



Overcoming Poverty Together

The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014 – 2019

Final Report, Fall 2020

Ensemble  Pour vaincre
la pauvreté
Overcoming  Together

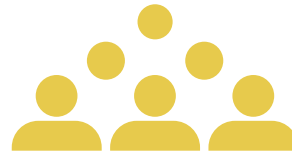
Contents

2	OPT2 at a glance
3	Introduction
4	Executive Summary
7	Message from the Minister
8	Message from the Co-Chairs
10	Overview of Overcoming Poverty Together 2
12	Pillars and Themes
13	Pillar One: Community Empowerment
16	Pillar Two: Learning
19	Pillar Three: Economic Inclusion
22	Pillar Four: Social Inclusion
27	Community Inclusion Networks (CINs)
34	Lessons Learned
35	Appendix A
40	Appendix B
48	Appendix C
51	Appendix D

Overcoming Poverty Together 2014 – 2019 at a glance



28 Priority Actions



3 Advisory Committees

Rural and Urban Transportation
Living Wage and Pay Equity
One-Stop-Shop

12 Community Inclusion Networks

100,000

number of people mobilized

\$30.5 million

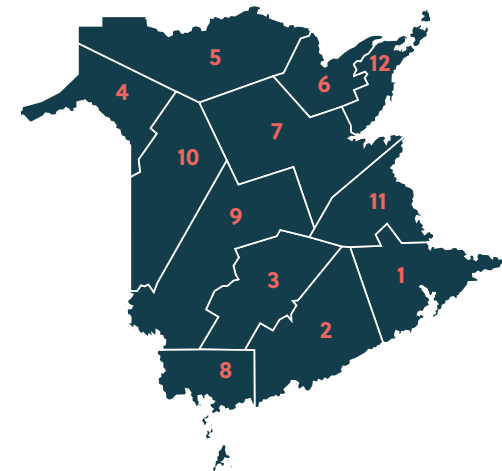
worth of community projects funded across NB

\$22.9 million

in leverage investments made by communities

\$4.06 for each \$1 invested

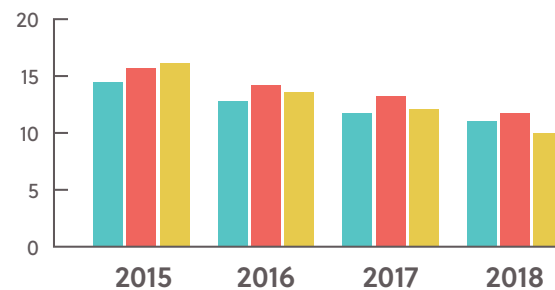
by ESIC in projects



Percentage of New Brunswickers in low income as measured by the Market Basket Measure (2018 base) compared to Canada and the Atlantic Provinces, 2015 – 2018

■ New Brunswick ■ Atlantic Provinces ■ Canada

Source: Statistics Canada



Introduction

Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, 2014–2019 is a roadmap for the province to move towards and foster economic and social inclusion for all. The purpose of the plan is to build a favorable environment that creates a culture shift which empowers communities and stakeholders to maximize the use of local and regional assets, to reduce poverty and to improve the quality of life of New Brunswickers.

The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Act defines poverty as “the condition of a person who lacks the resources, means, opportunities and power necessary to acquire and maintain economic self-sufficiency or to integrate and participate in society.” The plan has the unique approach of bringing together four sectors – citizens, non-profit, business and government – to work in collaboration with 12 Community Inclusion Networks, their partners and stakeholders in a collective effort to reduce poverty across the province.

This report includes:

1. A summary of what has been accomplished during the course of *Overcoming Poverty Together 2014–2019*
2. Stories that take place in New Brunswick and have an impact on New Brunswickers
3. Comparable data for *Overcoming Poverty Together 2014–2019*
4. Status of the plan’s 28 Priority Actions



**For any question or clarification, please contact
the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation
esic-sies@gnb.ca or 1-888-295-4545.**

Executive Summary

Overcoming Poverty Together: *The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014–2019 (OPT2)* was a strategy for the province to move toward and foster economic and social inclusion for all. The purpose of the plan was to build a favorable environment that creates a culture shift to empower communities and stakeholders to maximize the use of local and regional assets to reduce poverty and to improve the quality of life of New Brunswickers.

The *New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Act* defines poverty as:

“the condition of a person who lacks the resources, means, opportunities and power necessary to acquire and maintain economic self-sufficiency or to integrate and participate in society.”

OPT2, takes a unique approach in bringing together four sectors – citizens, non-profit, business and government – to work in collaboration with 12 Community Inclusion Networks, their partners and stakeholders in a collective effort to reduce poverty across the province.

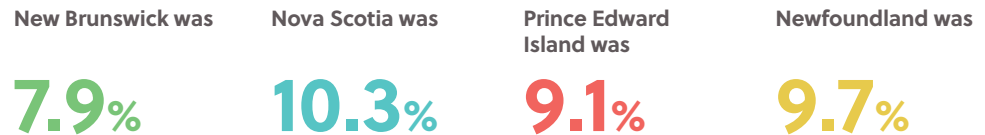
Poverty in New Brunswick

Based on the [Canadian Income Survey](#), in 2018 there were 58,000 people in New Brunswick living below the poverty line. This is a decrease of 13,000 people living below the poverty line from 71,000 calculated in the same survey in 2017.

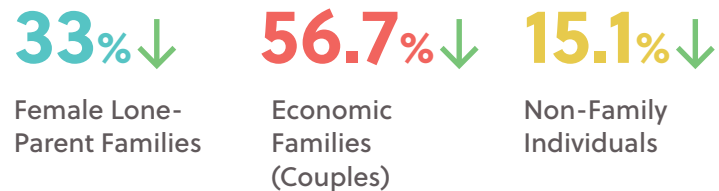
Please note: After 2018, data from the annual Canadian Income Survey will be presented from the 2018 rebased Market Basket Measure.

In 2018, New Brunswick had the second lowest provincial poverty rate in Canada, tied with Quebec at 7.9%. Alberta had the lowest provincial poverty rate in Canada at 7.3%.

The overall **poverty rate for Canada was 8.7%**.
The poverty rate for:



From 2010 to 2018, **the overall poverty rate in NB declined from 13.7% to 7.9%, a decrease of 42%**. This represents 42,000 people who were lifted out of poverty in New Brunswick over these eight years.



How is poverty reduced?

It has been proven that government alone cannot eliminate or reduce poverty. ESIC was established as a catalyst to promote and foster partnerships between the four key sectors in the community, both at the provincial and the regional levels.

ESIC is also non-partisan. The Official Opposition has always collaborated on ESIC and OPT. A Member of the Official Opposition sits on ESIC's board of directors. From the beginning and as established in legislation, all political parties agreed that this initiative should NOT be political.



More specifically, OPT2 included:

- Launch of from [Surfaces to Services](#) – An inclusive and sustainable transportation strategy for the province of New Brunswick.
- Integrated Service Delivery, which involves close collaboration between SD and PETL to increase employment for those on social assistance.
- Help in ensuring there are school food programs in NB schools.
- 366 community projects initiated by the CINs, for a combined total of 578 projects in OPT1 and OPT2
- Expansion of the provincewide income tax preparation clinics for people on modest income through the [Get Your Benefits](#) program, which include:
 - Total benefits accessed growing from \$22.5 million to \$55.71 million annually, or 148% over 8 years;
 - The number of volunteers involved growing from 363 to 758, or 109% over 9 years;
 - The number of completed tax returns growing from 13,969 to 25,720, or 84% over 9 years; and
 - The number of organizations involved growing from 61 to 236, or 174% over 9 years.
- Continuing research and development of a one-stop-shop approach to service information access for NB (a 211 Service approach).

"Poverty is not just a lack of money; it is not having the capability to realize one's full potential as a human being."

Amartya Sen



Message from the Minister

December 2020

The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) and the 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) play a key role in reducing poverty and improving social inclusion in our province through implementation of *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan*.

Since their creation over ten years ago, the Corporation and the CINs have teamed up with many different community organizations to improve the lives of New Brunswickers, build stronger families, and promote economic and social inclusion.

As Minister responsible for the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, I would like to acknowledge the exceptional work of the various Minister's and Members of the Legislative Assembly that have contributed to the Corporation throughout OPT2 from 2014 to 2019. These individuals fully supported the efforts of ESIC and its partners, and their respective governments have always participated in the success of the plan by promoting the active and concerted participation of their departments and agencies.

I want to congratulate ESIC, the CINs and their partners, as well as representatives from the business, non-profit and citizens sectors for their dedication to our fellow citizens and helping build a better New Brunswick. I encourage each person who reads this document to support this work and engage in this vital initiative.

Honourable Bruce Fitch,
Minister of Social Development
Minister responsible for the Economic and Social
Inclusion Corporation

Message from ESIC Co-Chairs

December 2020

As co-chairs of the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, we are pleased to present the final report of *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Plan 2014–2019*. The Corporation is reporting on the plan's 28 Priority Actions and on statistical data relative to poverty rates.

The *Economic and Social Inclusion Act* defines poverty as “the condition of a person who lacks the resources, means, opportunities, and power needed to obtain and maintain economic self-sufficiency, or the ability to integrate and participate in society.” We believe that no one is interested in living in poverty. Many factors can increase the odds of living in poverty: some are systemic and based on life conditions, while others are due to unexpected life circumstances.

It has been proven that government alone cannot eliminate or reduce poverty. The coming together of the four sectors – non-profit, business, government and citizens – in the development of *Overcoming Poverty Together (OPT)* has seen the creation of a province-wide movement geared towards changing and improving the quality of life of our friends, families, neighbours and communities daily.

OPT is a plan on paper, but all over our province, there are people living it out. More than 100,000 New Brunswickers have played a direct role in the development and implementation of *Overcoming Poverty Together*, through more than 578 projects, programs or initiatives supported by the 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs).

