

SKILLS4SUCCESS Initiative

Engagement Summary



“What we heard”

June 2015

There has been measurable progress in increasing education and employment levels in the Northwest Territories (NWT) over the past 15 years. This has resulted in a higher standard of living and quality of life for many residents. Despite this improvement, too many Northerners remain unemployed and unprepared for available and emerging employment opportunities at the very time that employers express they cannot find enough qualified workers in the NWT.

Building the capacity of residents is crucial to achieve economic growth and social progress in the NWT. The skills, knowledge and talents of NWT residents are the driving force behind a vibrant economy and

healthy, thriving communities. Understanding this, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE) recently launched the Skills 4 Success Initiative (S4S) to better understand the changing demand for skills in the job market and to determine what skills, knowledge and attitudes NWT residents need in a fast-changing economy.

By taking a systematic look at how adult and postsecondary education and skills training is supported and delivered in the NWT, ECE can identify shortcomings and find long-term solutions to ensure territorial residents have the necessary programs, supports and pathways to achieve their potential.

S4S was purposefully designed to be an inclusive process to make sure all NWT residents and interest groups have a chance to help shape skills training and postsecondary education strategies that align with labour market needs and demands in the NWT. Under the leadership of Minister

Jackson Lafferty, ECE undertook a territory-wide engagement process to spark a conversation among key stakeholders groups, and interested members of the public about the need for change in the NWT's adult and postsecondary education and skills training system. People were asked how best to improve employment success, equip individuals with the required skills for in-demand jobs, better meet the needs of employers in search of workers, and ensure that adequate and

appropriate supports and incentives are available to Northerners so they acquire the skills and knowledge they require for personal and employment success.

Engagement sessions were held with job seekers, students, educators and

trainers, and employers in five regions of the NWT (Beaufort-Delta, Sahtu, Dehcho, South Slave and North Slave) during February and March, 2015. These sessions culminated in a territorial symposium held in Yellowknife, *Improving Employment Success for NWT Residents*, on March 12, 2015. It was attended by Aboriginal governments and authorities, education and training providers, industry and business representatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), professional associations, academics, students, apprentices and engaged citizens.

ECE also conducted an online survey to gather further input from interested territorial residents. In total, 163 people participated in 30 regional engagements sessions, 168 delegates attended the Yellowknife symposium and 337 people completed the online survey.

S4S aims to **increase employment success for individuals, close the skills gap for in-demand jobs, and respond more effectively to the needs of employers and industry.** This is essential to strengthen economic diversification and growth in the NWT. It is equally vital to ensure Northerners are first in line for jobs in the territory's growing economy.

Skills 4 Success Engagement by numbers:

- **163 participants** at 30 regional engagement sessions
- **168 delegates** at the S4S Symposium
- **337 completions** of the Online Survey

This summary provides a brief overview of ‘What we heard’ during all three engagement activities. This Analysis of the feedback is now informing the development of a 10-Year Strategic Framework, which will lead to implementation of a 3-Year Action Plan that will support NWT residents in achieving the necessary Skills 4 Success in the future.

A bulleted summary of ‘What we heard’ can be found on pages 11-14. The full version of the Skills 4 Success Initiative Engagement Report can be found online at www.skills4success.ca.

REGIONAL ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

Participants were invited to share their experiences with, and knowledge of, adult education, skills training, postsecondary education (PSE) programs, incentives and supports, and the state of the NWT labour market. With the help of facilitators, participants were asked: What works? What isn’t working? What needs to be improved? What could be eliminated because it’s duplicated? What’s missing?

Through responses to these questions, it became clear that no single solution will address all the labour market challenges across the territory nor provide all the needed training and learning opportunities. Generally, participants shared similar concerns, but there were regional variations based on the local economy (e.g. oil and gas was mentioned in the Sahtu and Beaufort Delta

while timber harvesting, geothermal and wind energy was mentioned in the South Slave) and the size of the community.

