 full-time with a minimum of three courses per semester, and 1007 part-time students in campus and community-based programs).

The average annual FTE cost of literacy and basic education in the NWT is estimated at:

- \$8,900 per FTE enrolment in NWT community schools, and
- \$10,273 per FTE enrolment in College and community-based ABE programs.<sup>77</sup>

While the circumstances of individual learners vary widely, it is assumed that:

1. most ABE students begin their academic studies at the 120 level, and
2. three years may be required to meet the literacy needs of full-time adult students (e.g. the achievement of grade 12-level education or the necessary courses to qualify for entry into college certificate or diploma programs, or university undergraduate programs).

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<sup>75</sup> The total NWT schools budget in 1998/99 was \$81 million. The \$22.3 million investment in NWT schools is \$8900 per FTE x 2500 estimated enrolment age 15+ in NWT schools.

<sup>76</sup> does not include contributions to the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre.

<sup>77</sup> Funding allocated to the Tree of Peace adult education program is not included in this figure.

Based on 1998/99 budget and enrolment data, entry at the 120 level and exit at ABE 140,150 and 160 level,

- an investment of \$30,819 may be required to meet the literacy needs of each adult learner in the NWT.

The estimated annual investment per FTE enrolment in ABE is 15% higher than in NWT schools.

## **4.2 The Benefits**

The benefits of investing in literacy are wide ranging. As illustrated in Chapter 2, higher level literacy within the NWT adult population:

- reduces the incidence of poverty and the costs of social programs,
- improves the development and life chances of children and youth,
- strengthens health status, quality of life and sense of well-being,
- reduces the costs of medical care, hospital stays, physician visits and medical transport,
- improves public participation in government and community services,
- enables better quality and accountability of government and community services,
- supports fairness and equality in all aspects of society,
- improves economic performance at the worker, business, industry, territorial and national level,
- enhances the capacity of northerners to respond to the new demands of northern government, a knowledge-based economy and more complex workplaces,
- strengthens accountability and the performance of the NWT education system,
- reduces rates of incarceration and recidivism,
- enhances rehabilitative efforts in correctional institutions,
- reduces the costs of the justice system,
- supports the expression and protection of basic rights and freedoms, and
- reduces disparities within the population, particularly between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal northerners.

At this time, lack of data limit the extent to which many of these benefits can be quantified.

Public investment in literacy and ABE combined with the investment in community schools is gradually reducing the incidence of low literacy in the NWT. In quantitative terms, fewer people with low literacy may result in the following.

### Higher Participation and Achievement

The rate of higher level literacy is gradually improving in the NWT.<sup>78</sup> Improving literacy rates are enabling more adults to participate in society, achieve greater self-sufficiency and contribute to the well being of their families and communities. Improving literacy rates are enabling more adults to qualify for a high school diploma or enrol in a college certificate/diploma or university degree program.

Between 1994 and 1999:

- Grade achievement contributed to a 3% decline in the NWT working age population without secondary school education (high school diploma). Over this period, the percent of NWT working age people with less than a high school diploma declined from 34% to 32%.<sup>79</sup> This reduction was entirely due to fewer working age people with less than grade 9.
- Increasing enrolment in senior high school grades and 1,235 high school graduates contributed to higher literacy levels. Grade extensions for NWT community schools and implementation of the age-grade appropriate policy are factors in increases in enrolment and graduation.
- Investment in literacy and ABE resulted in 1843 FTE enrolments and an estimated 239 graduates. Overall, 35% may be completing courses.<sup>80</sup> Between 1991/92 and 1998/99, ABE/Math and ABE/English data show that only 37% of completions are at the 140-160 level. This level qualifies students for entry into certificate, diploma, and undergraduate programs. Adjusting for the lower completion rate, it is estimated that these programs graduated 239 students over the five years, an average of 47 students each year.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>Working age population with a high school diploma or more education.

<sup>79</sup>1745 fewer working age people with less than a high school diploma calculated as the change in overall working age population @ 1434 combined with the 311 decrease in working age population with less than grade 12 diploma.

<sup>80</sup> 645 of an enrolment of 1843 FTE.

<sup>81</sup> Comprehensive tracking information is necessary to accurately assess the effect of the ABE/Academic studies program on literacy needs in the NWT. ACCESS enrolment may not be included.

### Educated Northerners

Improving literacy levels contributed to small increases in NWT labour force participation and employment rates.

- Between 1994-1999, NWT labour force participation rates increased by .5% and the employment rate grew by 1.2%.
- In 1999, NWT adults with a high school diploma, degree or other certificate/diploma had more than twice as many employment opportunities as people with less than grade 9 or no high school diploma.
- Most adult learners (93%) enrolled in ABE are Aboriginal. Improving labour force participation and employment among Aboriginal adults suggests that ABE may be contributing to improved economic prospects for this segment of the population.
- Higher education levels among Aboriginal people improve job entry level qualifications.

### Higher Employment Earnings

NWT adults achieving a high school diploma, degree or other certificate/diploma have excellent opportunities to substantially increase their earnings.

- An individual who improves his/her literacy and achieves a high school diploma may increase their annual labour income from \$13,776 to \$43,619.<sup>82</sup>

Based on potential increases in earnings, two scenarios are presented to describe the potential annual impact of higher literacy on NWT labour income and government revenues.<sup>83</sup>

1. If the 47 people who completed ABE were not working and recruited to new jobs, the potential increase in annual NWT labour income would be \$2 million. The additional \$2 million in NWT labour income represents additional payroll and personal tax revenue to government of \$349,000 annually.

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<sup>82</sup> from **Towards Excellence, A Report on Education in the Northwest Territories**. The average income for a worker with a grade 12 diploma was \$43,619 compared to \$29,843 for a worker with grade 8 or less in 1996. (Skilled/high school diploma \$43,619 - unskilled less than grade \$29,843 = \$13,776)

<sup>83</sup> An increase in NWT labour income may occur if those achieving more highly skilled jobs replace non-resident workers in the NWT or are recruited to new jobs.

2. If the 47 people who completed ABE progressed from unskilled to new semi-skilled or skilled jobs, the potential increase in annual NWT labour income would be \$650,000. The additional \$650,000 in NWT labour income represents additional payroll and personal tax revenue to the government of \$175,000 annually.<sup>84</sup>

Income and taxation impacts are shown in Tables 4-1 and 4-2. The estimates provided in these tables refer to a one-time investment but show annual benefits. The magnitude of these benefits is best understood by assessing impacts over the working life of individuals who achieve higher level literacy.

**Table 4-1: Estimated Incremental Tax Revenue and Social Program Saving Per Individual Investment in Literacy**

<b>Individual Literacy Investment</b>	<b>\$30,819*</b>
<b>Benefits</b>	
<b>Income Opportunity</b>	<b>\$43,000</b>
<b>Average Federal Tax</b>	<b>\$ 4,817</b>
<b>Average NWT Tax</b>	<b>\$ 2,168</b>
<b>NWT Payroll Tax</b>	<b>\$ 430</b>
<b>Income Support Saving</b>	<b>\$ 3,068</b>
<b>Public Housing Rent Recovery</b>	<b>\$ 6,000**</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$16,483</b>

**Notes:**

Net GNWT tax revenue on \$43,000: NWT payroll tax + NWT tax – Grant offset = \$827.

Income Support benefits vary with geographic location, family size, income and assets. Public housing rental recovery rates also vary with household income, type of housing arrangement, etc.

\*Based on an average of three years to achieve prerequisites for entry into post-secondary level studies.

\*\*Based on estimates provided in the 1995 NWT Diamonds Project Environmental Impact Assessment.

### Savings

A positive change in NWT literacy levels may result in savings to GNWT social programs such as Income Support and public housing.

- NWT Income Support clients achieving higher level literacy have an excellent opportunity for recruitment to full-time/long-term employment. This has the potential to reduce and/or

<sup>84</sup> Source: GNWT Department of Finance. The calculation includes income tax collected by the GNWT adjusted for change in formula financing, and 1% payroll tax.

terminate reliance on Income Support and housing subsidies. A change of this nature may help to sustain the NWT Income Support Program and public housing subsidies.

Based on potential increases in earnings, the following scenario describes the potential savings to the NWT Income Support and public housing programs.

1. If the 47 people who completed ABE were recruited from the NWT Income Support Program to a job earning \$43,000, the NWT IS Program could incur annual savings of \$169,576 in IS beneficiary payments.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, savings for public housing subsidies calculated at \$500 per month could generate additional savings of \$282,000.<sup>86</sup>

**Table 4-2: Estimated Incremental Tax Revenue and Social Program Saving to the NWT based on the Annual Public Investment in Literacy and ABE**

**Costs:**

Territorial Literacy Investment	\$2,930,000
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**Benefits:**

Incremental Labour Income (47 completions)	\$2,021,000
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Average Federal Tax	\$ 226,399
Average NWT Tax	\$ 101,896
NWT Payroll Tax	\$ 20,210
Income Support Saving	\$ 144,196
Public Housing Rent Recovery	\$ 282,000
Total	\$ 774,701

Notes: Net GNWT tax revenue on \$2 million: NWT payroll tax + NWT tax – Grant offset = \$38,869

<sup>85</sup> GNWT Bureau of Statistics. 2000. **Statistics Quarterly**. In 1999, 3,539 Income Support beneficiaries and their dependants received IS support payments of \$12,777,000 for an average of payment of \$3,608 per beneficiary. 76% of working age individuals with a high school diploma are employed.

<sup>86</sup> BHP. 1995. **NWT Diamonds Project Environmental Impact Statement Volume 4 Impacts and Mitigation**





## **5. Conclusions**

### **5.1 The Literacy Problem**

No testing is done in the NWT to determine the actual number of adults (persons 15 or more years of age) who have literacy problems. It is estimated that one-third to one-half of the NWT adult population lack adequate literacy skills to successfully participate in society. These estimates show the seriousness of the literacy problem in the NWT. The literacy problem extends beyond English language skills to the NWT's official Aboriginal languages.

Literacy plays a pivotal role in all facets of daily living. Persons with higher level literacy have significant socio-economic and political advantage over those persons without these skills. In the NWT, the Aboriginal population has the greatest literacy problem. It is estimated that as many as two-thirds of Aboriginal adults lack adequate literacy skills to successfully participate in society.