We commend the CINs, their local partner organizations, volunteers and all the participants who are active in their communities and who, year after year, succeed in bringing together citizens, groups and other partners to help their fellow citizens.

Overcoming Poverty Together 2 (2014–2019) has seen a large number of accomplishments, including:

- Launch of an inclusive and sustainable strategy for accessible, available and affordable transportation for the province of New Brunswick (December 2017).
- Enhancement to the province-wide program for income tax preparation clinics for people on modest income through the [Get Your Benefits](#) program.
- Help in ensuring there are school food programs in New Brunswick schools.
- Research and development of a one-stop-shop approach to service information access for New Brunswick (211 Service approach). This led to the launch of 211 NB in October 2020.
- 366 community projects initiated by the CINs, for a combined total of 578 projects in OPT1 and OPT2

Message from Co-chairs

We recognize the Government of New Brunswick which has played a critical role with the introduction and implementation of various programs and services in harmony with OPT2, including:

- Early Learning Centres
- Minimum wage increases based on inflation
- Integrated Service Delivery, with close collaboration from Departments of Postsecondary Education, Training and Labour; Social Development; Health; and Public Safety
- Free Daycare for low-income families
- Literacy and Housing strategies
- 10 Year Education Plan

We also commend the Government of Canada who committed to poverty reduction by introducing [Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy](#), in August 2018. The government also introduced the Canada Child Benefit and the Canada Workers Benefit, and increased the Guaranteed Income Supplement. These measures have already started to show positive outcomes for Canadians who need it the most.

We wish to thank all the persons, volunteer organizations, government, business people, current and past board members of ESIC and the CINs, and other stakeholders who participated in the public engagement process and in the creation and the implementation of OPT2. Thanks to your dedication, our province has made remarkable progress in improving the lives of New Brunswickers.



Monique Richard
Co-Chair
Citizens



Nick Ganong
Co-Chair
Business



Roger Martin
Co-Chair
Non-Profit



Bruce Fitch
Co-Chair
Government

Overview of Overcoming Poverty Together 2

Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014 – 2019 was a roadmap for the province towards economic and social inclusion for us all. The purpose of the plan was to build a favorable environment to create a culture shift that empowers communities and stakeholders to maximize the use of local and regional assets, to reduce poverty and to improve the quality of life of all New Brunswickers.

Below is a summary to help the reader better understand OPT2. The complete plan is available on ESIC's website at www.gnb.ca/poverty

Vision

Through the collaboration of governments, business and non-profit sectors, persons living in poverty and individuals – all men, women and children in New Brunswick – shall have the necessary resources to meet their basic needs and to live with dignity, security and good health. Furthermore, all New Brunswickers shall be included as full citizens through opportunities for employment, personal development and community engagement.

Global Objective

The global objective for OPT2 is to foster and social inclusion of all New Brunswickers and reduce poverty through increased community capacity and collaboration of all four sector partners. Ongoing emphasis will be placed on reducing income poverty by 25% and deep income poverty by 50%.

Our Mandate

ESIC was established to:

1. Ensure the implementation of OPT and the development and adoption of any other economic and social inclusion plan;
2. Co-ordinate and support the Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) in developing their plans and in reaching objectives of the provincial plan set out in their regional plans;
3. Administer the Economic and Social Inclusion Fund established under section 29 of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*;
4. To exercise the other functions or activities authorized or required by this Act or the regulations or as directed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.



ESIC leads and facilitates collaboration among GNB departments, community groups, various sectors and interest groups. Providing leadership around poverty reduction, ESIC is uniquely equipped to identify new opportunities to improve economic and social inclusion of New Brunswickers.

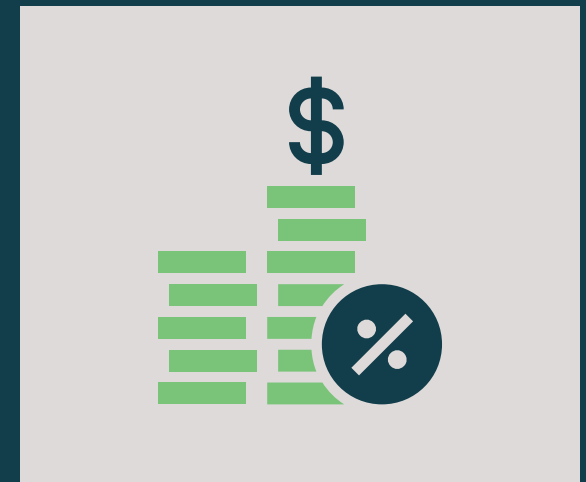
Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan 2014–2019 builds on the momentum of New Brunswick's initial Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, launched in 2009. The plan places emphasis on community capacity-building.

The plan also recognizes that each individual and community has a role to play in fostering economic and social inclusion and suggests that communities be empowered to tackle poverty reduction and other issues in New Brunswick. The plan includes 28 priority actions, divided into four pillars.

Of the 28 Priority Actions of OPT2 (2014–2019) 25 have been completed or are ongoing, while three remain in progress (see Appendix B).

To this end, ESIC has also led and supported several complementary initiatives to the 28 Priority Actions found in *Overcoming Poverty Together (OPT2)*, including:

- Free community tax clinics – [Get Your Benefits](#) – that help citizens with low income complete and file their tax returns. As a result, these citizens can also access additional financial supports through an array of social programs tied to the tax system.
- Since 2010, this ESIC initiative has completed 156,000 tax returns and put \$288 million in the hands of individuals with a modest income in NB.
- Since 2013 tax filers with a modest income who participated in this ESIC initiative have also been eligible for the Canada Learning Bond (CLB). To date, more than 20,400 New Brunswickers with a modest income have received the CLB with a value of over \$41 million.
- 100,000 people mobilized
- CINs initiated 366 community projects (total of 578 in OPT1 and OPT2) to help move the 28 Priority Actions
- Return on investment of \$4.06 for each dollar invested by ESIC in projects



Pillars and Themes

- Support for Community Development
- Communication and Networking
- Volunteerism



- Participation in the Labour Market
- Business Activity

- Food Security and Healthy Food Availability
- Housing
- Transportation

- Child and Youth Education
- Adult Education, Training and Preparation to Work



PILLAR 1 Community Empowerment

Community empowerment is a process whereby communities gain control over the factors and decisions that shape their existence. Community empowerment seeks to strengthen individuals and groups of people by building on their assets and capacities and mobilizing them to affect change in the community.

The Community Empowerment pillar contains seven priority actions, divided into three themes: Community Development, Communication and Networking, and Volunteerism.



THEME

Support for Community Development

Through the mobilization of community assets brought by the four sector partners, initiatives would be designed to reflect the values of individuals that make up these communities, and:

1. Foster community development through community asset mobilization.
2. Foster an entrepreneurial spirit to promote economic and social inclusion.



SUCCESS STORY

Turning an old school into a popular community centre

La Barque is a non-profit cooperative located in a former school in Pointe-Verte. Its mission is to pool spaces, tools and knowledge for the benefit of the Chaleur region community. The centre provides education and training opportunities to enhance the well-being, development and sustainability of the community.

La Barque brings together many associations and groups with various interests: cabinetmaking workshop, physical conditioning and gymnasium with sports leagues, community development cooperative, senior citizens, chess club, bookstore with over 7,000 used books. The Chaleur Resource Center for Parents and Children located at La Barque offers learning and entertainment programs for families.

A person who offers training at La Barque mentioned that her participation has changed her life completely. She used to have negative opinions towards her village and her region. Since her commitment to La Barque projects, she recognizes that she is more positive and has created new friendships.

The fact that the parking lot is regularly full of cars during the day and at night helps recruiting new participants. Residents of the village of Pointe-Verte are proud to see that the old school has been brought back to life.

THEME

Communication and Networking

The opportunity to better communicate and share information about community activities was highlighted throughout the OPT2 public engagement process to:

3. Share and communicate information to improve coordination of community activities and regional initiatives that foster economic and social inclusion.
4. Support creation of a “one-stop shop” to inform people about government and non-profit organization programs related to economic and social inclusion.
5. Celebrate communities’ best practices and success stories.

THEME

Volunteerism

The effectiveness of efforts to reduce poverty relies heavily on the commitment of citizens who volunteer their time and skills to create vibrant communities and help non-profit organizations provide opportunities to individuals and families with a modest income. It is essential to recognize the value of volunteering and to strengthen support for these efforts to:

6. Promote the spirit of volunteerism in our communities.
7. Support the alignment of community volunteer organizations and initiatives.



SUCCESS STORY

Young leaders in training at Charlotte County Boys and Girls Club

The Boys and Girls Club of Charlotte County (BGCCC) provides a safe, supportive place where children and youth can experience new opportunities, overcome barriers, build positive relationships and develop confidence and skills for life.

The Leaders in Training (LIT) program is offered to 22 youth, between the ages of 13 and 17 years old. This summer camp runs for eight weeks. A participant’s week includes three days of volunteering, one day attending an educational workshop and one field day trip.

The program continues two days per week during the school year. Students are picked up after school and they have the opportunity to volunteer within the club or in the community. Most participants are disadvantaged and vulnerable youth. Staff at the BGCCC are mentors and role models

to all the youth in this program. They provide a safe and supportive place to be during those most critical hours of the day. Strong friendships are created amongst the participants, many of them being unlikely pairs. Several LIT participants dealt with severe social anxiety or faced exclusion at school. Through the program, they were able to build confidence that will enable them to eventually pursue higher education, community engagement and employment. Many of the LIT participants return for a second year.

This program not only impacts the youth involved but also many people in the community. For example, 105 students from kindergarten to grade 2 have benefited from the LIT program’s literacy outreach program.



PILLAR 2 Learning

Learning, education and training are essential for individuals and communities to reach their full potential, to promote economic and social inclusion and reduce poverty. There are many groups and organizations dedicated to the delivery of education and learning programs.

Literacy starts for a child well before he or she learns to read and write. By playing with books and by recognizing that letters can be found everywhere the child develops increasing interest in literacy.