Participants from smaller communities highlighted region-specific solutions such as regional training centres and locally appropriate training and supports. Many voiced the desire for more regional control over resources and programming. Other concerns centred on incentives and supports, such as child care, housing and in-community/local training. People from larger regional centres noted the impacts of the cost of living, suitable and affordable housing, and transportation issues. Many said they felt their options for training and employment were limited. For instance, people in the community of Behchokò raised the problem of insufficient trades training and support, and the lack of journeymen to access particular types of training. Most of the discussions in Yellowknife revolved around adequate funding for training and supports to offset the cost of living.

Particular ideas were highlighted by certain groups. For example, students and job seekers were most interested in employment supports, whereas educators and trainers stressed the importance of preparing students for the job market and quality of life considerations in communities. Meanwhile, employers were mostly focused on creating conditions that enable them to be more competitive in the marketplace, such as finding skilled workers.

“Young people need to be able to see where they can go and believe they can get there.”

-Engagement participant

Overall, stakeholder groups and regions agreed on the following points:

- *Employees benefit from making personal connections to employment* – culturally appropriate solutions tailored to the region and community best support local employment success
- *It is important to celebrate success and showcase career pathways* – role models and mentors can present viable career options to youth and demonstrate how to achieve them
- *Effective training/skills development requires a strong foundation* – building a “culture of education” that begins with early childhood and K-12 which is championed by community leaders is the springboard to postsecondary education
- *Everyone has a contribution to make* – while the Government of the NWT (GNWT) plays a critical coordinating role in education, ultimately, educational and employment success depends on the actions and support of individuals, communities, schools, employers, support agencies and all governments. Lasting change requires community ownership over change processes and a unified voice among elders and community leadership that education is important
- *Employment and education success is linked to personal wellness and community well-being* – building wellness starts at a grassroots level with individual commitment, community cohesion and strong community leadership
- *Diversified training and investments support a diversified economy* – prepare for the future by focusing on technological education, information management, basic internet and computer skills, customer service and entrepreneurship skills

There was also near consensus on common problems, such as the availability and ease of access to labour market information. Many mentioned that information is scattered across numerous departments and agencies at the federal, territorial and community levels which can make it difficult to find. Participants asked for better access to career supports information on available jobs, the skills needed to fill jobs and where the jobs of the future are likely to be through a ‘single window’ (or single point or access) where information is quickly and easily found. The lack of knowledge about where and how to access support was also frequently cited. Participants recommended advertising job openings and support programs more creatively and called for better coordination between governments and employers.

A shortage of educators and trainers to deliver the programs that Northerners require was raised in several sessions. Making the NWT a destination of choice, one that offers supports and incentives, was suggested as a solution. This same point was raised by most employers across a wide range of sectors who confirm that it is difficult to attract and retain workers, and very costly to compete with other jurisdictions.

Another issue raised frequently was the need for better funding and housing options. In particular, inadequate housing was identified as a deterrent to both training and hiring. Some proposed increased online training as a potential solution to this challenge.

Certain aspects of the current system were significantly praised, such as the Registered Apprenticeship Program and the Schools North Apprenticeship Program.

SKILLS 4 SUCCESS SYMPOSIUM

Two days filled with presentations, keynote addresses, panel discussions and breakout sessions provided participants with the opportunity to learn from experts, share practical experiences and offer their advice on what issues an S4S 10-Year Strategic Framework must address.

The opening remarks made by the Honorable Robert R. McLeod, Premier of the NWT, underscored that S4S is about tapping into the wealth of knowledge and skills of NWT residents to create opportunity and prosperity throughout the territory. He noted that the NWT faces increasing skills and labour shortages due to an ageing population and competition for skilled workers elsewhere in the country. He also highlighted the tremendous potential to address these challenges given the territory's enormous economic potential – from its rich natural resource base to the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Link to the Mackenzie Valley Highway. He underscored the need for Northerners to work in productive partnership to capitalize on opportunities to stimulate and benefit from economic development.