Gaps in literacy levels between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the NWT are significant. Literacy levels among non-Aboriginal people in the NWT are greater than the national average. At the same time, literacy levels among Aboriginal people in the NWT are lower than the national average and lower than levels among other Aboriginal people in Canada. Gaps in literacy levels contribute to the socio-economic and political disparities that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the NWT. These gaps do not bode well for evolving Aboriginal self-government arrangements, Aboriginal economic development strategies or the overall social and economic security of Aboriginal people in the NWT.

Low literacy among today's adults has implications for future generations. Arresting the cycle of low literacy now can only have positive consequences to the future health and well being of all northerners.

## **5.2 The Framework for Literacy and Adult Basic Education in the NWT**

The seriousness and pervasiveness of the literacy problem in the NWT is such that no one group alone can address this issue. At the present time, a number of groups are endeavouring to address literacy problems in the NWT. Employers, Aurora College, early childhood groups, Aboriginal language communities, labour and the NWT Literacy Council are examples. However, there are few mechanisms to link literacy efforts or to encourage co-operative approaches to solving this problem. A fragmented rather than a systematic, structured approach to addressing literacy has resulted in very little real progress being made on this problem.

The problem of literacy and low education has been recognized in a wide variety of documents and in the endeavours of a broad range of stakeholders. However, there is no legislation or widely understood policy framework for addressing the NWT literacy problem in any systematic way. The direction for literacy and ABE programs provided in a variety of GNWT strategies has in many respects, set these programs up for failure. For example, various strategies have envisioned literacy and ABE programs that:

- are parts of a 'community learning network' but this network has not been developed in many NWT communities.
- use a case management approach similar to the NWT Income Support Program although this approach has not been universally adopted in social and educational programming.
- are driven by community groups although few communities have the capacity to develop and deliver programs.
- are developed and implemented through ongoing partnerships despite an absence of supports to enable successful partnerships.

The absence of any systematic approach to literacy and adult basic education programs in the NWT has created a myriad of problems for the delivery of literacy and ABE programs. These problems have existed for at least the last two decades and relate to the inadequacy of :

- promotion and awareness of the value of literacy,

- learner supports,
- instructor supports,
- funding arrangements,
- program options,
- linkages with other educational endeavours,
- partnerships, and
- program performance monitoring and evaluation activities.

The lack of structure or system for literacy and adult basic education programs in the NWT is also reflected in the funding priority and the funding arrangements for these programs. In this research, the funding and program environment for literacy and adult basic education was likened to “*a broken mirror scattered on the floor. It is almost impossible to fit the pieces together.*”

Unstable, fragmented and competitive funding arrangements together with uncertain funding levels have impacted on program partnerships, accessibility, options and performance. Funding for literacy and ABE has also created inequities among students, within programs and among communities.

Across Canada, funding for adult education is tending to focus on higher rather than lower level literacy programs. Refocusing literacy and basic education spending on higher level literacy is also under consideration in the NWT. Currently, the distribution of funding for literacy and basic education clearly gives priority to young adult learners who are typically served through NWT community schools. At the present time, it is estimated that Aurora College meets 13% of the NWT adult literacy need and NWT community schools meet 27%. The remaining 60% of NWT adult literacy needs may be met to some extent by Aboriginal organizations, workplace programs or family literacy activities but information on these efforts is unavailable. There are no mechanisms requiring broadly-based or multi-sector partnerships to ensure that scarce resources are used most effectively to address the serious problem of literacy in the NWT.

### **5.3 Costs and Benefits**

A solid information base is required to assess the costs and benefits of investing in literacy and adult basic education programs. In the NWT, input-output data are not collected or managed in any consistent way. Literacy and adult basic education programs are not monitored or regularly evaluated to demonstrate the performance of public funding invested in these programs. The absence of a performance or accountability framework for literacy and adult basic education detracts from opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the existing investment in these programs. This situation also limits the extent to which new initiatives can be rationalized.

In conclusion, the authors of this report believe that the very serious literacy problem among Aboriginal people in the NWT must be addressed, and it must be addressed now. However, no substantive improvements can be made in literacy and education levels until long-standing program issues are addressed. Addressing these program issues will require the collective commitment and action of all literacy stakeholders in the NWT.

Currently, the GNWT is developing a comprehensive literacy strategy. Non-government, Aboriginal and private sector organizations are not active players in the development of this strategy. The authors of this report believe that the government component of a comprehensive literacy strategy could provide the platform for building a multi-sector and a truly comprehensive approach to addressing literacy problems in the NWT. The NWT Literacy Council has a valuable role in promoting collective action on this issue.

## 6. Recommendations

### **The Literacy Problem:**

**Problem:** Low literacy is primarily an Aboriginal issue.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council actively and visibly engage Aboriginal organizations in the NWT within its structure and in its activities with the intent of better responding to literacy needs and setting an example to others of co-operative approaches to addressing literacy problems.

### **The Right to Literacy:**

**Problem:** Although 32% to 50% of NWT adults do not have adequate literacy skills to successfully function in society, literacy and adult basic education are not mandated public services in the NWT.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council gain support from NWT and national organizations to petition the GNWT to recognize the right of all adults in the NWT to literacy and basic education by amending the NWT Education Act or enacting an Adult Literacy and Basic Education Act.

### **Policy Vacuum:**

**Problem:** Key literacy stakeholders have not endorsed the policy framework for literacy and adult basic education programs in the NWT. Further, the policy framework does not clearly direct a continuum of long-term, stable and appropriate programming that is accessible to all adults in the NWT.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT Education, Culture and Employment to provide a policy framework for literacy and adult basic education programs that supports a continuum of long-term, stable and appropriate literacy and ABE programs that are accessible to all adults in the NWT.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT Education, Culture and Employment to gain approval of the literacy and adult basic education policy from Aboriginal, industry, non-government and educational organizations prior to implementation.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT Education, Culture and Employment to conduct periodic public reviews of the literacy and adult basic education policy.

**The Vision vs. the Reality of Literacy and ABE Programs:**

**Problem:** ECE's vision for literacy and ABE programming is not reflected in reality.

There is little or no evidence of a community learning network, a case management approach to social and educational programs, community-based capacity, or wide-spread, ongoing partnerships to support the development and delivery of sustainable and appropriate literacy and adult basic education programs.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT Education, Culture and Employment to evaluate both the environment for and performance of literacy and adult education programs with the view to developing a system and a structure for these programs in the NWT.

**At Least Two Decades of Program Issues:**

**Problem:** Inconsistent and inadequate funding are two of a lengthy list of problems that have undermined the effectiveness of literacy and ABE programs in the NWT.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to develop substantive proposals for addressing long-standing literacy and ABE program issues including student and instructor supports, co-ordination, communication, targeting, performance, funding, partnerships at all levels, and accountability. Refinement of these proposals should be the subject of consultations with literacy stakeholders throughout the NWT.

It is recommended that at the completion of consultations that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to include these proposals as part of the public government component of the NWT-wide comprehensive literacy strategy called for in the July 7, 2000 motion of the NWT Legislative Assembly.

### **Measurement of Literacy:**

**Problem: Education attainment as a measure of literacy does not accurately describe literacy needs in the NWT.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request support from the National Literacy Secretariat (NLS) and the GNWT Bureau of Statistics to petition Statistics Canada to include the NWT in the upcoming International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). Due to the small size of the NWT population, it is recommended that persons in NWT institutions also be included in the IALS.

### **Literacy has no borders.**

**Problem: The seriousness and pervasiveness of the literacy problem in the NWT is such that no one group alone can address this issue.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request support from the GNWT to form a multi-sector Literacy Steering Committee involving public and Aboriginal governments, and private sector, labour, educational and community organizations to:

1. launch a multi-media promotional campaign to create awareness of the benefits of literacy to the individual, family and society.
2. commit to an accord or multi-party agreement to recognize and address literacy as a fundamental component of all policy, strategic and program initiatives. (e.g. as a 'literacy lens').
3. evolve sub-Committees similar to tripartite committees in Canada's Prairie Provinces to address specific literacy, basic education and essential skill needs, for example family literacy, Aboriginal language literacy and workplace literacy.
4. develop a NWT-wide literacy and adult basic education strategy to be endorsed by all sectors.

It is recommended that in response to the July 7<sup>th</sup> motion of the NWT Legislative Assembly that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to table the government component of the NWT literacy strategy with the multi-sector committee to provide a basis for evolving a comprehensive, NWT-wide multi-sector literacy strategy. Further, it is recommended that a

timeline be established that ensures the completion of a multi-sector NWT-wide literacy strategy by the year 2001.

**GNWT-NWT Literacy Council Relationship:**

**Problem:** While the GNWT and the NWT Literacy Council share some common goals, there is no basis for an ongoing relationship between the two parties.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council submit a proposal to the GNWT requesting core funding, a partnership arrangement and an accountability framework with the view to developing a strong working relationship with the GNWT on literacy issues.

**Funding for Literacy and Adult Basic Education:**

**Problem:** Across Canada and in the NWT, spending on higher rather than low level literacy programs is increasing in priority.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council monitor spending trends within the NWT to ensure that access and support to low level literacy programs are maintained for all persons in need. It is further recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request that ECE and Aurora College publish annual reports detailing the target and performance of public literacy and ABE funding.

**Funding Partnerships:**

**Problem:** Declining funding priority for literacy and adult basic education programs have negatively impacted on partnerships, program accessibility, program options, program performance and community-based solutions.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request the GNWT to alter the public funding structure for literacy and adult basic education programs to enable communities and Aurora College to more effectively partner to address literacy and ABE needs.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request the GNWT to establish a dedicated long-term literacy partnership fund to enable communities without base funding to



plan and allocate resources for continuous and effective delivery of community-based literacy and adult basic education programs.

In the immediate term, it is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request the GNWT ECE to combine the entire \$650,000 Community Skills for Work Program fund with the Community Literacy Project fund (\$280,000) and make this combined fund available to partnerships which demonstrate a commitment to and show evidence of increasing literacy levels.