The Learning pillar contains six priority actions divided into two themes: Child and Youth Education, and Adult Education, Training, and Preparation to Work.



THEME

Child and Youth Education

Working together to ensure that resources are available to support our children's education so that they become well-rounded individuals who contribute to their community; and strengthening capacity in public schools to address specialized learning requirements of all children and youth to:

8. Reinforce and build upon capacity of parents, families, caregivers and communities to support children and youth in their learning.
9. Support and promote literacy in early childhood development and education.
10. Extend and strengthen the concept of innovative school models, such as entrepreneurial community schools and community-based school programming.
11. Promote skill-based mentoring and afterschool programming and support participation of children and youth living in families with a low income.



THEME

Adult Education, Training and Preparation to Work

Programs in post-secondary education, adult education, literacy, financial literacy, skills development and workplace preparation should be provided at a local level in learning-friendly environments, to reach people in the community where they live. Currently, several communities deliver these programs through a multi-sectoral approach to:

12. Support community-based initiatives in literacy, financial literacy, adult education, skill development and workplace entry preparation.
13. Support learning initiatives related to career development and employment counselling services for people with a low income.



SUCCESS STORY

Vitrail Project provides career guidance project for young people

The Vitrail Center is an alternative school that offers a second chance to young people who have not completed high school and who want to obtain their grade 12 diploma. These students are dealing with personal difficulties due to poverty, a difficult home environment, addiction issues or mental health.

There are three education centers in the region (Edmundston, Grand Falls, Kedgwick), and they are located outside public schools in order to create a climate of safety and support for the learner.

Vitrail is founded on the values of respect, independence, accountability, cooperation and sharing. The program offers young people the opportunity to experience

different career areas, to work on different artistic, cultural and personal projects, as well as to develop and flourish at all levels: academic, social, personal and professional. The strengths and uniqueness of each individual contribute to their own success. The students are proud to rediscover the pleasure of learning.

Vitrail (Stained glass) means several different pieces which come together and form a single piece; and because everyone is different, they still end up with a goal, a career objective and a degree that is unique to them.



PILLAR 3 Economic Inclusion

Economic inclusion can be achieved through employment opportunities, income sources, and influence over resources, and it can be achieved by removing barriers that hold back opportunities.

Priority actions need to be implemented to ensure economic inclusion for all New Brunswick citizens. As such, the annual indexation of minimum wage, the adoption of more inclusive pay equity legislation, the promotion of inclusion in the workplace and the support of local businesses and social enterprises were identified as key elements to facilitate economic inclusion.

The Economic Inclusion pillar contains seven priority actions divided into two themes: Participation in the Labour Market, and Business Activity.



THEME

Participation in the Labour Market

In the first Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, New Brunswickers took important steps together to increase minimum wage. OPT2 was committed to continuing efforts in this area. The next step was to ensure that minimum wage is reviewed and indexed annually.

The concept of living wage has also been looked at in several jurisdictions. In OPT2 work was done to:

14. Explore concept of a living wage.
15. Consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation.
16. Promote inclusion in the workplace.
17. Support flexible work place conditions to generate opportunities for people with barriers to employment and/or unique work practices and availability.



SUCCESS STORY

The Foundation Roof: A roof for the Food Bank

The Miramichi Community Food Bank was looking for space that was accessible by bus and by walking, offered ample parking and would provide room to grow.

A building was found, providing the roof's functionality could be restored. With the help of volunteers, EastSide supervised several at risk youth, with the use of volunteers from the church and the community, to remove debris, old furniture and interior constructed walls from the building. The roof itself was temporarily repaired in order to mitigate the damage to the interior of the structure through this winter and spring. Concluding in October, the last of the dumpsters left the property with the majority of the demolition having been completed.

The project did meet most of its planned outcomes. The work undertaken has prepared the project to move forward with additional funding from other funding partners. Other impacts include the addition of relationships built with probation officers and their clients through the Community Service Program of the Department of Public Safety.

At least 100 hours of community service were completed in this project. Many of the young people (youth at risk) have stayed in touch and are watching for updates on the building project. Support also came from outside the region from as far away as South Carolina. This project has inspired other communities to consider under-utilized assets in their own cities as opportunities for collaborations and community transformations.

THEME

Business Activity

Nurturing entrepreneurship is the first step in promoting the creation of local businesses and establishing a connection between these businesses and their community. OPT2 took steps to:

18. Foster entrepreneurship.
19. Promote the support of local and micro businesses.
20. Promote and support development, creation and sustainability of a social enterprise ecosystem.



SUCCESS STORY

Growing Workplace Success Through Cultivation

The Ville Cooperative is a community centre in Fredericton with the goal of empowering the community to learn, share, and grow in the spirit of health, wellness, and sustainability.

Taking a holistic approach, The Ville Cooperative aims to provide the community with progressive, health-related opportunities. Their goal is to create a supportive facility which promotes recreation, education, sustainability, food security, arts and culture, and green technology.

The Ville built an energy-efficient solar greenhouse to support hands-on learning experiences for learners, relating to tasks and skills common in the industry. The greenhouse demonstrates to students the newest industry trend in greenhouse operations and contains the modules to easily switch between traditional greenhouse work, hydroponic

and aquaponic systems. Producing year-round allows learners in all cohorts to gain experience in marketing, selling and entrepreneurialism. Participants in the classes were adults of all ages.

Building work was coordinated with local experts in the carpentry and building industry to help guide the technical aspects and to accomplish a lot of the hands-on work. From the ground-up this build has been a collaboration between community and the agriculture coordinators of The Ville. Many helping hands helped to bring the greenhouse to fruition: university student volunteers, a master carpenter, a construction worker plus others who helped at all stages of the greenhouse.

This project is an important asset to the community with capacity to build resiliency in local food security.



PILLAR 4 Social Inclusion

Social inclusion means that everyone, regardless of challenge or ability has opportunities to participate, feel welcome and be heard.

OPT2 focused on promoting the sharing of food knowledge, the changing role of emergency food programs, access to quality and safe housing options in mixed neighbourhoods, and development of effective alternative community transport services.

There are eight priority actions in this pillar, divided into three themes: Food Security and Availability, Housing, and Transportation.





SUCCESS STORY

Inspiration Café: More than your local coffee and donut shop

Can a huge storage area in a basement make a difference in the lives of certain people?

That's what the Inspiration Café did after turning the basement of the Community Peace Centre in Moncton into a beautiful and welcoming café.

The non-profit coffee shop and restaurant hires and trains people struggling with mental health issues, poverty and employment barriers. Similar initiatives are already in place across Canada. The café works with agencies to assist people who need employment.

Participants are taught culinary and people skills in a warm and positive working environment.

Participants are paid while in training to do everything from dishwashing to food safety to cooking techniques. They also learn to make beverages and serve customers. This way, participants don't get bored and coordinators can know

what kind of work they're interested in. There are learning curves for everyone. Employees benefit from excellent training, and clients understand that the Café is a learning environment.

The initiative also provides life skills training, which includes anger management, budgeting, writing a resume, setting goals, and preparing for a job interview.

People want to be valued, they want to contribute to society, but they don't always have the capacity to work full time. Inspiration Café is a great opportunity to be in a supportive, inclusive, environment that allows them to work to the capacity that they can.

Working at the café helps to get to the root cause of poverty. It provides work to people who want to help themselves and now can by receiving a regular paycheck.

THEME

Food Security and Healthy Food Availability

As a society, we can act collectively to implement sustainable measures to address the challenges of food security. The priorities in this area are intended to both overcome the problems of food insecurity and to support long-term solutions. OPT2 took steps to:

21. Promote and support community-based initiatives related to food preparation, food safety and access to healthy food.
22. Promote transition of food banks to community-based food centres.
23. Encourage initiatives that address availability of nutritional food and food management and coordination in emergency food programs.
24. Promote the establishment of community-based breakfast programs in all public schools.



SUCCESS STORY

Breaking Social Isolation at The Workshop

The Workshop is a dynamic and welcoming environment that promotes mutual aid, breaks down isolation and develops independence and balance for people living with mental health problems. It is located at The Anchor, a multifunctional center that aims to provide different types of activities in collaboration of different groups and organizations. The Workshop offers an inclusive place for socialization and participation and promotes healthy lifestyles. It is open to everyone and no reference is required.

By learning sewing, embroidery, knitting techniques and participating in art and personal development workshops, participants to the program can rebuild their social functioning and regain power over their lives to develop their autonomy, to break the isolation and to regain self-confidence.

Benefits of the Workshop include:

- Creating with your hands helps maintain personal balance;
- Learning develops self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Researching the quality of the articles produced encourages discipline and critical thinking;
- Developing a support network makes it possible to better face the difficulties of daily life.

The Workshop's mission is geared towards social integration, by breaking down isolation and developing a social environment. Participants with very different profiles increase their sense of belonging. By dissociating themselves from their illness, participants are able to organize their time more effectively in order to achieve their goals. The program provides a structure that encourages participants to stay active and future-oriented.

THEME

Housing

To create sustainable housing, partners from all sectors need to work together to develop and support innovative solutions that meet the long-term housing needs of individuals, families and communities. With OPT2 ESIC took steps to:

- 25. Support sustainability and quality of existing affordable housing options.
- 26. Encourage innovative community-based housing solutions for affordable, accessible, quality, mixed housing communities.



THEME

Transportation

Lack of access to transportation poses significant challenges for many of us, whether by creating barriers to employment and training, limiting participation in sports and community activities, or restricting access to health and other essential services. With OPT2 ESIC took steps to:

- 27. Develop a comprehensive rural and urban transportation strategy for the province.
- 28. Promote and support community-based alternative transportation systems.



Structure

From its creation, ESIC has been responsible for the coordination and implementation of the OPT economic and social inclusion plans. ESIC and OPT are uniquely structured as the Board, committees and other groups formed under ESIC have representation from the four sectors.