The Honorable Jackson Lafferty, Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, stressed the importance of strengthening NWT communities to spur ongoing economic growth. He acknowledged that, for all the progress achieved in recent years, too many people continue to fall behind and the status quo is not sustainable. He explained how S4S builds on the reforms to early childhood education and the K-12 system and completes the transformation of the education system continuum with focus on adult and postsecondary education and skills training. As the last phase of this comprehensive strategy, S4S will help develop a skilled NWT workforce to create attractive

communities for investment and generate economic growth for years to come.

A presentation by the Conference Board of Canada provided an NWT Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment, outlining the top employment occupations in the territory over the next 5, 10 and 15 years. The most compelling findings from the Forecast reinforce the urgent need to increase the skills and education levels of territorial residents. Traditionally, the NWT has depended on skilled and educated newcomers from other parts of Canada and the world to satisfy its labour market needs.

If Northerners are to have first access to jobs, NWT children and young people in school today must gain the advanced education and necessary skills to qualify for tomorrow's jobs. Currently under- and unemployed adults also need to become productive contributors to the economy and society at large. This is critical to the territory's future.

What Participants Had to Say

Several speakers and numerous participants emphasized the need for a skills inventory to better match those looking for work with those offering jobs, as this would help both job seekers find work and employers fill vacancies. There were repeated calls for a 'one-stop window' of access to labour market information (LMI) that would increase the use, access and availability of LMI. This single window would need to be easy to use and offer plain language access to a wide range of employment and education related information. Providing access to relevant and reliable labour market information is especially important to many in government and business and educational communities so they may make evidence-based decisions.



Participants strongly recommended the collection and coordination of data to improve community-level LMI, as well as streamlining data collection and distribution to minimize overlaps and duplication. There was discussion about the need to overcome this hurdle through shared agreements among government departments, agencies, Aboriginal governments and industry. A further concern raised was the challenge posed by addressing privacy concerns when sharing information about NWT residents or tracking people's progress through school and into entering the workforce.

Many mentioned the need to better market career opportunities, early in a student's education, to get young people excited about career options in the NWT.

Special emphasis was placed on communicating trade apprenticeships and occupational certifications as an honourable and profitable way to make a living. Others noted the need to build seamless career pathways during the middle- and high-school years to expose young people to career options, required education and available resources. Still others highlighted preparing students for higher education and employment success through work placements for high school and college students.

The need for system-wide change to rethink and reorganize how skills training and PSE are delivered spurred extensive discussions. Funding, including free PSE for territorial students, and reforms to Student Financial Assistance were specifically mentioned. Participants emphasized the need to provide targeted education and employment supports and incentives, both to marginalized groups currently outside the labour market as well as to small- and medium-sized

employers who find it difficult to compete with larger industries. There was also discussion surrounding disincentives to employment that deter some NWT residents from pursuing education and employment opportunities.

Another frequent message was the importance of individuals taking ownership of their career paths and committing to lifelong learning. There was considerable criticism of social passing, which serves neither students nor employers well. Others stressed the crucial role of parents and communities in ensuring children attend school and providing encouragement and support for higher learning.

The importance of community and culturally relevant learning, training and job opportunities was noted, as was the need for flexible learning modules responsive to learners' needs. On-the-land learning and certification was emphasized as a valuable option in smaller communities. Exposure to opportunities outside youths' home communities was also identified as being important.

Employers highlighted the need for job skills such as apprenticeship, entrepreneurship and business

training as well as practical, transferable skills like teamwork and critical thinking. They also underscored the

necessity of advancing technology related literacy and skills of workers, as the workplace is increasingly technology driven. New technologies were flagged as an effective way to reach prospective employees through social media and other forms of non-traditional communication.

"Create footprints that give young people opportunities and hope."

-Symposium participant

"Focus on can dos, as opposed to can not's."

-Symposium participant

Participants acknowledged the need to prioritize workplace wellness and to establish respectful and safe workplace policies as one way to increase the retention of professionals in hard to fill positions. Other suggestions to increase recruitment and retention, generally, included establishing professional and personal support networks, promoting work-life balance, and tax reform and other incentives to address affordability concerns, such as housing and childcare.