#### **Year to Year Funding:**

**Problem: Public funding for literacy limits: 1) long term and consistent delivery of programming in two-thirds of NWT communities, and 2) opportunities for students in the majority of NWT communities to develop higher level literacy skills.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request that the GNWT replace year to year, project funding with multi-year funding arrangements in order to create greater stability and certainty for literacy and adult basic education programs and students in the NWT.

#### **Funding Inequities:**

**Problem: Although base funding for Aurora College and Community Learning Centres has increased, campus and community-based adult basic education services may be eroded due to costs associated with staffing. Further, a very small Community Literacy Project fund is inadequate to effectively deliver community literacy programs.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request the GNWT to ensure that there is no reduction in Aurora College campus or community literacy and adult basic education programming.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request that the GNWT review and subsequently increase public funding for adult basic education and community literacy projects

to establish a more equitable and sustainable level of funding for these programs throughout the NWT.

In the immediate term, it is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request that the GNWT adjust base funding for literacy and adult basic education programs to accommodate increased costs resulting from ACCESS programs, the inclusion of the Holman Community Learning Centre and the ratification of the collective agreement for Aurora College staff.

**Results Based Funding:**

**Problem: The impacts of and ability to rationalize public funding are severely limited by the absence of an evaluation or accountability framework for literacy and adult basic education programs in the NWT.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to develop and implement with other program partners, an evaluation framework for literacy and adult basic education programs that supports best practices, student successes and public accountability.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to require a clear and consistent monitoring process be implemented by each literacy and adult basic education program in order to measure program performance.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request that the GNWT make annual literacy and adult basic education monitoring reports available to the public.

**Workplace Literacy Funding:**

**Problem: There is no provider of workplace literacy services in the NWT.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request that the GNWT establish a workplace literacy fund to support needs assessments, project planning and pilot projects in NWT workplaces. For application to the fund, industry should demonstrate a commitment to share in

the costs of needs assessments, planning and pilot projects and an ability to finance ongoing delivery of workplace literacy programs. It is recommended that the multi-sector sub-Committee on workplace literacy administer the workplace literacy fund.

**Student Funding:**

**Problem: Many adults including persons with disabilities are ineligible for financial and learner supports to enable them to pursue literacy and adult basic education.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council work with representative organizations such as the NWT Council for Disabled Persons to petition the GNWT to develop a student financial assistance program targeted at adults with disabilities enrolled in literacy and adult basic education programs with benefits comparable to the NWT Student Financial Assistance Program.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council monitor the supports available to NWT students enrolled in literacy and adult basic education programs to ensure that there is no cost to the individual student.

**Accredited Programs and Institutions:**

**Problem: Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) funding must be applied to an accredited program or institution but the guidelines for accreditation are unclear, creating barriers for individuals and community groups offering literacy and basic education programming.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to clarify the guidelines respecting program and institutional accreditation with the view to eliminating barriers to individuals seeking literacy and adult basic education, and community groups offering these services.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to adopt the standard Adult Basic Education curriculum as the mechanism for establishing accreditation.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to provide training to Aurora College and community-based adult basic education program instructors to ensure consistent and professional implementation of the standard Adult Basic Education curriculum.

**Competition for Scarce Resources:**

**Problem:** The environment for literacy and adult education program funds is competitive and not conducive to effective or efficient public spending.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council advocate for the adoption throughout the NWT of collaborative and cooperative models for decision-making for literacy and adult basic education funding. Models in place in the Beaufort-Mackenzie Delta and Dogrib Regions provide good examples of collaboration and cooperation.

**A Continuum of Literacy and Adult Basic Education:**

**Problem:** While the research shows that a continuum of literacy and adult education programs is needed to address the very serious issue of literacy, few options are available to NWT persons in need.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT to develop a continuum of literacy and adult basic education options that would have:

- Family literacy funded as a component of early childhood programs,
- NWT schools implement literacy throughout the K to 12 curriculum, making literacy and numeracy acquisition a priority,
- English as a Second Language (ESL) programming funded and supported throughout the NWT,
- School to work literacy and essential skills programming available in NWT schools, and
- A variety of adult literacy, basic education and job-literacy skills programs available in each community in the NWT.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council advise the GNWT to feature this continuum of literacy and adult basic education programs as the centre-piece of the government component of a NWT-wide comprehensive literacy strategy.

### **Adult Basic Education and the College:**

**Problem:** Community-based literacy and adult basic education programs are an important source of students for higher level literacy and post-secondary education programs offered by Aurora College campuses. There is low recognition of the pivotal role that community-based programs play in support of Aurora College.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council request the GNWT and Aurora College to accord priority and support to the development of sustainable community-based literacy and adult basic education programs.

### **Aboriginal Language Literacy:**

**Problem:** Aboriginal languages are in danger.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council partner with Aboriginal language communities and the GNWT:

- to ensure that the GNWT Aboriginal Language Strategy actively and visibly supports the maintenance and development of Aboriginal language fluency and literacy.
- to develop an awareness and promotional campaign that engages Aboriginal communities in developing fluency and literacy in all NWT official Aboriginal languages.
- to collect and assemble a comprehensive library of Aboriginal language resource materials.
- to seek additional resources to support the goals of Aboriginal language communities to assemble and publish language materials, train Aboriginal adult literacy instructors, and design and deliver literacy programs.

### **Family Literacy:**

**Problem:** While early childhood programs with family literacy components are having a positive impact on breaking the cycle of illiteracy and high risk behaviours, there is no dedicated funding to family literacy programs.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council lobby the GNWT to recognize and strengthen the role of literacy in early childhood development programs.

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council lobby the GNWT to fund a family literacy component as part of the integrated early childhood action plan that includes the current Healthy Children Initiative, currently under development by GNWT H&SS and ECE.

### **Health**

**Problem: A substantial body of information draws direct linkages between literacy and health status but these linkages are not evident in the NWT.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request GNWT Health and Social Services and regional H&SS Boards to address literacy in health promotion campaigns, orientation and professional development programs for community-based staff, and in policy and program initiatives.

### **Workplace Literacy:**

**Problem: Literacy needs in the workplace are not well recognized.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request the GNWT to make a commitment to literacy as a fundamental component of labour market development. This commitment should be expressed through:

- the provision of funding for a co-ordinator position to undertake the groundwork to develop and maintain a multi-sector Steering Committee on Literacy which involves industry.
- ongoing support and commitment to the work of a multi-sector Steering Committee on Literacy.

### **The Justice System:**

**Problem: Low literacy is a significant factor in incarceration and recidivism rates in the NWT.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council petition GNWT Justice to:

- include literacy testing as a component of its new information management system.
- adjust programming within NWT correctional facilities to recognize and address literacy issues and enhance rehabilitative efforts.

- work in partnership to support inmates released into the community to enter into literacy and adult education programs.
- promote literacy and adult education throughout the justice system to improve citizen participation and expression of rights.

**Clear Language:**

**Problem: Access to programs and services by persons with low literacy is impacted by the language used in legislation, program guidelines and promotions.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council formally request GNWT Departments and agencies, the Government of Canada and Aboriginal governments to adopt a clear language approach to the production of program and services materials.

**Quality of Services:**

**Problem: The effectiveness and efficiency of public services may be compromised by low literacy in the workplace.**

It is recommended that the NWT Literacy Council advocate for workplace literacy in all public environments to ensure that NWT residents are treated equitably and fairly, and public servants are not compromised in their ability to discharge their responsibilities.

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## APPENDIX B

### List of Contacts

Anne Marie Dawe, BHP Inc., Yellowknife  
Bertha Black, NSR Employment Solutions Inc., Rae-Edzo  
Bill Chipman, GNWT, Yellowknife Correctional Centre, Yellowknife  
Bill Hoggarth, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife  
Bronwyn Waters, GNWT, Health and Social Services, Yellowknife  
Bruce Evelyn, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife  
Carolyn Koe-Simpson, Wha Ti  
Catherine Moore, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife  
Diane Rumble, Chief Jimmy Bruneau School, Rae-Edzo  
Doug Richie, GNWT, Health and Social Services, Yellowknife  
Edith Weber, Aurora College, Fort Smith  
Ellen Bourassa, Aurora College, Yellowknife  
Eric Jones, Aurora College, Fort Smith  
France Benoit, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife  
Gay Kennedy, GNWT, Municipal and Community Affairs, Yellowknife  
Gilbert, David and Julian (last names withheld by request) participants in Diavik  
sponsored skills training, Rae-Edzo  
Glenn Zelinski, Diavik Diamond Mines Inc., Yellowknife  
Auke Pramsmaa, HRDC, Yellowknife  
Jamie Watts, Aurora College, Fort Smith  
Jim Martin, Dogrib Community Services Board, Rae-Edzo  
Joanne Simpson, NWT/Canada Service Centre, Yellowknife  
John Monroe, GNWT, Department of Finance, Yellowknife  
Judy Langford, GNWT, Department of Justice, Yellowknife  
Karen Horn, Aurora College, Yellowknife  
Lana Paulson, Gameti First Nation Band, Gameti  
Larry Jones, NWT Housing Corporation, Yellowknife  
Laura Duncan, Wha Ti First Nation Council, Wha Ti



Lesley Allen, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife  
Linda LeBlanc, Dogrib Community Services Board, Rae-Edzo  
Lise Labonte, National Literacy Secretariat, Ottawa  
Liz Baile, Yellowknife Catholic Schools, Yellowknife  
Margaret Imrie, Aurora College, Fort Smith  
Marie Darkes, Aurora College, Fort Smith  
Mary Richardson, Aurora College Learning Centre, Rae-Edzo  
Melody McLeod, GNWT, ECE, Aboriginal Languages, Yellowknife  
Ray Tuccaro, GNWT, Yellowknife Correctional Centre, Yellowknife  
Rita Mueller, Chief Jimmy Bruneau School, Rae-Edzo  
Roy Kaiser, GNWT, Department of Justice, Yellowknife  
Shirley Kermeys-Jones, GNWT, Department of Justice, Community Justice, Yellowknife  
Ted Blondin, Dogrib Treaty 11 Council, Rae-Edzo  
Wendy McPherson, GNWT, ECE, Yellowknife

# Literacy in the Dogrib Region - A Case Study

## 1. An Introduction to the Dogrib Region

The Dogrib (Treaty 11) Region has a population of 2,471 spread over four communities - Rae-Edzo (pop. 1,662), Wha Ti (pop. 418), Gameti (pop. 256) and Wekweti (pop. 135). Rae-Edzo is the political, business, administrative, health and education centre for the Dogrib Region. Rae-Edzo is approximately 113 km by all-weather road from Yellowknife. The small traditional community of Wekweti is about 180 air km from the Ekati Diamond Mine site.