ESIC's foundation and operations as a Crown Corporation are guided by the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*. As outlined in the Act, the main purpose of ESIC is to:

- lead the implementation and evaluation of the Provincial Plan and the development and adoption of other Economic and Social Inclusion Plans, and
- coordinate and support the CINs in the development of their regional plans and in the implementation of the objectives of the Provincial Plan set out in their regional plans.

ESIC's reach ranges from the CINs in the communities across New Brunswick to the provincial government level, with three government Ministers on its board and a GNB Interdepartmental Working Group on Poverty.



Community Inclusion Networks (CINs)

The *Economic and Social Inclusion Act* sets the framework for 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) to be established either independently or through the support of existing community-oriented organizations.

Since their creation more than ten years ago, ESIC and the CINs have teamed up with various organizations to improve the lives of the people of New Brunswick, building stronger families, and promoting economic and social inclusion to reduce poverty in New Brunswick. These networks are very active in their communities, and year after year, they succeed in bringing together citizens, groups and other partners to help their fellow citizens improve their quality of life. They partner with local organizations and support them in the development and implementation of their community projects. Every two years, the CINs submit a revised regional plan which aligns with the provincial plan. Many organizations recognize and support the activities of the CINs by aligning their strategies and initiatives with the provincial poverty reduction plan.

There are 12 Community Inclusion Networks across New Brunswick:

Region 1: Westmorland Albert Counties

Region 2: Saint John and Sussex

Region 3: Greater Fredericton

Region 4: North West

Region 5: Restigouche

Region 6: Chaleur

Region 7: Northumberland

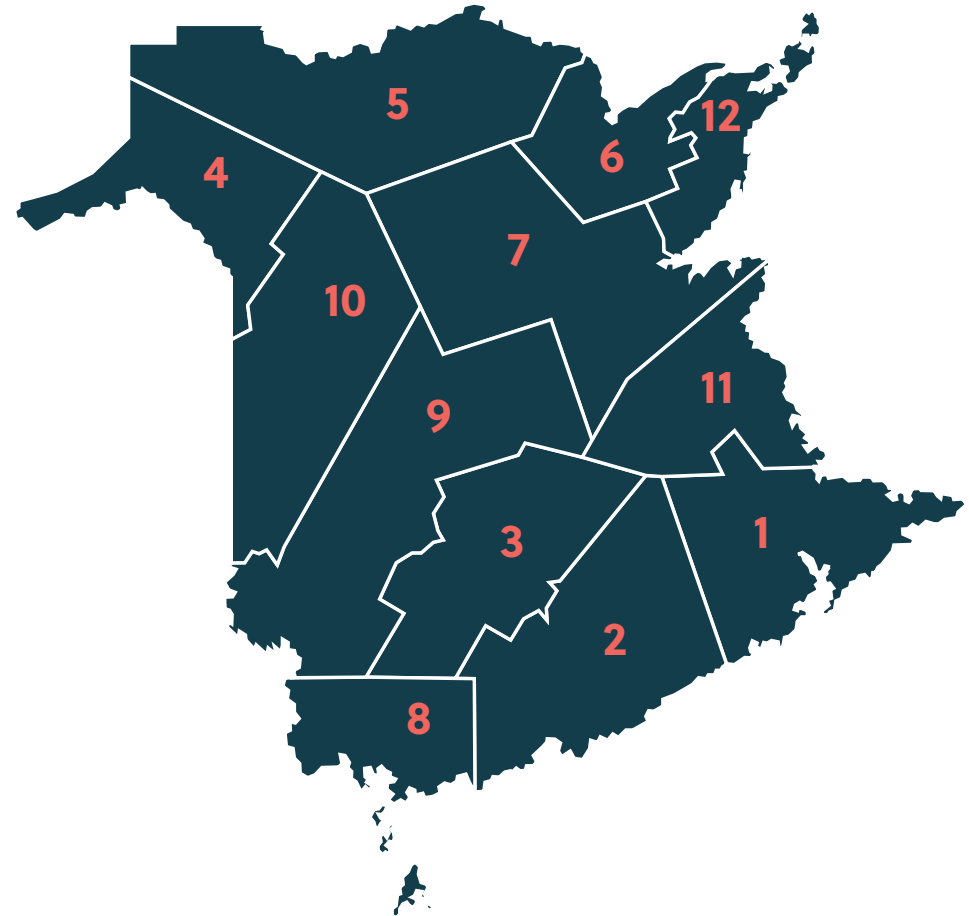
Region 8: Charlotte County

Region 9: Central New Brunswick

Region 10: Carleton Victoria

Region 11: Kent

Region 12: Acadian Peninsula

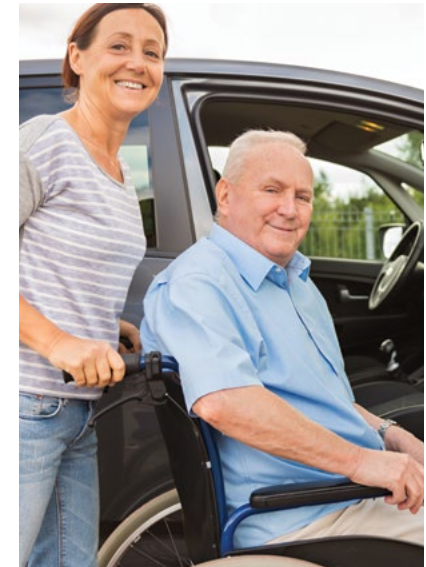


Themes for projects undertaken by the CINs in OPT2 include:

- Support for community development
- Communication and networking
- Adult education, training and preparation for work
- Transportation
- Food security and healthy food availability
- Child and youth education
- Volunteerism
- Participation in the labour market
- Business activity
- Housing
- Health and wellness

Projects funded by ESIC generate community engagement that comes in various ways: financial contribution, in-kind donations and volunteer time.

Up to the conclusion of OPT2, 578 community projects have been funded. In the first 10 years of its existence, for every dollar invested by ESIC, \$4.06 in total was leveraged into each project. In addition, more than 100,000 residents of New Brunswick have played a direct role in at least one of these projects, programs, or processes supported by the CINs.



Advisory Committees

As it was in OPT1, ESIC established advisory committees to work on complex priority actions that required more thorough examination and analysis prior to implementing a response plan.

Advisory committees bring in subject matter experts from each of the four sectors that are involved in the poverty reduction strategy: business, government, non-profit organizations, and citizens with lived experience.

Three advisory committees were established under OPT2:

Advisory Committee on Living Wage and Pay Equity

The Economic Inclusion pillar included actions to look at living wage and pay equity.

An Advisory Committee was created in April 2017 with the mandate to explore the concept of living wage, and to consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation.

Members of the committee included individuals who have expertise related to living wage and pay equity issues in New Brunswick, more particularly those living in poverty, two representatives from the Board, one member of the Women's Equality Branch, employees of the respective government departments with expertise related to living wage and pay equity, and one employee of the Corporation.

The committee developed a jurisdictional review and an options paper, which was submitted to ESIC in 2018:

- [Report on Living Wage and Pay Equity](#) – A report addressing the issue of Living Wage and Pay Equity in New Brunswick

One-Stop-Shop Working Group

The Community Empowerment pillar includes an action focusing on sharing and communicating community information and promoting communities and volunteerism.

The Working Group on One-Stop-Shop was created in April 2017 to support the creation of a "one-stop-shop" to inform people about government and non-profit organization programs related to economic and social inclusion.

Members of the committee included individuals with expertise related to information sharing and communication issues in New Brunswick, particularly in relation to those living in poverty, two representatives from the Board, and one employee of the Corporation.

The committee had the mandate to research and document the various ways and methods that information about government and non-profit programs and services is made available to the public.

Recommendations for moving forward were submitted to ESIC in 2018 in this report:

- [From Call to Service](#) – A One-Stop-Shop Solution for New Brunswickers

Following the extensive exploratory work carried out by the ESIC's working group, 211 NB, a free, bilingual, confidential resource to help New Brunswickers navigate the network of community, social, non-clinical health and government services, was launched in October 2020 by the government of New Brunswick in partnership with the federal government and the United Way.

Advisory Committee on Rural and Urban Transportation

The Social Inclusion pillar includes two actions addressing transportation.

The Advisory Committee was created in April 2015 with the mandate to develop a rural and urban transportation strategy for the province.

Members of the committee included individuals with expertise related to transportation issues in New Brunswick, particularly in relation to those living in poverty and/or with disability, two representatives from the Board, employees of the respective government departments with expertise related transportation, and one employee of the Corporation. ESIC submitted the committee's report to government in December 2017:

- **From Surfaces to Services** – An inclusive and sustainable transportation strategy for the province of New Brunswick, 2017 – 2037

From Surfaces to Services

An inclusive and sustainable transportation strategy for the province of New Brunswick, 2017-2037

Rural and urban transportation advisory committee
NB Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

December 2017



Ensemble  pour vaincre la pauvreté
Overcoming Poverty Together

Financial Literacy

Since 2010, the corporation has collaborated with the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Department of Social Development to promote the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program, which in New Brunswick is called Get Your Benefits (formerly known as *Get Your Piece of the Money Pie*). Other provincial and federal partners include the New Brunswick Public Library Service, Service Canada, the Department of Health, and some First Nations communities.

Individuals and families with a low income who file their annual income tax returns are eligible for several income-based provincial and federal tax credits and benefits that can help improve their lives. Depending on the situation and eligibility of each applicant, credits and benefits like the GST/HST Credit, the NB Harmonized Sales Tax Credit, the Canada and the NB Child Benefits, the NB School Supplement and many others can be obtained by filing an annual income tax and benefit return. Since 2010, this ESIC-led initiative has seen 156,000 tax returns completed and put \$288 million in the hands of New Brunswickers with a modest income.