ONLINE SURVEY

Between February 26th and April 10th, 2015, territorial residents had the opportunity to have their say about Skills 4 Success by completing an online survey. The survey was set up to assess the

experiences of a cross-section of interested parties, including students, job seekers, education and training providers, employers, employees and retired people. Participants were asked to answer questions based on the four key themes of the engagement process: Labour Market Information; Education and Employment Supports; Skills and Postsecondary Education; and Recruitment and Retention (Figure 1).

Perhaps predictably, the responses varied according to the needs and perspectives of the survey participants.

Educators/trainers

According to Educators and Trainers, the types of labour market information they would find most helpful include the education and skill requirements for particular jobs (86%), the types

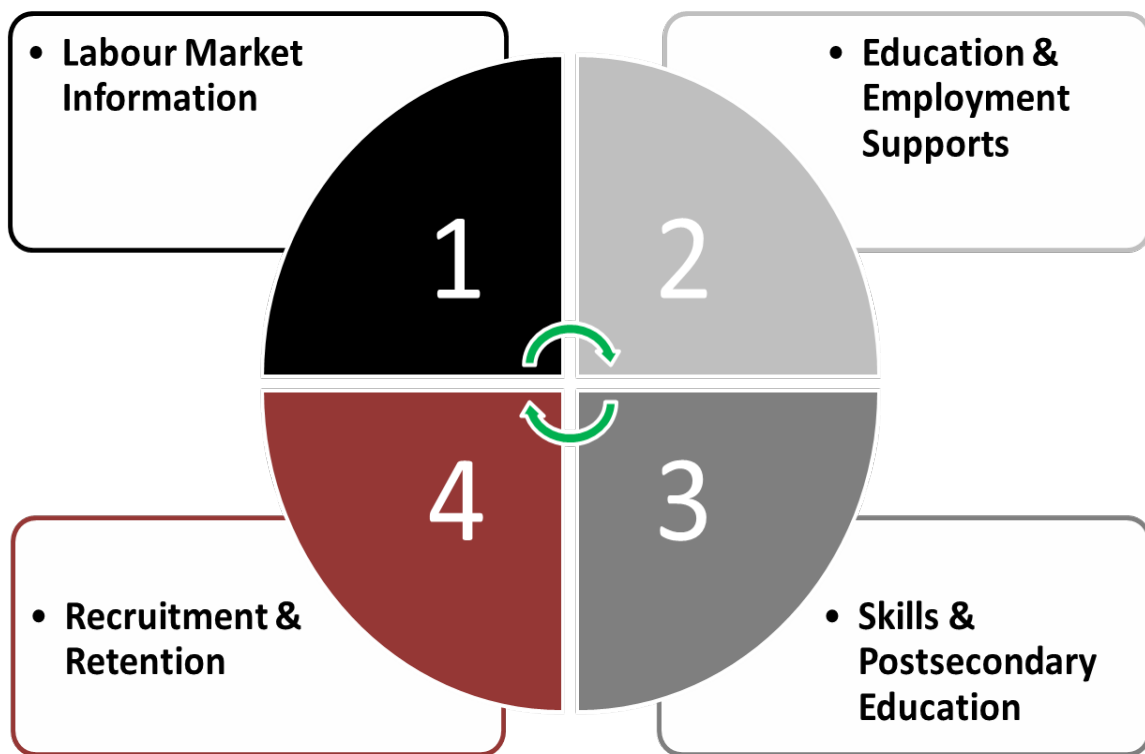


Figure 1: Key Themes of Engagement



of jobs most in demand (82%), the location of job opportunities (77%), job wage levels (60%) and necessary years of experience (46%).

Over 60% of educators/trainers indicated that additional childcare facilities (66%) and additional funding for childcare (62%) would impact students'/ trainees' ability to stay in school or return to school. There was also a strong emphasis on improved counselling, particularly personal counselling for such issues as health, wellness, or assistance with personal and family problems, with 65% indicating this would impact the person's ability to stay in or return to education/training to a great extent.