The Dogrib Region's population is predominately persons of Dogrib Dene ancestry. The Dogrib Dene are members of the North American Athapaskan linguistic community. Between 1991 and 1996, the Region's population grew by 7.8% (from 2292 to 2471) and will likely continue to increase at an average of 1.3% per annum. Population growth is primarily due to high birth rates. In 1995, the birth rate in Dogrib Region communities was 24.7 per 1,000 population compared to 20.4 in the NWT and 12.9 in Canada.

In 1996, working age adults (15 years of age and older) made-up 65% of the Region's population. About 8% of these persons are 65 or more years of age. In the future, a gradual lowering of birth and mortality rates are expected to account for greater increases in the adult population than in the overall population (2.6% compared to 1.3% per year). By the year 2014, the working age population in the Region is expected to reach 2,411.<sup>1</sup>

The Dogrib people are actively preparing for self-government and land claims implementation. Dogrib organizations and institutions are taking on a range of human service, governance, and land and resource management responsibilities, previously delivered by the Gov't of the NWT or Federal Government. The Dogrib Community Services Board (DCSB) is one of these organizations. Since 1997, the DCSB has been responsible for education, health and social services, and income support. The DCSB continues to take on human service responsibilities and to develop new programs to meet the needs of people in the Region.

Compared to other regions, the Dogrib Region is more directly impacted by the rapidly expanding mining industry in the NWT. Since the mid-1990s, new jobs have been created in this industry as well as in the construction, transportation and service sectors. These new jobs have created new opportunities for the Dogrib people. Industrial

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<sup>1</sup>GNWT, Bureau of Statistics

development has also spawned a wide range of new Dogrib-owned businesses, new industry-community-government relationships, and new goals and aspirations among individuals, families and communities. A goal of many regional residents is to benefit from new job and business opportunities while maintaining traditional renewable resource based harvesting and cultural practices.

## **2. Adult Literacy and Basic Education Programs/Services**

In the 1970s, adult education programs in the Dogrib Region were delivered through the Adult Vocation Training Centre (AVTC) headquartered in Fort Smith. AVTC programs focused on trades training and academic upgrading. AVTC evolved to become Arctic College (now Aurora College). Rae-Edzo is the only regional community with an adult education centre and a lengthy relationship with the College.

- Prior to 1988, adult education activities in the Region were mainly focused in Rae-Edzo and were delivered by regional offices of the GNWT Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) through a network of adult education centres. Two adult educators were employed at the Rae Adult Education Centre - one for students with low level literacy, and the other for students with junior/high school education.
- From 1988 until 1993, the Rae-Edzo School Society delivered adult education in that community.
- Aurora College's Yellowknife Campus expanded its service area to include the Dogrib Region in April 1993.<sup>2</sup>
- In 1997, adult education staff in Rae-Edzo was reduced to one.
- In 1998, Aurora College ceased delivery of ABE programs in Rae-Edzo but has continued to partner with community, regional and business organizations to provide training and skill development programs in the community.

On Oct.1, 2000, the College will transfer the Monfwi Adult Education Centre and one PY in Rae-Edzo to the DCSB. The current adult educator will be assigned to Dogrib language curriculum development and adult education will be delivered by an unfunded PY, reliant on discretionary funding.

*“(Adult education and training) programs are like a broken mirror scattered on the floor, it is almost impossible to fit the pieces together.” (stakeholder view)*

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<sup>2</sup>Lutra Associates Ltd. August 1993. Arctic College Yellowknife Campus - 1993 Education and Training Needs Assessment.

A myriad of single and multi-party adult training initiatives have been undertaken in the Dogrib Region. Training has focussed on short-term skills-based training for employment, academic upgrading and literacy.

- Between 1994 and 1999, Aurora College education/training courses involved 70 full-time and 258 part-time students in Rae-Edzo, Wekweti and Wha Ti, and 66 students in Gameti. (Table 1)

**Table 1: Enrolment in Aurora College Programs in the Dogrib Region, Summer 1994 to Winter 1999,**

Aurora College Programs	Gameti*	Rae-Edzo	Wekweti	Wha Ti
ABE	19	17 FT 91 PT	9 FT 23 PT	17 FT 52 PT
Early Childhood Certificate	13	34 PT	14 PT	
Northern Skills Development (NSD)	15	16 FT		
Homemaker/Personal Care Attendant	14			
Pre-Employment Cooking	5		5 PT	
Teacher Education		7 FT 1 PT		3 FT 3 PT
Aboriginal Language Teacher Education		1		
Heavy Equipment Operator				5 PT
Community Programs				1 PT
Management Studies				1 PT
Community Administration Certificate				4 PT
Tourism Entry Level				24 PT
Total	66	41 FT 126 PT	9 FT 42 PT	20 FT 90 PT

Source: Genesis Group. 1999. **A Proposed Dogrib Human Resource Development Strategy**. prepared for the Dogrib Community Services Board.

Notes: FT = Full -Time PT = Part-Time

Information on the status of students enrolled in programs in Gameti (e.g. part-time or full-time) is not available. Includes individuals attending Investing in People projects (e.g. Northern Skills Development and ABE).

Between 1994 and 1998, 36 Investing in People Program projects were staged in the North Slave Region to address the educational and training needs of income support

- more than one-half (54%) of income support recipients had grade 7 or less education and 44% had grade 8-10 education.
- 54% were women compared to 31% in 1992.
- 64% were between 20-39 years of age.

In Rae-Edzo in 1998,

- almost three quarters (74%) of income support clients had grade 10 or less education of which 20% had grade 7 or less.
- 52% were women compared to 41% in 1992.
- 65% were between 20-39 years of age.

The main reason for receiving income support in the Dogrib Region is “no job/not working”.

The profile of Income Support users is expanded somewhat by a snapshot of participants in Investing in People programs in the North Slave Region.<sup>6</sup> These data show that:

- 70% are women.
- 66% are between 22 and 40 years of age.
- almost an equal number are single/never married and married/living common law.
- 70% learned a language other than English as a child.
- 52% (Dogrib Region only) have less than grade 8.

Adults with weak literacy skills are more likely to live in low-income households than those with stronger literacy<sup>7</sup>, and to experience:

- housing difficulties. The 1999 NWT Housing Corporation's Housing Needs Survey found that 1,033 households in the North Slave Region experience housing difficulties.<sup>8</sup> An estimated three-quarters of households with housing needs are in the Dogrib Region.
- stresses in family relationships. One in 36 people in Rae-Edzo, one in 105 people in Wha Ti and one in 256 people in Gameti may be victims of spousal assault.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>based on interviews with 50 individuals participating in projects in Yellowknife, N'dilo, Rae-Edzo, Gameti, Wekweti and Wha Ti reported in the Education, Culture and Employment. October 1998. **Investing in People Follow up Survey - North Slave Region Draft Final Report**

<sup>7</sup>Shalla, Vivian and Grant Schellenberg. 1998. **The Value of Words: Literacy and Economic Security in Canada** (International Adult Literacy Survey). Human Resources Development Canada and National Literacy Secretariat, Ottawa

<sup>8</sup>North Slave Region includes the four Dogrib region communities and Yellowknife

<sup>9</sup>UMA. 1997. **Rae-Edzo Socio-Economic Profile**. Diavik Diamond Mines Inc.

Children from low-income families are at particular risk, as they may lack the basic elements necessary for learning and development, namely:

- physiological well being- adequate rest, good nutrition and sense of security;
- emotional well being - sense of belonging, love, care and attention; and
- intellectual stimulation - verbal interaction, family play/activities and story-telling.<sup>10</sup>

*“Many children attending elementary school are unable to focus on the tasks and routines to facilitate learning. Such challenges in the case of some school children are clearly related to inadequate rest and sleep deficit, poor nutrition and poor dietary habits, and a lack of positive structure and routine in their lives outside of school. Some children are unable to focus on the tasks and routines that facilitate learning because they are continually dealing with, and confronted by emotional and social issues in their homes and in their community. With these issues pervading their lives, there is little wonder that these children cannot focus on learning math and reading books. Many children are inadequately prepared academically to challenge their first years in school. They lack for example, a rich vocabulary in their native language and/or English, a variety of play experiences and the curiosity that is nurtured through strong parent/child interaction.”<sup>11</sup>*

In 1996, Rae-Edzo was the only community in the Region to have early childhood programs and most were sponsored by the Dogrib Divisional Board of Education.<sup>12</sup> As shown in Table 4, a number of early childhood development and family literacy programs now operate in the Region. While these programs are encouraging family literacy, successes are challenged by low English and very little Dogrib literacy skills, and uncertainty about the value of education. Informants in the Region suggest that the success of these programs also depends on the extent to which materials such as the Nobody's Perfect parenting kit, can be adjusted to accommodate low literacy levels. Family literacy workshops offered in the Region by the NWT Literacy Council have encouraged:

- the use of Dogrib language materials (e.g. children's rhymes) in early childhood programs, and
- family members to work together to use reading and writing materials in the home.

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<sup>10</sup>submission to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy from Dave Matthews, Rae-Edzo educator, dated June 15,2000

<sup>11</sup>Dave Matthews, June 15,2000

<sup>12</sup>Lutra Associates Ltd. November 1996. *Toward a Response to Early Childhood Intervention*. Education Culture and Employment.