Canada Learning Bond

The corporation is leading the promotion of the Canada Learning Bond (CLB) in New Brunswick, which is offered by the Department of Employment and Social Development Canada. The CLB is a non-repayable grant to help pay for education or training after high school, for children born after 2004, with a family net income of less than \$48,535 (2020 tax year for 1–3 children).

This program provides up to \$2,000 in federal money per applicant child to be deposited in a Registered Education Savings Plan. No parental contribution is required to get the bond. To date, more than 20,400 New Brunswickers with a low income have received the CLB with a maximum value of \$41 million. Information on the CLB is available at www.gnb.ca/poverty. Online registration takes less than 10 minutes at www.mysmartfuture.org/clbnb.



Government of New Brunswick

The Government of New Brunswick (GNB) has been an important stakeholder in initiatives that impact the lives of New Brunswickers in a positive way.

GNB continues to build foundational supports that will have economic and social impact for our entire province, including:

- Funding to ESIC and the Community Inclusion Networks;
- Support to Early Learning Centres around New Brunswick;
- Increase to the provincial minimum wage, now with annual increases based on inflation;
- Integrated Service Delivery approach between Social Development and Post-secondary Education Training and Labour to improve employment for hard to serve clients;
- Free and low-cost daycare for families with a low income;
- Provincial literacy strategy;
- Provincial housing strategy;
- Support for an economic development plan;
- 10-year education plan;
- Extension of Home Energy Assistance Program;
- Healthy Aging Strategy;
- Support for the Interdepartmental Working Group on Poverty which ensures better GNB alignment & collaboration; and
- HST Credit in NB.



Government of Canada

The federal poverty reduction strategy, *Opportunity for All*, was built on consultation with stakeholders, academics and citizens from across Canada and has a vision to help reduce poverty, support Canadians working hard to join the middle class and build a diverse, prosperous and truly inclusive country where everyone benefits from economic growth – a country where all Canadians can realize their full potential.

The Federal Poverty Reduction plan is built on three pillars, with a focus similar to the three pillars from New Brunswick’s first economic and social inclusion plan. The three pillars of the federal poverty reduction plan include:

- *Dignity* – lifting Canadians out of poverty by ensuring everyone’s basic needs are met;
- *Opportunity and Inclusion* – helping Canadians join the middle class by promoting full participation in society and equality of opportunity; and,
- *Resilience and Security* – supporting the middle class by protecting Canadians from falling into poverty and supporting income security and resilience.

The global target of the federal plan is to reduce poverty by 20% by 2020 and by 50% by 2030, compared to the 2015 level, as measured by the Market Basket Measure.

The 50% poverty reduction target aligns with one of the Sustainable Development Goals that Canada adopted in 2015.

The Government of Canada has identified the Market Basket Measure (see Appendix A) as Canada’s Official Poverty Line.

In *Opportunity for All*, the Government of Canada adopted a definition of poverty similar to NB’s definition in OPT. *Opportunity for All* defined poverty as the condition of a person who lacks the resources, means, opportunities, and power necessary to acquire and maintain economic self-sufficiency or to integrate into and participate in society.

The Government of Canada has committed to develop a dashboard of indicators to monitor other meaningful dimensions of poverty, including:

- Food security
- Unmet health needs
- Unmet housing needs and chronic homelessness
- Deep income poverty
- Literacy and numeracy
- Number of youth (aged 15 – 24) who are currently not employed, at school or in training

- Proportion of Canadians in relative low income which is the bottom 40% income share
- The median hourly wage
- Poverty entry and exit rates
- The average poverty gap, and
- Asset resilience (as measured by the ability to cover expenses for three months from savings)

The plan recognizes that poverty is complex and that individuals experience poverty differently and face different barriers to exiting poverty.

The implementation of the strategy and the monitoring and evaluation of it will involve a gender-based analysis lens and disaggregate the progress of various groups that have historically had a higher incidence of poverty (e.g. Indigenous, singles aged 45 – 64, single parents, recent immigrants, Black Canadians and other racialized groups, LGBTQ2).

The Government of Canada will be investing \$12.1 million over five years, starting in 2018 – 19, and \$1.5 million per year thereafter, to address key gaps in poverty measurement in Canada.



Lessons Learned

Through developing and implementing two versions of *Overcoming Poverty Together*, lessons have been learned. These include:

- The state of the economy plays a vital role in the poverty landscape of New Brunswick.
- During periods of economic growth, it is typical to see an increase in employment and a decrease in social assistance caseloads;
- Over the past decade in New Brunswick, there has been modest economic growth and no net employment growth; however social assistance caseloads have still decreased;
- The measurement of poverty in Canada has seen significant changes since 2009 which include changes to the Statistics Canada census and the development of an official poverty line for Canada;
- OPT's priority actions are led by multiple stakeholders including ESIC, thereby adding to the complexity of tracking and completing actions;
- The delivery of assistance measures beyond income, such as free transportation, subsidized daycare, food assistance programs, and other non-monetary related benefits, have been provided by multiple agencies and departments across the province;
- Some of the priorities outlined in both OPT1 and OPT2 were designed to alleviate rather than decrease poverty. Consequently, it is difficult to provide statistical outcomes for implementing these priorities. Even so, significant benefits at the community level have been observed through the qualitative impacts and life changing experiences of people who are now economically or socially included in their communities.

Appendix A

Definitions

Market Basket Measurement

In 2018 Statistics Canada adopted a calculation to measure the number of people who live in poverty called the Market Basket Measurement (MBM).

According to the MBM, a family lives in poverty if they cannot afford the cost of a specific basket of goods and services in its community representing a modest, basic standard of living.

The MBM includes the costs of food, clothing, footwear, transportation, shelter and other expenses for a family. Prices of the goods and services that make up the basket are updated and methodological changes are also made if needed.

Statistics Canada has updated or "rebased" the MBM through a comprehensive review. An MBM rebasing usually results in a shift upward in the poverty rate, as the poverty thresholds are updated to better reflect contemporary costs of living.

The change in the poverty line between the two bases on this occasion is due mainly to updated costs of shelter included in the MBM basket.

For clarity, the rebased (new) poverty measure is called the 2018 – base MBM, while the existing measure in use since 2008 is called the 2008 – base MBM.

The poverty rates generated by the new 2018 – base MBM are not directly comparable to the poverty rates generated by the old 2008 – base MBM.

The transition to the 2018 – base MBM took effect in June 2020.

Poverty in New Brunswick

Tracking the number and percent those who fall below Canada's Official Poverty Line can be used to measure the progress on and effectiveness of initiatives designed to lift people out of poverty.

Using the 2008 – base MBM, the rate of poverty in New Brunswick has fallen to 7.9%, from 9.7% in 2017. This is a decrease in the number of people living in poverty in NB from 71,000 in 2017 to 58,000 in 2018, or a decrease of 13,000 people living in poverty in 12 months.

In 2009 (the year prior to the launch of OPT1) the poverty rate in New Brunswick was 14.2% or a total of 104,000 people. Between 2009 and 2018 there was a 44% decrease in the number of people living in poverty in New Brunswick, which is 46,000 fewer people living in poverty.

In 2018 NB had the second lowest provincial poverty rate in Canada, tied with Québec at 7.9%. Alberta had the lowest rate at 7.3%. The rate for Canada was 8.7%.

Rates in Atlantic Canada:

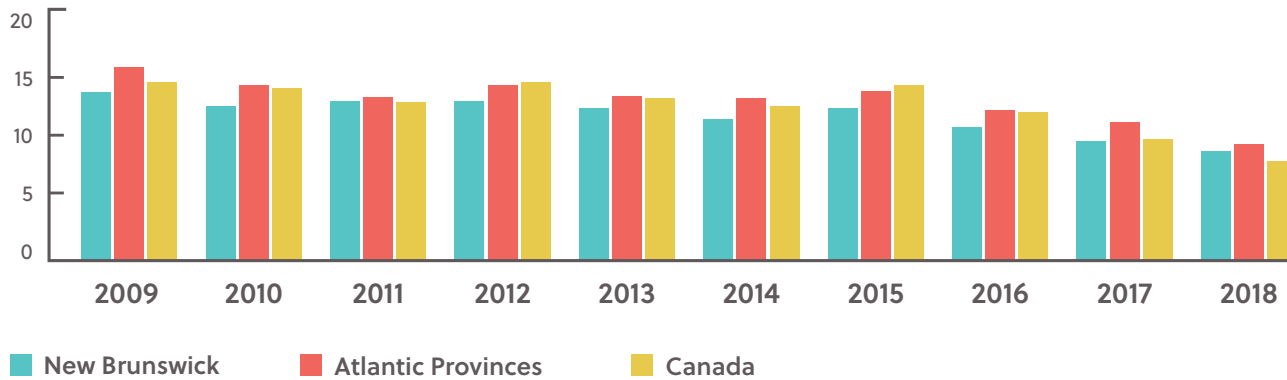
New Brunswick was	Prince Edward Island was
7.9%	9.1%
Nova Scotia was	Newfoundland was
10.3%	9.7%

Please note:

When the new 2018 – base MBM was implemented, the poverty rate for New Brunswick in 2018 was revised to 10%.

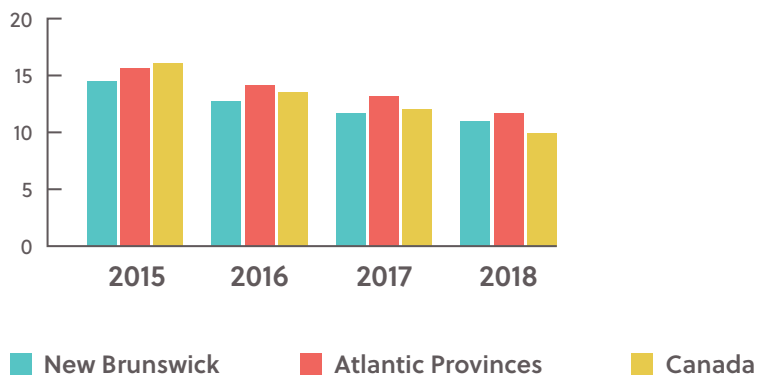
The goal for OPT3 in New Brunswick is a poverty rate of 7% by 2030. Whether measured by the 2008 – base MBM or the 2018 – base MBM, ESIC believes this goal will be accomplished through the existing poverty reduction plans in NB.