A guaranteed job upon graduation (45%), increased program flexibility (45%) and a greater offering of courses (42%) were also identified as important factors. A number of individuals felt that it was critical for personal supports to be in place (such as child care or addictions counselling) before students/trainees participate in a program. Retirees suggested the need for mentors or career counsellors who could motivate and encourage youth. Educators and trainers felt that the socio-economic realities of adult learners are the biggest impediments to their training/education, with 58% indicating that these realities had impacted their students' learning to a great extent, and 22% to a certain extent. The next most serious challenges include limited program funding, lack of community support, and a lack of tutoring support for students/trainees who required extra assistance.

When asked what professional development supports would help educators and trainers to advance their own careers, time off from employers to support training (66%), training and education subsidies (57%), travel grants to support training (57%) and access to online

training opportunities (48%) were the most consistent responses.

Current students/trainees

This demographic group was most interested in financial supports for education and training, particularly additional funding for living expenses (65%) and for tuition (59%). These responses were closely followed by a guaranteed job upon graduation (53%). Beyond financial assistance, academic (28%), career (32%), and personal wellness counselling (29%) were all in demand. Additional help with coursework (26%), more flexible programs (22%), online training (22%) and greater program variety (19%) were all listed as important considerations in how training/education is offered.

Students/trainees most often reported getting information on educational and training opportunities on-line (75%) and through word of mouth (49%). Twenty percent of students/trainees reported getting this information through academic counselling. The most popular reason for enrolling in training/education programs is to obtain a degree, certificate or diploma (71%). The next most frequent responses include personal interest (67%), to help get a job (54%) and to increase income (34%).

The majority reported having no difficulty participating in their program or course (55%). Among those who did report some difficulty, the most commonly reported reasons were family responsibilities (21%), challenging course material (17%), and "Other" (17%), such as the financial burden, whether through a reduction in income, inadequate funding or difficulty obtaining funding. Health and mental health problems were also noted.



Most felt that their training/education would lead them to finding jobs within their community or the NWT more broadly; a greater percentage feeling that their chances of finding work are higher if looking across the whole territory (73%) versus in their home community specifically (67%). Over three-quarters of current students/trainees are hoping to stay in the NWT after completion of their programs (76%). Of those, 67% would like to remain in their home community, while 29% are open to working anywhere in the territory.

Among those students who plan to leave the NWT after completion of their programs, the most common reason given was seeking educational or employment opportunities that are not available either in the NWT or in their home community. Beyond that, some simply desired to experience living somewhere new, and others noted the lack of housing and high cost of living. When asked what might keep them in the NWT, the most common response was a guaranteed job in their field.

Job seekers

Job seekers and people who were currently unemployed were not optimistic about their futures. Only 13% felt confident about job prospects in either their home community or the NWT as a whole. Among people looking for work, an online job search tool was by far the most common used way of finding information on employment opportunities (86%), followed by word of mouth (57%), a community newsletter or bulletin (50%), and electronic mailing lists or social media (43%). Career counselling (38%) and advice from a family member or mentor (38%) was sought less frequently.

Currently employed

People who are currently employed ranked the types of labour market information that most

influenced their career paths as skills and education required to qualify for particular jobs (49%), the location of employment opportunities (45%) and wages that different jobs pay (28%).

Those already in the labour market found their current job through an online job site (36%), through their peer network (24%) or through an unlisted option (26%). In this latter category, most indicated finding the job through a personal or professional relationship, or after being contacted by a recruiter.