The Council notes that incorporating family literacy into other family support and early childhood programs is a cost effective albeit long term approach to improving literacy skills.<sup>13</sup>

*"The Dogrib language is not used as much in our communities as it has been in the past. It is not used for every communication as it once was, and in some contexts its use has diminished significantly."*<sup>14</sup> The 1996 Canada Census reported that the mother tongue of over 2000 people in the NWT is Dogrib and 72% of these people speak Dogrib in the home.<sup>15</sup> Declining numbers of people speaking Dogrib in the home (72%) compared to the number (83%) who identify Dogrib as their most fluent language, indicates that language erosion is occurring.<sup>16</sup>

Regional residents have strong fluency but very low literacy in the Dogrib language. An estimated 80% of people of Dogrib ancestry may have no literacy and only 3% may have good literacy in the Dogrib language.<sup>17</sup> The Proposed Language Plan for the Dogrib Communities identifies 33 individuals with training and experience in Dogrib literacy, language structure, writing, interpretation, translation and Dogrib literacy instructional skills. Dogrib language literacy is greatest among persons who have achieved more than grade 10. A recent study in Gameti also found a high level of fluency (95% of 82 people 16 years of age and over) and a low level of literacy (7%) in the Dogrib language.<sup>18</sup> The Gameti study concludes that efforts should be made to teach more community residents to read and write Dogrib in order to protect the future of the language.

*"Language and culture loss has a strong negative impact on identity and learning. Thirty years ago, the majority (more than 90%) of 5 year old students entering kindergarten*

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<sup>13</sup>from NWT Literacy Council presentation to the NWT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Social Programs, June 1, 2000. Costs are estimated at \$5-\$7,000 per program per year (assuming parental participation).

<sup>14</sup>Dogrib Community Services Board, May 1999. **Proposed Language Plan for the Dogrib Communities**

<sup>15</sup>1996 Canada Census

<sup>16</sup>New Economy Development Group. 1993. **Evaluation of the Canada-NWT Cooperation Agreement for French and Aboriginal Languages in the NWT - Final Report Part II.** prepared for the Government of the NWT. (Characteristics of the Dogrib language group are derived from a sample of 221 people of Dogrib ancestry living in Dettah, Wha Ti, Rae-Edzo and Yellowknife.)

<sup>17</sup>New Economy Development Group. 1993.

<sup>18</sup>Gameti First Nation Band. 1996. **Community Study Gameti.** unpublished. (Persons literate in the Dogrib language may read/write syllabics and/or orthography.)

*were unilingual. They brought into their classroom a strength and fluency in their own native language. Today very few (less than 10%) students entering kindergarten bring such fluency or strength in their native language. This loss of fluency in the native language has not been replaced by fluency in English. Today very few students enter kindergarten with a strong foundation in either their native language or in the English language. Such a foundation is a key ingredient for students to reach their potential in school.”*<sup>19</sup>

## **Literacy in the School**

### ***Community Schools***

Rae-Edzo was the first Dene community in the NWT to take an active role in local education programs. The community established the Rae-Edzo School Society in 1971. To improve access to education and address issues around early school leaving, senior high school grades were phased in at the Chief Jimmy Bruneau School between 1991/92 and 1993/94.<sup>20</sup> Mezi Community School in Wha Ti will offer the grade 12 curriculum in the 2000/2001 school year. Other Dogrib community schools offer up to grade 9 education.

Between 1994 and 1998, an average of 780 students or about one-third of the regional population, were enrolled each year in elementary and secondary schools in the Dogrib Region. In these four years, enrolment fluctuated in Rae-Edzo, mainly due to grade extensions in the community and the success of efforts to encourage and support students to complete their high school education.

In the four years between 1992/93 and 1995/96, the Dogrib Region had 33 high school graduates and an estimated 46 graduates between 1996/97 and 1998/99. (Table 6) In 1999/2000, an estimated 18 students graduated from high school in Rae-Edzo including three mature adult learners (over the age of 25 years). Informants in the Region suggest that students, particularly those whose home community is one of the three smaller Dogrib communities, may require an average of five years to complete grades 10 to 12. This may be due the disruption and stress associated with attending school outside one's own community.

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<sup>19</sup>submission to the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy from Dave Matthews, Rae-Edzo educator, dated June 15,2000

<sup>20</sup>grade 10 became available in 1991/92, grade 11 in 1992/93 and grade 12 in 1993/94.



**Table 6: High School Graduates by Home Community, Dogrib Region 1992/93 to 1998/99**

	'92/93	'93/94	'94/95	'95/96	'96/97	'97/98	'98/99	Total
<b>Gameti</b>	0	0	0	1	-	-	-	1
<b>Rae-Edzo</b>	6	6	11	7	10*	3*	28*	71*
<b>Wekweti</b>	0	0	0	0	-	-	-	0
<b>Wha Ti</b>	1	1	0	0	1*	-	4*	7*
<b>Total</b>	7	7	11	8	11*	3*	32*	79*

Source: GNWT, Dept. of Education, Culture and Employment

Note: \* Figures are estimates. Students graduating from Rae-Edzo may be from other communities in the Region.

The DCSB and the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council have taken extraordinary steps to encourage youth to stay in school and pursue academic study *"but if they want to go into skills training then that's okay too."* (stakeholder view) In the last two years, the Council has contributed \$500,000 each year (from Impact Benefits Agreement funds) to a scholarship fund for post-secondary education. The scholarship fund supplements NWT SFA funding and addresses emergency needs. Informants report that over the past four years:

- the number of individuals attending post-secondary education has increased from 4 to more than 100 students.
- Dogrib students have become more mobile and willing to spend time away from the community in post-secondary studies.
- more support has become available for students (e.g. where possible, students going to educational institutions, go in pairs. Families are assisted to attend graduation. Assistance is also available to bring students home for holidays.)

The majority of students graduating from Chief Jimmy Bruneau School are 19 years of age or more and virtually all (90%) are women. Women are more likely than men to pursue higher level education be due to:

- a lack of employment or other education options
- ABE programs have been offered intermittently. Other adult training opportunities have focussed on developing job skills for jobs in male dominated occupations. Skill development programs for women have included cooking and home care worker training. Few local employment opportunities have been available in these occupations.

- social dynamics in the community.

Women with older children may have more freedom to pursue education; feel responsible

for setting an example for youth; or more willing/less fearful of acknowledging poor literacy skills.

There are conflicting views on the appropriateness of educating mature students in a high school setting, particularly mature students with less than grade 10. Nevertheless, the DCSB endeavours to meet the literacy/numeracy skills needs of mature students who have achieved grade 5 or more education within community schools. The reasons for this are mainly economic. The DCSB maintains that in an environment of shrinking resources (e.g. cutbacks to ABE programs/instructors and school funding linked to enrolment), community schools offer the only economically viable option for adults seeking higher-level literacy/numeracy skills. Community schools cannot and do not accommodate persons with less than grade 5. No literacy/numeracy programming is available in the Region for these adults,

In the Dogrib Region, mature students:

- enter community schools with a wide range of abilities -“*adults comfortable with reading and writing are the ones going to school.*”<sup>21</sup>
- are conscious of their low literacy skills; usually dedicated, conscientious and motivated students; and receptive to new/different educational approaches and/or class placements.
- tend to group together while not isolating themselves from younger students. Mature students become role models particularly for younger relatives (e.g. sons, daughters, nieces, and nephews).
- often become strong advocates of the education system, having had direct experience with the challenges faced by teachers and students.
- do not create friction with other students. These incidents usually occur outside of the school.

Most mature students (including those with low literacy skills) are enrolled in English 23,<sup>22</sup> within a multi-level classroom environment. Local educators estimate that on average, a committed mature student can complete high school within three years. The DCSB reports that the attitude and commitment of teachers contribute to the success of mature students. The DCSB encourages teachers to promote and show the value of literacy in all subject areas. Educators say that as more adults stay/return to school, the need for teachers to become advocates of literacy will be even greater.

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<sup>21</sup>personal communications with local educator(s)

<sup>22</sup>All English classes have been expanded to run for the entire year to provide students with extra exposure/opportunity to enhance literacy.

Educators anticipate an increase in the enrolment of mature students and are concerned about the impact that these students will have on schools that are already operating beyond capacity. One-on-one assistance and other student supports required by adult learners will undoubtedly tax the system.

### *Adult Basic Education (ABE)*

*“Patchwork funding is not the way to do literacy and adult basic education”.* (stakeholder view)

Aurora College sponsored ABE programs ceased to operate in Rae-Edzo in 1998. Since that time, skills-based training has been the focus of adult programs. The movement away from ABE in the community is related mainly to funding issues.

- In 1995/96, the Dogrib Rae Band contributed funding to maintain community-based ABE programs.
- In 1997/98, the Band terminated its sponsorship of ABE students.
- At the same time, the characteristics of ABE program enrolment changed from Band assisted students to income support or UI/EI assisted students. Only a small number, perhaps one-fifth, of this latter group are estimated to have been committed to learning.
- In 1998, the Band became an active partner in skills training.

ABE programs in the Region have also been impacted by an unstable day care environment, which has contributed to student recruitment and attendance problems. (Income support does not provide a child care subsidy if the student’s spouse is not working. Further, Dogrib men traditionally do not take primary responsibility for childcare.) Accessibility issues also plagued ABE programs. In the absence of Band sponsorship, clients not receiving income support or employment insurance could not receive support to attend ABE programs

Historically, ABE programs in Rae-Edzo served students with very low literacy levels (e.g. grade 3-6 education). Motivated students could achieve grade 10 in two to four years. Most (80%) students were women.

For the past five years, uncertainty has been the main characteristic of the ABE programs in Wha Ti. However, residents report that *“at the last minute it (ABE) would come.”* At the time of writing, there was uncertainty about an ABE program in Wha Ti in 2000/2001. ABE programs that have operated in the community have mainly been at the 110 level. Anecdotal information suggests that programs have enrolled 10 to 15 students annually and have an estimated 50% completion rate. Reasons for non-completion are

not documented. Regional informants suggest that the main reasons are - wage employment, family problems, alcohol, frustration with instructors, and/or inappropriate materials.

One very successful ABE program in Wha Ti had:

- an enrolment of 14 including the Chief,
- 10 students who completed the program,
- levels of literacy ranging from illiterate to 120 and 130 level ABE.
- identical materials for all students with a qualified instructor able to adjust materials according to levels/needs.