Percentage of New Brunswickers with Income Below the Market Basket Measure (2008 base) Compared to Canada and the Atlantic Provinces, 2009 – 2018



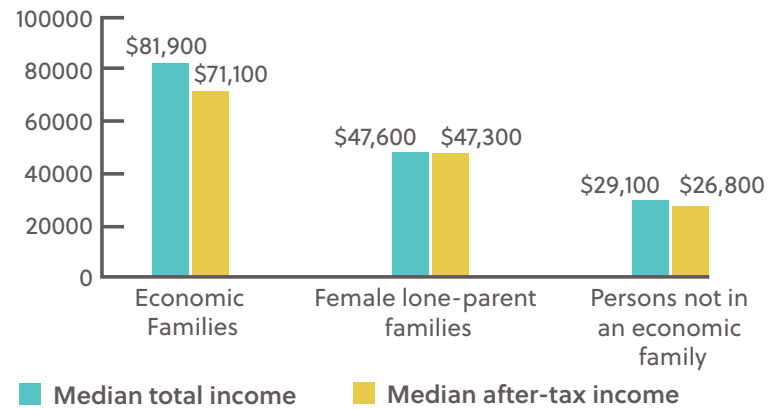
Source: Statistics Canada

Percentage of New Brunswickers in low income as measured by the Market Basket Measure (2018 base) compared to Canada and the Atlantic Provinces, 2015 – 2018



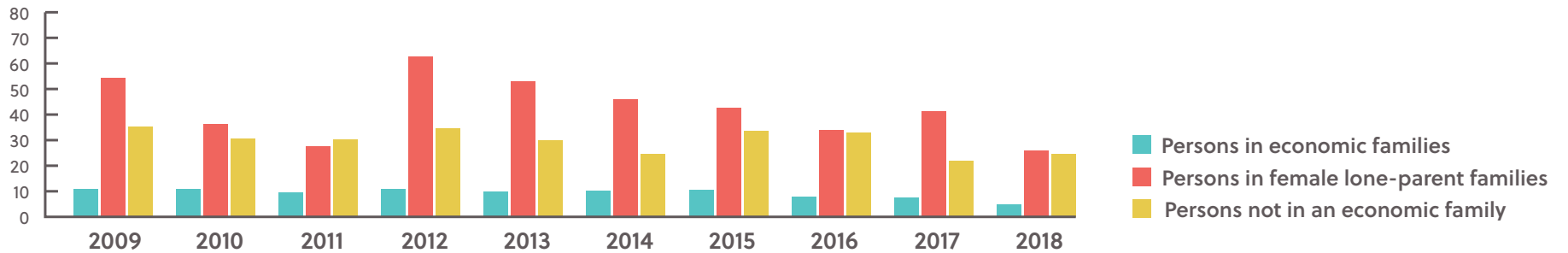
Source: Statistics Canada

Median Total and After-Tax Income by Family Type (2018 Constant \$)



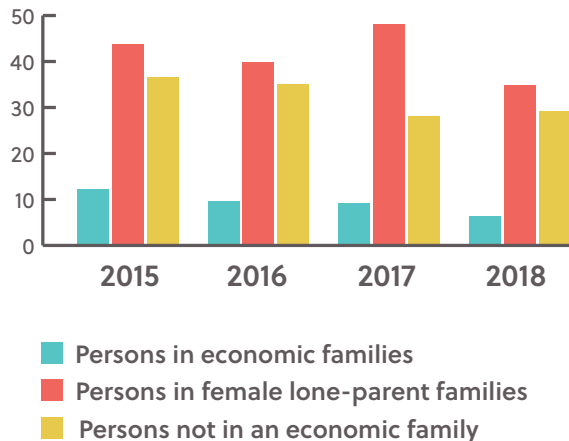
Source: Statistics Canada

Percentage of New Brunswickers with Income Below the Market Basket Measure (2008 base), 2009 – 2018



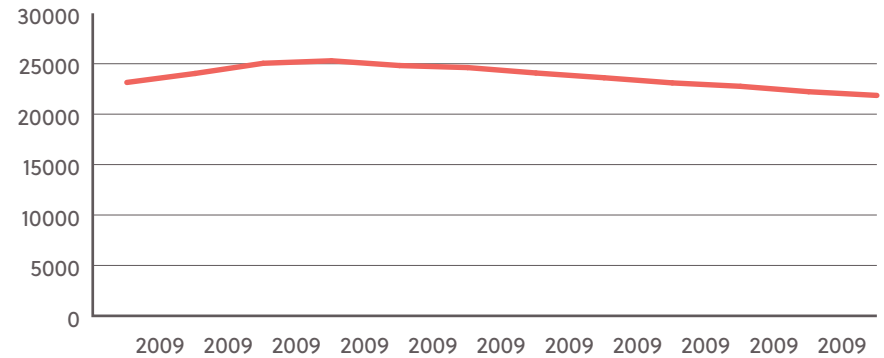
Source: Statistics Canada

Percentage of New Brunswickers with Income Below the Market Basket Measure (2018 base), 2015 – 2018



Source: Statistics Canada

Social Assistance Recipients (2009 – 2020)



Source: GNB Department of Social Development

Poverty Outcomes in New Brunswick

The chart below presents the percentage of New Brunswickers with incomes below the poverty line by year and by demographic category, as indicated by the MBM. These statistics are provided by Statistics Canada.

A primary goal of OPT 2 is a 25% decrease in poverty. This chart indicates that poverty in New Brunswick has been reduced in every demographic category measured between 2009 and 2018. As indicated in green, all but two demographic categories exceeded the overall poverty reduction target of a 25%.

Market basket measure, 2008 base

Percentage of persons in low income											
Economic family type	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	% Diff Since 2009
All persons	14.2	13.7	12.6	14.2	12.9	12.3	14	11.8	9.7	7.9	-0.44
Persons in economic families	10.7	10.7	9.5	10.7	9.9	10.1	10.5	7.9	7.5	4.7	-0.56
Persons in non-elderly families	11.5	11.5	10.5	11.7	10.8	11.6	11.3	8.6	8.3	5.4	-0.53
Persons in couples	8.8	11.6	11.7	7.8	7.5	6.6	8.7	5.3	7.4	5.1	-0.42
Persons in couple families with children	9.6	9.2	9.1	10.1	7.7	11.7	9.1	8.1	5.5	5.5	-0.43
Persons in lone-parent families	50.2	33.8	27.8	53.7	49.3	38.8	34.6	27.6	37.7	25.6	-0.49
Persons in female lone-parent families	54.4	36.1	27.7	62.6	53.1	45.9	42.5	34	41.2	26	-0.52
Persons not in an economic family	35.3	30.7	30.2	34.6	29.8	24.4	33.6	32.8	21.8	24.7	-0.30
Elderly persons not in an economic family	20.2	18.6	18.8	27.2	17.6	16.4	20.5	20.8	6.3	7.6	-0.62
Elderly females not in an economic family	23.5	22	15.8	27.1	19	17.9	21.4	21.2	6.8	7.9	-0.66
Non-elderly persons not in an economic family	40.6	35.5	35.2	37.8	35	28.6	39.3	38.9	30	33.8	-0.17
Non-elderly males not in an economic family	34.9	30.1	27	31.3	29.7	25.6	39.8	36.1	30.3	34.2	-0.02
Non-elderly females not in an economic family	46.7	42.2	44.3	45.7	42.4	32.4	38.6	42.2	29.7	33.4	-0.28

Deep Poverty

Deep poverty is living far below the poverty line, at 50% or less during a given year. In New Brunswick, income poverty is measured using the Market Basket Measure as previously stated.

Please note that while OPT2 concluded in December 2019 statistical data on the state of deep poverty in New Brunswick from that same date will only be available in mid to late 2021. An update by ESIC on the status of deep poverty in NB in December of 2019 will be completed when the data is available.

Consequently, comments about deep poverty included in this final report for OPT2 reflect data and analysis compiled up to 2016. ([Deep poverty in NB](#))

The number of people living in deep poverty in New Brunswick has been declining, driven by a notable decrease in 2016, continuing a trend that started in 2012. Someone living in deep poverty in NB is more likely to be single, living alone, middle aged, and on social assistance.

Having children or being over the age of 65 are both protective of deep poverty due to the additional government benefits like the Canada Child Benefit and the Guaranteed Income Supplement that target these groups.

There seems to be no relationship between sex, geographic region, language or education and deep poverty.

Statistics Canada data from 2016 shows that poverty among immigrants is approximately double that of non-immigrants, with the difference between the groups increasing over time.

New Brunswick is typical of the Atlantic Region in terms of deep poverty characteristics and trends; and the Atlantic region in turn is similar to the rest of Canada. So, New Brunswick's challenges are not unique.

While being on government programs and benefits (e.g., social assistance) and being single are both correlated with living in deep poverty across the country, this relationship is strongest in the Atlantic provinces.

People who persist in deep poverty are possibly not transitioning off social assistance for systematic reasons, such as having a disability.

During any given year for some period of time, there are approximately 100,000 people who live below the poverty line in New Brunswick, and approximately 18,000 of them live in deep poverty, or close to one in 5 of the people living in poverty. Most people below the poverty line are quite close to that line.

Appendix B

OPT2 was a roadmap to move NB toward economic and social inclusion for all. Emphasis was placed on community capacity-building and supporting the notion that everyone has a role to play in fostering economic and social inclusion for us all.

The 12 CINs have a vital role in building our collective capacity to work together. They are at the heart of the OPT2. Through ESIC's financial and operational support, the CINs and their partners lead community and regional initiatives that foster partnerships, build capacity, and leverage resources that directly impact the lives of the people of New Brunswick.