Over six in ten (61%) indicated they had taken a course, seminar, workshop or training related to a current or future job in the past 12 months. Among those who received some form of training, 38% indicated that it was provided by their employer, while 42% indicated that it was provided by a college or university. Further, 52% indicated that the training was provided during working hours, 24% indicated that the training was provided outside of working hours and 24% received training both inside and outside of working hours. The most popular reason for taking some form of training was personal interest (57%), followed closely by “Looking for advancement opportunity (promotion or career development)” (45%), “Requirement of employment (including professional association, legal requirement, collective agreement)” (45%), and “Do your job better” (45%). The types of training received covered a wide range of topics, the most common being job or career specific skills (38%), communication skills (36%) and management or supervision (36%).

Those currently employed were asked what efforts their employers made to retain them. The most frequent responses were paying employees well (61%), supporting education and skills training opportunities (46%), providing career

advancement opportunities (38%) and fostering a supportive work environment (36%).

When asked what supports their employers could offer to make them more likely to stay in their current positions, better pay was the least popular response (29%). Survey respondents were far more interested in additional education and skills training opportunities (54%) and career advancement opportunities (52%). A flexible work schedule (37%) and a supportive work environment (37%) were also common responses. More than a third of responses (35%) cited “Other” reasons, including giving individuals more autonomy at work, job security, payment for overtime, better benefits and pension plans, and filling open positions/staffing in sufficient numbers.

Providing opportunities for young professionals was a key theme, with some suggesting the GNWT should provide more entry level positions to those looking to begin their career in the NWT. Other suggestions included providing more educational options to discourage students from going south to study, as well as ensuring recreational opportunities and facilities to entice people to stay in the North.

Employers

Whether within large or small businesses, most employer respondents wrote about the necessity of understanding the labour demands of the NWT as a whole – and matching those demands to available training programs and supports. Employers were also eager to better understand the types of training and supports that are available to their employees.

There was near unanimous agreement (98%) with the statement that employers have a responsibility to help support the development of skills and postsecondary education efforts in their

employees. The vast majority of employers (82%) provided classroom training, workshops or seminars for at least some of their employees in the past year. Training was offered most often to those in managerial and administrative occupations (67%), technical and paraprofessional occupations (51%), professional occupations (46%), and clerical and administrative support occupations (46%).

The types of training offered by employers varied widely. The most frequently offered training included job or career specific skills (79%), workplace health and safety (72%), management or supervision training (51%), and computer skills (41%). Literacy skills training was offered rarely, if at all: writing skills (15%); reading skills (5%); and math skills (0%).

Employers’ most frequent method of recruiting new employees is “Word of mouth/ personal contacts/ referrals/ informal networks” (72%), followed by online job boards/postings (54%), newspaper ads (44%), and government employment centres or websites (33%). Recruitment methods appear to have been at least somewhat successful, as a sizable proportion of employers hired over ten employees in the previous year (21%); the most frequent response was 2 to 3 employees (31%).

Nearly two-thirds of employers have positions they find “hard to fill”, where the search for a suitable worker takes longer than usual or lasts longer than originally planned.

The most common reasons for a position being “hard to fill” include “Applicants did not have required qualifications (education level/credentials)” (62%), “Applicants did not have required skills” (54%), and “Applicants did not have required work experience” (51%). Other common responses included “Applicants did not

have required motivation, attitude, or interpersonal abilities” (32%) and “Could not compete with other employers’ pay and benefits” (32%). Over a quarter of employers indicated that, for some positions, there were simply no applicants (27%).

The types of positions employers found most hard to fill included professionals (46%), trades (32%), technical (30%), and managers and executives (27%). When asked about the impacts of these hard to fill positions, by far the most common response was an increased workload for other staff (86%). The next most frequent problems were challenges meeting quality standards (46%), decreased productivity (35%) and difficulties with introducing new workplace practices (27%).

When employers were asked to rate how difficult it is to find candidates with specific types of skills, they cited occupation specific skills (45%), writing skills (38%), communication skills (33%) and management skills (37%) as the most difficult to secure.