Since the early 1990s, Gameti has focussed on skills-based training with an ABE component. Successful community partnerships among the Band, Development Corporation, Aurora College, governments, and businesses such as PCL and Robinson's Trucking have been the reasons for this. In 1999, the Band partnered with Aurora College and the NWT Literacy Council to:

- retain two instructors, one of whom was employed by the First Nation.
- deliver a day and an evening upgrading program between October 1999 and March 2000.
- provide flexible, student-centred education that ranged from a phonics program for some to higher level literacy for others, and a computer program.

Most participants in the day program were:

- enrolled in ABE.
- mainly 40+ years of age.
- unemployed with poor literacy skills.
- exposed to new skills but "*none probably progressed.*" (stakeholder view)

The evening program had 12 participants. Most were employed in full or part-time jobs.

Evening students were generally:

- poor attenders.
- tired and lacking interest or energy.
- less motivated than day students, to get more education (mainly because they already had a job).
- embarrassed about having low literacy level (and were reluctant to admit poor literacy).

### *Skills-based Training Programs*

A 1993 needs assessment of persons in the North Slave found that:

- persons living in small communities find business and College partnerships which are linked by employment, basic education and skill training, to be successful training

programs.<sup>23</sup>

- funding and follow-up are important elements in successful partnerships.
- communities were looking to work more closely with the College to address literacy, education and training needs.

The Dogrib Rae Band has been a leader in partnering to bring skills-based training to Rae-Edzo. The Band has matched funding dollars accessed through other sources for many of the programs delivered in Rae-Edzo. Skills-based training programs seek to develop abilities to do carpentry work, lay concrete, operate heavy equipment, etc. Skills-based training programs in Rae-Edzo and other regional communities:

- are job and/or industry driven.
- split time between academic and practical skills training.
- usually run for an eight-month period.
- are funded on a program-specific basis by government and non-government organizations and industry.

Adult learners entering skills-based programs in Rae-Edzo are assessed using the Rosenthal method, then interviewed prior to program entry. The student's vocabulary is used as one indicator of literacy skills. Gaps between grade achieved and the functioning ability of students may be identified in the assessment process. In the last three years, eight high school graduates enrolled in the Rae-Edzo skills-based program were assessed at a grade 8 level. Skills-based programs in Rae-Edzo have:

- an average enrolment of 15.
- participants at three levels - one-third of the class with very low literacy skills; a third with slightly higher skills; and one-third with the skills to successfully complete course materials.
- mainly male participants (In the past three years, seven of 45 participants were women who have expressed interest in non-traditional jobs. None of these women have pursued this goal.)
- a majority of students who complete the program. (Completion rates may be attributed to personal confidence and esteem building in the first two weeks of the program; and efforts to create a safe yet fun learning environment which includes team building and peer tutoring as integral components.)
- participants who by the end of the program, have advanced one level (e.g. from 110 to 120 ABE).

Virtually all (90%) program participants in skills-based programs in Rae-Edzo say that the high school environment has not worked for them. (stakeholder view)

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<sup>23</sup>Lutra Associates Ltd. August 1993

The demand for skills-based programs in Rae-Edzo is high (e.g. 50 or more applications for 15 seats). Band/NSR Solutions Inc. personnel and the instructor screen participants and determine funding to support these students (e.g. from different pots - Income Support, HRDC, AHRDA, IBA). Administration of student funding is cumbersome and time consuming given variable program eligibility, application and reporting guidelines.

The skills-based training instructor in Rae-Edzo also facilitates a self-directed study program. Individuals entering this program are assessed to determine their current academic level and education/employment goals. Between 20 to 25 students enrol in the home study program each year and 90% complete their studies. Approximately 50% of these students do very well. Program participants are usually employed and need to increase skills to stay in their current job or to advance. The facilitator is available for one hour each day for tutoring and assistance.

### *Job Preparatory Training*

In recent months, the focus of skills training in the Dogrib Region has shifted from longer-term academic and skills training to shorter-term preparation for specific jobs in construction and/or mining. A typical job preparation program would:

- be based on a partnership among Diavik Diamonds, the NWT Chamber of Mines, the Dogrib Rae Band, and Aurora College.
- enhance job skills through classroom and hands-on training over a short period. (The most recent program was eight hours/day for six weeks.)
- not have a literacy component.
- see most participants completing the program being employed by Diavik or a contractor. (Those with no literacy skills are required to develop literacy skills.)

The current job preparatory training program in Rae-Edzo is concrete laying. The program is a joint venture between Nahanni Construction, Diavik and the Dogrib Rae Band (NSR Solutions Inc.).

Diavik Diamonds is seeking to train 200 people over the coming year in four NWT regions. Since March 2000, Diavik has become very active in training partnerships in the Dogrib Region, co-sponsoring two-short-term (6 week) training courses (welding, concrete laying) in Rae-Edzo in preparation for mine construction jobs. Persons from other regional communities have also attended. The training module includes professionalism, safety in the work place, safety practices, WHMIS, First Aid/CPR, personal resumes and site environmental regulations. Training is contractor driven - *"the contractor says we need concrete layers then they train people to lay concrete"*. (stakeholder view)

Diavik has a human resources database of Dogrib Region residents. Participants in job preparatory training programs are informally interviewed to discuss personal background (e.g. education, training and work experience) and goals. The minimum education level for a recent program was grade 10, however none of the students were assessed at this level. There were 14 participants enrolled in the first training program and nine are now employed at Diavik. Diavik's performance expectations with respect to skill level were exceeded. Two of 16 participants in one program were illiterate. The "*Hooked on Phonics*" materials were purchased for illiterate students and the facilitator worked with them after hours. To date, the average per student cost for a six-week job preparatory program is \$5700.

In the longer-term, Diavik Diamonds expects to continue partnerships in the Region to provide entry level training, and assist employees to improve their literacy skills for jobs in mine operations. Upgrading (classroom work) may be off-site or at an on-site self-directed training facility. The company will provide on-the-job training.

**Student's View of Job Preparatory Training - *views of three students in Diavik sponsored training:***

- Each had left school in grade 9/10 (in 1992, 1996, 1996); have attended other training/upgrading programs; and worked in the community and at Ekati Mine.
- Education is seen as a continuum and every program attended has enhanced skills and employability.
- Training/education opportunities should create a continuum of learning.
- Career goals are to eventually enter an apprenticeship and "*get a trades ticket*".
- Each sees other participants with low literacy levels enrolled in training courses. Although other participants help them to understand the materials, often these people may be too embarrassed to ask questions.
- Arrangements have been made for verbal first aid testing of people with low literacy.
- Some participants with very good hands-on skills, can't read or write. They need special help and tutors.
- Skills-based training programs should be four to six months not six weeks.
- Training helps people to work as a team.
- All have talked informally to Diavik representatives who they know by name.

### **Literacy in the Workplace**

In 1993, the demand for wage employment was high in all Dogrib communities.<sup>24</sup> Lack of basic education and literacy were identified as the most significant problem facing people of working age.

Low literacy and education create barriers to accessing and maintaining employment, and to positive self-esteem. In southern Canada, employment among persons with low level literacy is less (45%) than for persons with higher literacy levels (74%).<sup>25</sup> This is also the case in the NWT and the Dogrib Region. The 1994 NWT Labour Force Survey found that of persons who want a job in the Dogrib Region, more than one-third (37%) had less than grade 9 education. Only 2% had a high school diploma. (Table 7)

**Table 7: Highest Level of Education and Employment Status, Dogrib Region 1994**

	<b>Rae-Edzo</b>		<b>Gameti</b>		<b>Wekweti</b>		<b>Wha Ti</b>		<b>Total</b>	
	Empl.	Want a Job	Empl.	Want a Job	Empl.	Want a Job	Empl.	Want a Job	Empl.	Want a Job
Pop.15+Yrs	333	448	57	59	24	23	78	123	492	653
<Grade 9	28%	26%	47%	46%	63%	78%	29%	66%	25%	37%
Gr. 9-11	10%	38%	14%	12%	-	9%	17%	20%	10%	31%
HS Diploma	10%	3%	16%	-	-	-	6%	1%	6%	2%
Cert/Diploma	34%	29%	16%	41%	13%	4%	37%	13%	46%	26%
Degree	16%	-	7%	-	25%	-	9%	-	13%	-
Not Provided	2%	4%	-	2%	-	9%	1%	-	-	3%

Source: Government of the NWT, Bureau of Statistics. 1994 NWT Labour Force Survey

The Outreach Worker in Rae-Edzo reports that persons seeking employment submit applications for entry into the Dogrib Region human resource database.<sup>26</sup> Education levels vary from grade three to grade six to grade 12/college however frequently applicants do

<sup>24</sup>Lutra Associates Ltd. August 1993. *Arctic College Yellowknife Campus - 1993 Education and Training Needs Assessment*. Arctic College, Yellowknife

<sup>25</sup>Shalla, Vivian and Grant Schellenberg. 1998. *The Value of Words: Literacy and Economic Security in Canada (International Adult Literacy Survey)*. Human Resources Development Canada and National Literacy Secretariat: Ottawa

<sup>26</sup>maintained by NSR Solutions Inc., a Dogrib Rae Band company



not give their education/training. The reasons for this vary - some don't understand what they are supposed to write; some have problems with sentence structure or putting thoughts down on paper; and some are embarrassed by their education level. Gameti stakeholders identify a skilled carpentry work force in the community but say that low literacy levels prevent many from completing an apprenticeship entrance exam.

A number of Dogrib Region residents are employed by BHP for the Ekati Diamond Mine operations. BHP does not screen applicants by literacy level and there is no minimum literacy criterion for hiring. BHP has found that literacy surfaces as an issue during orientation. BHP estimates that 1/4 to 1/3 of BHP employees (100 people) would benefit from literacy training. BHP has found that there is a stronger correlation of literacy to lengthy work experience than grade level. A literate work force reflects BHP's operating philosophy that places safety as the highest priority in the planning and execution of all activities.<sup>27</sup> Other benefits of a literate work force include:

- less barriers to career advancement
- a sustainable, reliable and efficient workforce
- fewer recruitment costs
- more satisfied employees - improves employee self esteem and confidence
- employees better equipped to help their children with homework and reinforce the importance of staying in school
- helping BHP meet and sustain its northern employment targets.