At the conclusion of OPT2 there are noticeable improvements in community access to transportation, healthy food for low-income individuals and families, new after school and summer programs for children and youth, adult return-to-work training programs, social enterprise development support, adult and children literacy programs, and new affordable housing initiatives.

Progress has been made and below are examples of success.

The implementation of the *Overcome Poverty Together* plans has had a positive impact on the quality of life of New Brunswickers. In addition to the 50 priority actions set out in the 2009–2014 and 2014–2019 plans, non-profit organizations, businesses and citizens have also joined this work initiated by the Government of New Brunswick by setting up concrete on the ground initiatives that were not part of OPT. Most of these initiatives have had a positive impact on New Brunswickers, and some are listed in italics below.

Priority Actions with Status: Overcoming Poverty Together 2014 – 2019

In this Appendix the following status definitions are used:

Ongoing: The priority action is in continued progress and is not meant to have a final completion date.

In Progress: The priority action has started and is in progress towards completion.

Completed: The priority action is done and the objective has been attained.

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
Pillar 1 – Community Empowerment		
Theme – Support for Community Development		
1. Foster community development through community asset mobilization.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CINs have held community asset mobilization consultations. <i>Wellness and Nutrition (Restigouche)</i>
2. Foster an entrepreneurial spirit to promote economic and social inclusion.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CINs have partnered with projects of economic nature or have economic impact. Along with various government programs, other organizations also provide programs and services promoting entrepreneurship, such as the Saint John Learning Exchange (English only), Programme de jeunesse entrepreneuriale (French only), and CBDC Campbellton.
Theme – Communication and Networking		
3. Share and communicate information to improve coordination of community activities and regional initiatives that foster economic and social inclusion.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CINs promote initiatives to link individuals to their communities with help from local partners. Connections are made through radio shows, newsletters, social media, and related activities. The NB Public Library is one of ESIC’s community partner in promoting the Get Your Benefits program.
4. Support creation of a “one-stop shop” to inform people about government and non-profit organization programs related to economic and social inclusion.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A provincial One Stop Shop, the 211 NB service, launched on October 15, 2020.
5. Celebrate communities’ best practices and success stories.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ESIC has rolled-out a promotional and awareness campaign on social media with monthly themes. At the local and regional level, CINs celebrate and sharing their partners best practices and success stories. <i>Around the Block Community Newspaper (Saint John)</i>

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
Theme – Volunteerism		
6. Promote the spirit of volunteerism in our communities.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC launched the Small Act, Big Impact campaign in 2015 to promote volunteerism. • ESIC recruits volunteers in NB for free income tax clinics in the Get Your Benefits program. • GNB Department of Finance has an Assessment Reduction Program for property tax relief to qualifying charitable and non-profit organizations that offer social benefits to individuals and communities. • <i>Becca Told Me To</i>
7. Support the alignment of community volunteer organizations and initiatives.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CINs primary focus is on linking community stakeholders to work on common goals, including several regional projects created within OPT2. • CINs in Charlotte County and Fredericton region have developed websites to help connect volunteers with organizations that need their help. • <i>Day of Caring – United Way Central NB</i>

Pillar 2 – Learning

Theme – Child and Youth Education

8. Reinforce and build upon capacity of parents, families, caregivers and communities to support children and youth in their learning.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs offered by Social Development • Programs offered by PETL • Programs offered NB Public Library: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every Child Ready to Read Program – Program based on the principles of sing, read, write, talk, play developed by the American Library Association) • Afterschool programs, Annual summer reading clubs, Interactive learning spaces.
9. Support and promote literacy in early childhood development and education.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC promotes ELF (English) and CLEF (French) literacy programs • Early Childhood Services (Anglophone) • Early Childhood Services (Francophone)
10. Extend and strengthen the concept of innovative school models, such as entrepreneurial community schools and community-based school programming.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in school system • Alternative High School Training Centres

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
11. Promote skill-based mentoring and afterschool programming and support participation of children and youth living in low income families.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CINs partner with local organizations to implement mentoring and after-school programs.
Theme – Adult Education, Training and Preparation to work		
12. Support community-based initiatives in literacy, financial literacy, adult education, skill development and workplace entry preparation.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC is proactive with the Get Your Benefits program and Canada Learning Bond. ESIC leads with a 10-year federal-provincial partnership and has organized several Super Clinics in the last 3 years (income tax, Social Insurance Number, Registered Disability Saving Plan, Canada Learning Bond sign-up sessions) • The Financial Education Network (made up of many GNB and non-profit organizations) has a focus on partnerships in Financial Literacy. • GNB Department of Finance introduced the NB HST credit in 2016. • Other programs that benefit New Brunswickers on low-income include the Low-Income Tax Reduction, NB Child Tax Benefit, NB Working Income Supplement, NB School Supplement Program, Low-Income Seniors' Benefit and Low Income Property Tax Allowance. • Financial Literacy is an ongoing integrated part of the grade 10, 11 and 12 curriculums. • Adult Literacy and Essential Skills Action Program has been created with a focus on adult literacy and essential skills. • Community Adult Learning Services Through a partnership between government and twelve incorporated community adult learning organizations, New Brunswick adults have access to learning services in, or near, their communities. • Workplace Essential Skills This is aimed at helping adults who are employed or seeking employment and require additional essential skills to succeed • New Brunswick Public Library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach services – Pop up library service in communities to reach underserved groups using cellular service and online services. • Youth and Adult Programs – Ongoing programs that focus on employability, economic growth, literacy and lifelong learning.

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
13. Support learning initiatives related to career development and employment counselling services for people with low incomes.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saint John Learning Exchange <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Learning Exchange is a leader of social innovation in their community with “outside the box” thinking. • Supports participants achieving their academic or employment goals by helping create an individualized plan for the success of every individual that walks through our doors. • Women Empowerment Network POWER UP! is a FREE 10-week leadership empowerment training program designed to help women take their next step in life. • The Experiential Learning and Employment Continuum for Social Development clients is a joint PETL/SD initiative targeting 400 clients over 3 years with the goal to help social assistance clients acquire classroom and on-the-job training through employment placement. • Post-secondary education became more accessible with the provision of upfront grant assistance to NB students with the Renewed Tuition Bursary Program.

Pillar 3 – Economic Inclusion

Theme – Participation in the Labour Market

14. Explore concept of a living wage.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC’s Advisory Committee on Living Wage and Pay Equity completed its work in 2018. Research on living wage rates in NB has commenced with data for Saint John provided in 2020. • Similar Living Wage research for Fredericton, Moncton, and Bathurst is expected to be completed in Q1 of 2021.
15. Consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC’s Advisory Committee on Living Wage and Pay Equity began work in April 2017 with the mandate to consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation. The Committee Report on Living Wage and Pay Equity was completed in 2018. • GNB has completed five pay equity studies for female-dominated group of employees in the public services, including educational assistants and school administrative assistants, court stenographers, medical science professionals, specialized health care professionals, and professional support in schools.

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
16. Promote inclusion in the workplace.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Premier Council on Disabilities supports workplace inclusion as part of its mandate in the NB Disability Action Plan. • In 2016, the New Brunswick Human Rights Act was amended to add “family status” and “gender identity or expression” as prohibited grounds for discrimination. • PETL promotes hiring of persons with disabilities with employers sharing information on the benefits to their business of hiring persons with disabilities. Training and Employment Support Services. • PETL is funding New Boots, a program run by the Construction Association of New Brunswick that provides information, resources and supports to women apprentices and journeypersons in non-traditional trades.
17. Support flexible work place conditions to generate opportunities for people with barriers to employment and/or unique work practices and availability.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Premier Council on Disabilities supports workplace inclusion as part of its mandate in the NB Disability Action Plan. • The Training and Employment Support Services (TESS) program provides services to employers and persons with a disability in order to reduce barriers to employment.
Theme – Business Activity		
18. Foster entrepreneurship.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC’s grant program supports entrepreneurship projects developed by the CIN’s. • The Small Business Investor Tax Credit provides a 50% non-refundable personal income tax credit of up to \$125,000 per year to individual investors who invest in eligible small businesses, community economic development corporations or cooperative associations in the province. • PETL offers the Student Employment and Experience Development – Entrepreneurship program. • The Population Growth Secretariat, part of PETL also funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Immigrant Mentorship Programs and the Hive/La Ruche immigrant Business Incubators • Succession Connect, a program that connects immigrant entrepreneurs with New Brunswick-based business owners looking to sell their enterprises. • Facilitated the development an online guide to doing business in New Brunswick. • Startup Miramichi
19. Promote the support of local and micro businesses.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PETL offers the Student Employment and Experience Development – Entrepreneurship program. • The Population Growth Secretariat, part of PETL also funds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Immigrant Mentorship Programs and the Hive/La Ruche immigrant Business Incubators • Succession Connect, a program that connects immigrant entrepreneurs with New Brunswick-based business owners looking to sell their enterprises. • Facilitated the development an online guide to doing business in New Brunswick. • Charlotte County Business Bootcamp

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
20. Promote and support development, creation and sustainability of a social enterprise ecosystem.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2016 ESIC partnered with CECNB to develop a strategy to promote social enterprise in NB. • In 2020 in OPT3, ESIC included a key priority action to “make investments through a new social finance fund to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in New Brunswick”. (p. 21, Priority Action #3).