Even if they manage to find the right workers, many employers said that hanging on to them is a serious challenge. Most employers lost at least some employees during the past year, with 21% losing more than 10, 20% losing 4 to 10, 21% losing 2 to 3, and 16% losing one. Only about one in five (21%) employers did not have any employees leave within the past year. The reasons for employees’ departure varied, with “Quits/voluntary separations” being the most common reason (73%). Dismissals and permanent layoffs (43%) and retirements (31%) were the next most listed causes. Several noted that their employees moved away from the NWT. When asked about their retention strategies, employers’ responses were in line with what was reported by employees, particularly better wages and training opportunities. As well, employers mentioned

hiring locally, being family friendly, providing a positive work environment and treating employees with respect were efforts made to retain employees.

MOVING FORWARD

This Engagement Summary provides a brief overview of what we heard. The Skills 4 Success Engagement Report provides more detail on what we heard from residents across the NWT and points to numerous areas for improvement in the territory’s education and employment systems. It can be accessed online at (LINK). This feedback will inform the development of a 10-Year Strategic Framework that sets out new direction for adult and postsecondary education and skills training in the NWT. In turn, this will inform the subsequent 3-year Action Plan to implement the framework.

While the formal engagement phase has concluded, we encourage other government departments, federal agencies, community governments, voluntary groups, the business community and interested citizens to use the findings in the report to support their own efforts and projects. You can find project updates on the S4S Initiative through the ECE website www.skills4success.ca, where you will also find key documents and reports. Or you can contact us directly at: skillsforsuccess@gov.nt.ca.

What We Heard – Highlights

Labour Market Information

Increase use, access and availability of LMI	▶ Develop single-window source
	▶ Increase availability of community level data
	▶ Ensure LMI data is easy to use, timely, and updated regularly
	▶ Target information to different end users (students, job seekers, employers, program planners, policy makers)
	▶ Utilize social media platforms
	▶ Increase LMI literacy so users know how to interpret, apply, and benefit from LMI
	▶ Provide short/medium/long term economic forecast to support business planning and hiring plans
Develop data collection mechanisms and sharing agreements	▶ Establish program performance measures and indicators
	▶ Develop standardized data collection tools, reporting templates and data management systems
	▶ Encourage data sharing by signing Information Sharing Agreements / MOUs with government departments, agencies, and private sector
	▶ Develop accountability frameworks to drive program planning and program spending decisions
	▶ Create personal identifiers to track education and employment pathways
Use LMI to help people find careers and jobs	▶ Provide information on career choices and educational pathways to achieve career goals
	▶ Survey job seekers to find out what information they want and where they seek out information
	▶ Develop a centralized system that connects the skills of job seekers with job vacancies
	▶ Present labour market forecasts by sector and region
Use LMI to build career pathways early on	▶ Encourage career dreaming
	▶ Showcase career options and role models
	▶ Develop education and career roadmaps
Complement LMI with other forms of information	▶ Learn from best practices within and outside the NWT
	▶ Foster informal information exchange and networking



What We Heard – Highlights

Education and Employment Supports

Provide centralized career supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create a single-window source for information and advice (connected with LMI) ▶ Leverage opportunities through partnerships ▶ Connect availability of supports to demand ▶ Develop shared delivery platforms
Increase awareness of education and employment supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Build on success of career development and counselling ▶ Promote programs utilizing a variety of platforms. Different users and demographic groups seek out information in different ways ▶ Implement a coordinated outreach plan including possibility of joint public-private outreach
Increase opportunities for educational and employment success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop service pathway maps ▶ Increase youth experiences outside the NWT ▶ Improve childcare, eldercare, housing and peer supports for those studying or working away from their home communities ▶ Increase mentorship and practice based learning opportunities
Review education & employment supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Review existing programs to ensure relevancy and value. Program decisions and investment should align with LMI ▶ Streamline service delivery amongst providers and expand program delivery through partnerships and flexible training models ▶ Match timing of funding and program delivery to program need ▶ Review wage subsidies to increase hiring of students and recent graduates
Review SFA funding model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Allow two years of funding for upgrading ▶ Offer remissible loans for trades to incentivize working in the NWT ▶ Fund traditional educational programs, online programs and graduate degrees ▶ Consider offering free postsecondary education for NWT residents
Address education and employment gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Increase cultural and residential school awareness ▶ Introduce accreditation of transferable skills ▶ Remove employment disincentives (income assistance and housing)
Improve career development supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer time off for training, training subsidies, funding for travel, online training, and career coaching