To respond to literacy needs, BHP is working with Bow Valley Community College in Calgary and Skill Plan in B.C. to shape a workplace literacy program. The Ekati Literacy/Essential Skills Project will be implemented in 2000. The Project will:

- have curriculum and materials relevant and tailored to the workplace environment, particularly pit and processing plant operations.
- have voluntary participation from any full-time BHP employee with staggered entry.
- identify potential students through team leaders and the work orientation program. (Orientation is a modular program and is mandatory for all new recruits.)
- be scheduled for two hours every second day.
- have a class size of 10-15 participants.

Currently, BHP funds a five-month adult educator contract at the mine site to:

- provide literacy support to employees; and

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<sup>27</sup> BHP. Ekati Diamond Mine Staff Handbook

- establish the literacy program (e.g. develop the curriculum and identify resources, location, and participants).

### **Literacy in the Community**

On a daily basis, the Outreach Worker in Rae-Edzo serves an average of 25 to 30 people needing help understanding documents, application forms, and government and personal information related to community living for example, pension, income tax, and old age security benefits and requirements. The Outreach Worker estimates that approximately 50% of the working age population from high school students to elders, require assistance with daily reading and numeracy functions. In Wha Ti, the Outreach Worker fulfils a similar function but has difficulty providing assistance due to low literacy skills.

Health and social service issues have reached a critical point in the Dogrib Region. Issues are related mainly to staffing and services particularly to high-risk population with low literacy skills. The DCSB and the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council are investing \$600,000 to bring the Nechi Institute and Keyano College together to train addictions counsellors and address social issues in the communities.

Many informants contacted state that some of the leaders within the Dogrib Region have low literacy skills, and difficulty reading and understanding information. Community leaders are described as:

- often unappreciative of the importance and value of strong literacy skills and the benefits of a literacy component as part of all adult development programs.
- short-sighted in placing a higher value on fast-tracked job preparatory programs than adult basic education.
- intimidated by persons with higher level literacy and shy about their own literacy skills.
- lacking in understanding of the relationship between literacy and life opportunities and benefits. *"Councillors say train people to be heavy equipment operators and cooks."* (stakeholder view)

The Dogrib Treaty 11 Council is commended for its efforts to provide self-government and land claims information in plain language and orally. However, poor literacy continues to limit understanding, giving rise to fears, for example, among some elders of losing their Old Age Supplement when land claims are implemented.

## **4. Literacy Needs and Issues in the Dogrib Region**

An estimated two-thirds of the adult population in the Dogrib Region have literacy needs. Literacy needs are particularly great among:

- an estimated 300 young Dogrib men in their early to late 20's with very poor literacy skills but very strong traditional skills. (These young men were likely raised in the bush, usually with their grandparents and most have not completed a full year of school because of their traditional land-based lifestyle. Many are trying to enter the wage economy (by doing odd jobs/labour) and could fit into trades training but cannot do so due to illiteracy.
- the general population 20 to 40 years of age, including those who have completed high school (who also have problems writing, with numbers and reading).
- elders who experience difficulty reading government forms.

Addressing the literacy needs of Dogrib Regional residents is challenged by a number of factors. The most significant are the relative value given to education in the community and past experiences with ABE and training programs.

#### The Value of Education

In Gameti, 20 people from community are working at BHP. Boys see men with little or no education getting jobs paying \$70,000 per year. They see no reason to stay in school. In the absence of role models for education and literacy, boys as young as 13 years are losing interest in school.

Young women in the Dogrib Region have more role models for education and literacy. Over 90% of the over 100 people from the Region pursuing post-secondary education are women, including 15 of 19 individuals attending university. Most female high school graduates are working in community-based caring/nurturing positions (health care or teaching) or are pursuing post-secondary education. Women in the Dogrib Region tend not to work at BHP. Those who do, work mainly in lower paying janitorial/labouring positions even though they may have higher levels of education than men. To take up administrative/management positions with BHP requires relocation to Yellowknife to accommodate BHP's 4 day in/3 day out rotation schedule from Yellowknife to the mine site. Labouring positions including janitorial are on a two-week rotation with transportation directly from the community. Rotational employment is also seen as an impediment for women who have primary family and community caregiving responsibilities.

More residents are beginning to see the benefits of education. Early childhood programs together with grade extensions and more employment opportunities are resulting in greater parental support for education and more youth staying in school longer. Among those families who have recognized the benefits of education:

- adult members are enjoying longer term-employment and greater work satisfaction; and

- adults and children are likely to lead healthier lifestyles and support each other in work and educational endeavours. (These youth are described by stakeholders as committed to school, having career aspirations/goals and not using alcohol).

Informants in the Region suggest that education and employment are the two variables that are creating different classes of people in the Region. Families without employment and education are viewed as high risk, having addiction problems and a range of socio-economic issues that extend to the children. Informants in the Region state that successful education efforts at all levels require a holistic approach including socio-economic supports and healing.

Until recently, adult education success stories have been the exception rather than the norm. Women in the Region are inspiring adults with lower level education to increase their literacy skills.

- A woman in her late 40s who returned to high school with grade 6 education, graduated after three years.
- A woman who entered ABE with grade seven, young children and a difficult relationship is now attending a social work degree program at a southern university.
- A woman who completed grade nine in her community, went to Sir John and when tested at a grade six level, was totally demoralized and quit school. She then re-entered grade nine in her community and after completion worked in her community for four years. She later returned to school to complete high school/ABE. She has been employed for the past 14 years.

### Literacy and ABE Experiences

*"ABE is a treadmill with no continuity, and no goal."*(stakeholder view)

The Dogrib Region has a history of literacy and ABE programs, which have been poorly planned and implemented. Within the Region, the 'ABE experience' is described as a tragedy and ineffective because people have not succeeded or advanced in these programs. *"Programs which should have encouraged hope, and raised self-esteem had little promise."* (stakeholder view) A history of uncertain support for programs and for students wishing to acquire higher level literacy skills is seen in programs that have typically had:

- inadequate support for instructors - instructors have had to devote energy to resourcing the program; work with few resources and function without community/partner involvement.
- no instructor continuity and difficulties recruiting qualified instructors willing to adapt materials to the literacy skills of participants.

- inadequate facilities including instructor housing.
- poor student recruitment, attendance and completion.
- limited if any assessment or response to student needs, both academic and socio-economic.
- limited options to allow students to advance beyond ABE level 110.

Informants suggest that people serious about upgrading and pursuing education move to Yellowknife to attend Aurora College programs. Others are seeking to achieve higher level literacy/education through community schools. The majority of persons with literacy needs are applying for adult skills-based and short-term job preparatory training. These programs may not have a literacy or ABE component. They are likely to link participants to work opportunities mainly in labouring occupations

### **5. The Direction of Literacy in the Dogrib Region**

Regional informants suggest that the direction of literacy in the Dogrib Region is reflected throughout the NWT.

- The emphasis on literacy is declining. *“Only a small group of people in Yellowknife have carried the literacy banner and many of these individuals have moved on and literacy programs have been squeezed out.”* (stakeholder view)
- Greater emphasis is being placed on skills-based and job preparatory training to assist people to benefit from new employment opportunities in the mining, construction and transportation sectors.
- The few resources and institutional supports that are available for literacy and ABE are being utilized by the community/region in the most efficient manner possible.

Regional informants suggest that the declining priority to literacy is related to the lack of:

- an NWT literacy strategy
- clear responsibility and resources for adult education.
- representation from Aboriginal and community groups in Yellowknife-based organizations responsible for literacy and ABE, namely ECE, Aurora College and the NWT Literacy Council.
- political will and priority to invest in effective literacy and ABE programs that consider individual socio-economic and academic needs.

The Dogrib Community Services Board has recently completed a human resource development and implementation strategy. The strategy is intended to prepare the Dogrib population:

- for the implementation of the land claim and self government agreements,

- to be full participants in society,
- to run Dogrib companies and secure jobs in the mining and other sectors of the economy, and
- live healthier, happier lives.

The strategy reaffirms many of the literacy, education and training initiatives currently underway in the Region.

Currently, the DCSB is doing what it can to provide literacy and adult education opportunities through community schools in Rae-Edzo and Wha Ti. In Gameti in the coming year, there is a plan to create a virtual/electronic classroom connected to other DCSB schools. Both youth and adult learners in grade 10 would participate. Currently, a committee has been formed to develop the idea, seek resources and hire a curriculum advisor. If this approach is successful, Wekweti could also adopt this approach.

The Dogrib Rae Band and other Dogrib organizations and businesses are endeavouring to address job-readiness and skills training needs. Improving relationships with Aurora College, local control of the adult education facility in Rae, an increasing number of 'educational success stories', and efforts to address substance abuse and other social dysfunction, may strengthen current initiatives. The DCSB believes in planning and delivering student/family-centred programming and ensuring that the education experience is positive and enables individuals to succeed. It is the view of the DCSB that well-planned and appropriate literacy and ABE programs may lead to a greater investment from and new partnerships with Dogrib organizations.

A longer term vision of education services in the Region exists within the Dogrib Treaty 11 Council and in regional communities. They envision a full continuum of education services in the Region.

- In the short-term, Chief Jimmy Bruneau will continue as a full-service regional high school (as it is not feasible to offer grade 12 in Gameti and Wekweti).
- In the longer-term, a junior high school (grades 7 to 9) will be constructed in Rae and will take a traditional, land-based approach to education to address difficulties typically encountered among this age group (e.g. maintaining commitment to schooling).
- In the long-term (maybe 20 years), Chief Jimmy Bruneau will evolve into a regional college training centre.

Funding is the main stumbling block to realizing this vision.

It is a goal of Dogrib political and social organizations to maintain Dogrib as the prime language of business and daily life in the Region. Developing Dogrib literacy skills is

seen as an essential element of maintaining the health of the language. Stabilizing, developing and revitalizing the Dogrib language is the vision expressed in the Dogrib Communities Languages Plan.<sup>28</sup> Part of this vision is the establishment of a Dogrib Cultural Institute over the coming three years to direct future Dogrib language and cultural programs. Inadequate funding is the main stumbling block to Dogrib language development in the Region.

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<sup>28</sup>Dogrib Community Services Plan. May 1999.

# TRISTAT RESOURCES

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Literacy Levels for the N.W.T.

## REPORT

Prepared by  
Richard Shillington, Ph.D.

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October 6, 2000



# Literacy Levels for the N.W.T.

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# Literacy Levels for the N.W.T.

## Background

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The National Literacy Secretariat is interested in estimating the level of literacy for residents of the Northwest Territories (N.W.T.). There is no direct survey evidence of the extent of literacy for the portions of Canada above 60 degrees of latitude. This is because the International Adults Literacy Survey (IALS) excluded northern Canada.

The approach of this study is to make inferences about the level of literacy in the NWT based on the demographic characteristics and the literacy level of a 'southern Canada' population with a similar demographic composition to that of the NWT.

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## Methodology

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The methodology for this study has been made up of two steps; first, estimate the literacy rate for various combinations of age, education and aboriginal status. Then, these estimated literacy levels were combined with data about the demographic composition of the population of the NWT to estimate the overall literacy rate.

The population of the NWT is different from the rest of Canada in a number of respects which one might expect to affect literacy levels. Three factors might be expected to be important:

- the average lower level of education for the population particularly in the aboriginal population.
- the younger age profile of the NWT suggests better literacy levels.
- lower literacy levels of the aboriginal population, compared to non-aboriginal, even after adjusting for age and education level.

## Results

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The literacy levels from the IALS were categorized into five levels (1 to 5). Much of the analysis has concentrated on the low levels (class 1) and high levels (classes 4 and 5).

The Logistic Regression technique was used to summarize the statistical evidence associating age, education and aboriginal status with literacy level. The regression analysis also tested to determine if the parameters were different for inhabitants of the prairie provinces – no significant difference was found.

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The results of the Logistic Regression are summarized in Annex A. The results for the aboriginal and non-aboriginal populations vary by both educational attainment and by age. Literacy levels are higher for younger and better educated populations and for non-aboriginals.

## **Conclusions and Cautions**

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The estimates obtained from this process are presented in Annex B. These are obtained by using the estimated literacy rates (Annex A) and applying these values to the population of the NWT.

The results in Annex B suggest a number of conclusions:

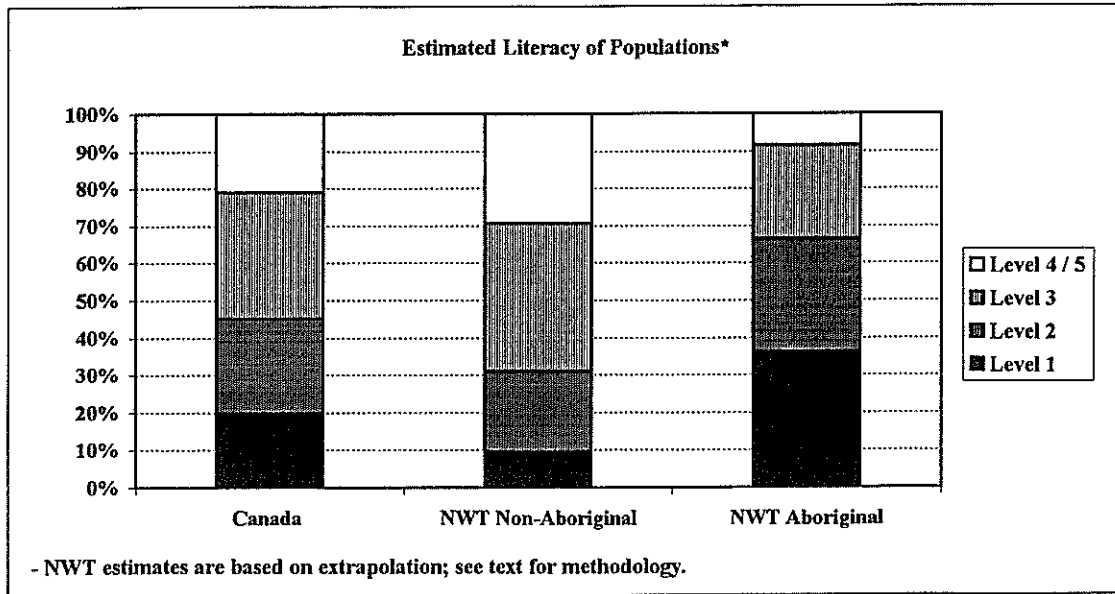
- overall the proportion of the population with low literacy is about the same in the NWT and Canada (24% and 20%). This surprising result is because of two offsetting results; a higher aboriginal population but lower older population.
- for the non-aboriginal population, literacy levels are much better in the NWT than in Canada (9% vs. 19%). This is because of the much younger, and more literate, population in the NWT.
- within age groups the aboriginal population have somewhat lower literacy levels than non-aboriginals. As well, literacy levels of aboriginals in the NWT tend to be somewhat lower than those, in the same age groups, in Canada.

Similar data, concerning the highest levels of literacy, are also presented in Annex B. The following observations are possible:

- the overall proportion of the population with high literacy is somewhat lower in the NWT compared with Canada (18% vs. 21%) despite being considerably higher for the non-aboriginal population (29% vs. 21%).

The interpretation of these results should be tempered. The analysis is limited by a number of factors.

- First, there has been no direct measurement of literacy
- The sample size of the IALS is not great; there are about 5,600 observations and 57 reported an aboriginal ethnic origin. Thus the estimate of the impact of aboriginal status on literacy is not based on a large number of observations.



## Annex A

### Estimated Proportion at Literacy Level 1

	by Age Group			
	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
<b>Non-Aboriginal Population</b>				
Less than grade 9	42	55%	66%	84%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	15	23%	32%	56%
With secondary school graduation certificate	6	9%	14%	30%
Some Post-secondary	4	6%	9%	21%
University without bachelor's degree or higher	1	2%	3%	8%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	1	1%	2%	6%
<b>Aboriginal Population</b>				
Less than grade 9	56	68%	77%	90%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	23	34%	45%	69%
With secondary school graduation certificate	9	15%	21%	43%
Some Post-secondary	6	10%	15%	32%
University without bachelor's degree or higher	2	3%	5%	13%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	2	3%	4%	10%

### Estimated Proportion at Literacy Level 2

	by Age Group			
	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
<b>Non-Aboriginal Population</b>				
Less than grade 9	40	33%	26%	13%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	37	42%	42%	33%
With secondary school graduation certificate	22	30%	36%	43%
Some Post-secondary	15	23%	29%	41%
University without bachelor's degree or higher	6	9%	13%	27%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	4	7%	11%	23%
<b>Aboriginal Population</b>				
Less than grade 9	33	25%	18%	8%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	42	42%	39%	24%
With secondary school graduation certificate	30	37%	41%	40%
Some Post-secondary	23	31%	37%	43%
University without bachelor's degree or higher	9	14%	20%	35%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	7	11%	16%	31%

### Estimated Proportion at Literacy Level 3

	by Age Group			
	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
<b>Non-Aboriginal Population</b>				
Less than grade 9	15	10%	7%	3%
Without secondary school graduation certificate	37	29%	21%	10%
With secondary school graduation certificate	48	45%	39%	23%
Some Post-secondary	47	48%	45%	30%
University without bachelor's degree or higher	31	40%	45%	47%
University with bachelor's degree or higher	26	35%	42%	48%

**Aboriginal Population**

Less than grade 9  
 Without secondary school graduation certificate  
 With secondary school graduation certificate  
 Some Post-secondary  
 University without bachelor's degree or higher  
 University with bachelor's degree or higher

10	6%	4%	2%
28	20%	14%	6%
45	38%	30%	15%
48	44%	38%	22%
40	46%	48%	40%
35	43%	47%	44%

**Estimated Proportion at Literacy Level 4/5****Non-Aboriginal Population**

Some Post-secondary  
 University without bachelor's degree or higher  
 University with bachelor's degree or higher  
 Total population 15 years and over by highest level of schooling  
 Less than grade 9  
 Without secondary school graduation certificate

by Age Group			
15-24	25-44	45-64	65 +
3	2%	1%	0%
10	6%	4%	1%
25	16%	11%	4%
34	23%	16%	7%
62	49%	38%	18%
69	56%	45%	23%

**Aboriginal Population**

Some Post-secondary  
 University without bachelor's degree or higher  
 University with bachelor's degree or higher  
 Total population 15 years and over by highest level of schooling  
 Less than grade 9  
 Without secondary school graduation certificate

2	1%	1%	0%
6	4%	2%	1%
16	10%	7%	3%
23	15%	10%	4%
49	36%	26%	12%
56	43%	32%	15%

## Annex B

### Estimated Proportion at Low Literacy - Level 1

	Canada			NWT - without Nunavut		
	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
All Ages	20	19%	30%	24	9%	36%
15-24	10	9%	22%	21	9%	27%
25-44	10	10%	23%	17	7%	29%
45-64	22	22%	42%	33	13%	54%
65 +	53	52%	78%	76	43%	86%

### Estimated Proportion at High Literacy - Level 2

	Canada			NWT - without Nunavut		
	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
All Ages	25	25%	31%	26	22%	30%
15-24	24	24%	35%	32	24%	36%
25-44	23	23%	31%	25	19%	31%
45-64	28	28%	29%	25	25%	26%
65 +	27	27%	15%	15	29%	11%

### Estimated Proportion at Low Literacy - Level 3

	Canada			NWT - without Nunavut		
	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
All Ages	34	34%	29%	32	40%	25%
15-24	39	39%	32%	32	39%	28%
25-44	39	40%	33%	36	41%	30%
45-64	33	33%	23%	28	39%	16%
65 +	16	16%	6%	7	22%	3%

### Estimated Proportion at High Literacy - Level 4/5

	Canada			NWT - without Nunavut		
	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal	Total	Non-Aboriginal	Aboriginal
All Ages	21	21%	10%	18	29%	8%
15-24	27	28%	12%	15	29%	9%
25-44	27	27%	10%	22	33%	10%
45-64	16	17%	8%	14	24%	4%
65 +	4	4%	1%	2	7%	0%