What We Heard – Highlights

Skills and Postsecondary Education

Advance community based training and education	▶ Explore opportunities to expand reach of programs through the use of learning technology and platforms
	▶ Develop partnerships to expand program options in smaller communities
	▶ Introduce culturally relevant and inclusive teaching styles
	▶ Discuss creation and expansion of regional training centres
	▶ Increase community based governance over education
Improve transition from high school to postsecondary education, training & employment	▶ Connect S4S strategy with NWT Education Renewal
	▶ Improve literacy and math skills to satisfy training and job entry requirements and future employment success
	▶ Teach life skills, job readiness skills, safety training, WHMIS, food preparedness and trades preparedness classes in high school
	▶ Address concerns regarding social passing and upgrading
	▶ Integrate work placements into high school curriculum and college programs
	▶ Expand Schools North Apprenticeship Program
	▶ Increase incentives for employers to hire students
Increase apprenticeship training and number of journeymen	▶ Improve profile of apprenticeships and parity of esteem
	▶ Create incentives for graduates to live and work in the NWT
	▶ Explore online and tele-apprenticeships and engaging retired trades people
	▶ Re-evaluate Apprenticeship Training on the Job wage subsidy
Expand on-the-land accredited training and education opportunities	▶ Increase the number of Northerners with university degrees
	▶ Build practical knowledge and skills applicable to multiple jobs
	▶ Restore cultural identity and values
	▶ Promote economic self-sufficiency
Provide training and supports to expand the traditional skills economy	▶ Capitalize on existing skills and community assets
	▶ Provide small business training
	▶ Foster elder-youth mentorship
	▶ Partner with arts council and tourism industry to provide grants and zero interest loans and to connect small businesses with market opportunities
Encourage entrepreneurship	▶ Provide entrepreneurship training and coaching
	▶ Offer financial supports and tax incentives to entrepreneurs

What We Heard – Highlights

Recruitment and Retention

Promote NWT as a great place to live and work	▶ Capitalize on Come Make Your Mark Campaign and Spectacular NWT
	▶ Establish community welcome programs and newcomer network
	▶ Invest in recreational facilities and community health projects
	▶ Prioritize workplace wellness
	▶ Establish respectful and safe workplace policies
	▶ Create professional and personal networks
	▶ Highlight workplace advancement opportunities
	▶ Develop workforce exit survey
Prioritize NWT workers	▶ Increase hiring targets for Aboriginal and NWT resident workers
	▶ Encourage mining companies to expand pick up points in the NWT and increase training commitments
	▶ Address concern that hiring outside NWT has extended to entry level positions
	▶ Make connections with youth studying and working outside NWT to come home
	▶ Improve GNWT hiring process to ensure it is open, inclusive and transparent
	▶ Match people in training to jobs
	▶ Provide wage subsidies for Income Assistance or Employment Insurance hires
	▶ Increase cross cultural awareness
Address persistent retention challenges	▶ Address housing, high costs of living, safety, connectivity and quality of education concerns
	▶ Develop recruitment plans to address persistent labour shortages
	▶ Reform payroll taxes and personal tax exemptions
	▶ Offer incentives for home ownership in the NWT
Help small and medium sized businesses attract and retain workers	▶ Extend wage subsidies and recruitment support
	▶ Reduce GNWT salaries (especially for entry level positions)
	▶ Subsidize training and professional development
Expand employee training and professional development opportunities	▶ Encourage employers to invest in employees
	▶ Develop employee learning plans and career growth pathways
	▶ Promote professional networks, mentorship and job shadowing
Increase number of trainers and educators	▶ Develop long term recruitment and retention strategy
	▶ Foster relationships between communities, trainers and agencies

For more information, contact:
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