Pillar 4 – Social Inclusion

Theme – Food Security and Healthy Food Availability

21. Promote and support community-based initiatives related to food preparation, food safety and access to healthy food.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC and the CINs support various projects related to food access. • ESIC supports training the New Brunswick Food Security Action Network’s program called Everybody Eats. • Funding under the Community Food Action Program to support organizations working to improve community food security. • Researchers at the NB Health Council provide data of state of food security in New Brunswick. • GNB Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) has reviewed its policy on Healthier Food and Nutrition in Public Schools, along with developing new guidelines for nutrition and active play guidelines for licensed day care facilities in NB. • Community Food Smart
22. Promote transition of food banks to community-based food centres.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC provides ongoing support to NB Food Security Action Network. <p>SD provides ongoing support for the Community Food/Resource Centre partnership with NB Association of Food Banks (English only) to encourage adoption of Community Food Security practices within the charitable food sector.</p>
23. Encourage initiatives that address availability of nutritional food and food management and coordination in emergency food programs.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC supports training the New Brunswick Food Security Action Network’s program called Everybody Eats. • Funding under the Community Food Action Program to support organizations working to improve community food security: • Action committee on Farm to School project; a co-operative was created in 2017 which was tasked with supporting local food. • SD provides ongoing support for the Community Food/Resource Centre partnership with NB Association of Food Banks to encourage adoption of • Community Food Security practices within the charitable food sector. • ESIC and SD support various bulk food clubs in the province.

Priority Action	Status	Examples of what has been done
24. Promote the establishment of community based breakfast programs in all public schools.	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various school breakfast programs in place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fondation Petits-déjeuners Péninsule acadienne (Acadian Peninsula) • Saint John • <i>Student Hunger Project (Fredericton)</i>
Theme – Housing		
25. Support sustainability and quality of existing affordable housing options.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC is involved with SD's work on implementing the NB Housing Action Plan under the National Housing Strategy. • The Provincial Property Tax Exemption for Not-For-Profit Low Rental Housing now includes qualifying rent-to-own housing. • Micro-Houses for Homeless (Fredericton) • Micro-Houses for Homeless (Fredericton)
26. Encourage innovative community-based housing solutions for affordable, accessible, quality, mixed housing communities.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Provincial Property Tax Exemption for Not-For-Profit Low Rental Housing now includes qualifying rent-to-own housing. • ESIC is involved with SD's work on implementing the NB Housing Action Plan under the National Housing Strategy. • Tantramar Energy Efficiency of Homes program
Theme – Transportation		
27. Develop a comprehensive rural and urban transportation strategy for the province.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESIC completed the transportation report entitled From Surfaces to Services in 2017.
28. Promote and support community-based alternative transportation systems.	On-going	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the transportation report and to the pandemic, ESIC has developed and supported several community-based transportation services and programs around the province.

For additional details on the updated status of the Priority Actions for OPT2 please contact the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, or visit www.gnb.ca/poverty

Appendix C

Highlights of Overcoming Poverty Together

Additional information can be found in the corporation's various report at www.gnb.ca/poverty

2008

October

Announcement of the public engagement initiative to adopt a poverty reduction plan for New Brunswick

2009

January to April

Public dialogues

June to September

Round table discussions

November

Final forum to adopt *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan (OPTI)*

December

Extension of health card for up to three years for persons exiting social assistance

2010

January

Elimination of the interim social assistance rate program

Application of household income policy to social assistance recipients in spousal relationships

April

Adoption of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*

Provision of stable funding for homeless shelters within five years. Funds also provided in 2011 and 2012

Amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act* to protect boarders

Minimum wage increased to \$8.50 per hour

May

Appointment of the corporation president and four co-chairs

June

Appointment of the corporation's board members

First board of directors meeting

September

Minimum wage increased to \$9 per hour

October

Investment in early learning and child care spaces

August to January 2011

Hiring of corporation staff

2011

January

First meetings of three advisory committees

February to October

Creation of 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs)

April

Minimum wage increased to \$9.50 per hour

August

Linkage of benefits such as health, child care and home heating to household income to the extent possible

November

Commencement of corporation funding for CIN projects in Community Transportation and Community Learning

2012

April

Minimum wage increased to \$10 per hour

June

Hosting of Community Transportation conference by the corporation

Presentation of Advisory Committee for Health Benefits – Dental and Vision Report to government

Presentation of Advisory Committee for Social Enterprise and Community Investment Funds (SECIF) report to government

September

Launch of Healthy Smiles Clear Vision program for children in low income families

October

Presentation of Social Assistance Reform Advisory Committee Report to government

2013

May

Development of GNB Interdepartmental Transportation Working Group

October

Restructure and increase of social assistance rates

Overhaul of the household income policy

Provision of more opportunities for people transitioning to work to keep earned income

Reform of wage exemptions to include a working income supplement

September to October

Public dialogues – OPT2

Regional and provincial stakeholder meetings

October to April 2014

Development of the *Economic and Social Inclusion Plan: Overcoming Poverty Together 2014–2019 (OPT2)*

October

First meeting of the Interdepartmental Working Group on Persons Living In Poverty

December

Announcement of New Brunswick Drug Plan

2014

February

Announcement of Community Economic Development Initiative Funds and Small Business Tax Credit based on the SECIF report

May

Presentation of Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation *Overcoming Poverty Together 2014–2019 (OPT2)*

Launch of the New Brunswick Drug Plan

August

Trade education in schools to better prepare youth, and investment in renovations of trades classrooms

October

New wage exemption policy for persons with disabilities as part of social assistance reform

November

Conclusion of OPT1

December

Commencement of OPT2

Minimum wage increased to \$10.30 per hour

2015

March

Youth Employment Fund launched to help create jobs for unemployed youth

April

First meeting of the Rural and Urban Transportation Advisory Committee

May

OPT receives a national award on poverty reduction from Tamarack Institute (Category: provinces and cities working together in partnership)

June

Public presentation of *The Impact of NB's 2009–2014 Economic and Social Inclusion Plan*

November – December

Corporation launches two-week awareness campaign Small Acts, Big Impact on volunteering

2016

January

Opportunity Summit on Economic Inclusion

February

Community conversation on Health Equity

April

Minimum wage increased to \$10.65/hr

Government of NB announces free tuition for postsecondary students from low-income and middle-class families

September

Creation of 10-year education plans

Investment \$56 million with the federal government in affordable housing to give the most vulnerable a place to live

Province invests \$1 million to help unemployed adults learn a second official language

November

NB expands the Home Energy Assistance Program

2017

January

Expansion of the Integrated Service Delivery model

February

Family Plan Summit on reducing poverty

Unleashing the power of literacy: New Brunswick's Comprehensive Literacy Strategy to improve literacy rates in the province

May

Economic Opportunities Summit on economic inclusion

NB Family Plan report on reducing poverty

August

Expansion of tuition assistance to postsecondary students

November

Government announces expansion of Healthy Smiles, Clear Vision program for all four-year olds who are not covered by a public or private health insurance program

Small Act, Big Impact Campaign

December

Release of report on inclusive transportation

2018

January

Government announces free daycare for low-income families

February

Creation of Implementation Committee on Rural and Urban Transportation

March

Progress report released

April

Government lowers income tax for small businesses

May

Partnership between government and Living SJ for pilot to end generational poverty in Saint John

June

ESIC holds provincial Leaders Tours in preparation for the renewal process of OPT

July

Government launches an online resources portal for families seeking information on early learning and child care services and programs

November

Government provides funding to help establish temporary shelters in Moncton, Fredericton and Saint John during winter months

2019

January

Release of report on Living Wage and Pay Equity

January

Release of report From Call to Service on One-Stop-Shop

February

Launch of Public Engagement Process for the renewal of OPT

March

Government announces that number of designated New Brunswick Early Learning Centres has surpassed goal

March to May

Public Engagement Process for OPT3: Online Survey, Community and Sectorial Dialogues, Focus Groups, Best Brains Exchange, Briefs

April

Minimum wage increased to \$11.50/hr

April

Government announces renewed Tuition Bursary program and reintroduction of tuition tax credit

August

New Brunswicker named chair of National Advisory Council on Poverty – Scott MacAfee from ESIC

October

Government announces new initiative to help students explore learning opportunities

2020

March

Launch of OPT3

Appendix D

Working Group Reports

Report on Living Wage and Pay Equity

Summary

Formed by the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation, the Advisory committee on pay equity and living wage was created in April 2017 to address two items under the Economic Inclusion Pillar of Overcoming Poverty Together 2014 – 2019. The Advisory committee included representation from four sectors: citizens, non-profit, business, and government. The Advisory committee's mandate was to:

1. Consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation, and
2. Explore the concept of a living wage.

Some New Brunswickers continue to face working poverty, income inequality and/or precarious employment. Considering comprehensive pay equity and exploring living wage in New Brunswick are important considerations in moving towards a more economically inclusive province.

Consider the creation of comprehensive pay equity legislation

Pay equity is a compensation practice that is often referred to as “equal pay for work of equal or comparable value”.

Pay equity practices aim to address one of the contributors to the gender wage gap: the under-valuation of traditionally or predominantly female occupations. This under-valuation results in paying lower wages to women and men in female-dominated occupations even when those jobs have the same value as male dominated occupations performed for the same employer.

Achieving pay equity requires evaluating and comparing, within an organization, jobs typically done by women to different jobs typically done by men. If these are found to be of equal/comparable value then they should be paid equally.

In 2017, New Brunswick had a gender wage gap of 7.4%.

The New Brunswick Pay Equity Act, 2009 (Act) came into force on April 1, 2010. It applies to all parts of the New Brunswick public service and defines minimum standards for employers to meet government’s pay equity policy goals in their compensation practices. Employers must undertake job evaluations to compare female job classifications to male job classifications on the basis of qualification, responsibility, effort required and working conditions using a non-discriminatory job evaluation system. To meet the minimum standards associated

with pay equity, female job classifications, which are found to be of equal or comparable value to male job classifications, within the same organization, must be paid the same.

The advisory committee on living wage and pay equity recommends that Government adopt comprehensive pay equity legislation that covers employees in both the public and private sector. The committee developed a list of options to consider in the development of comprehensive pay equity legislation, which were informed by lessons learned by Ontario and Québec (the two Canadian provinces with comprehensive pay equity legislation), as well as the 2004 federal pay equity task force.

Explore the concept of a living wage

The living wage is a conservative measure of the hourly wage that is necessary for workers to meet basic needs and for families to fully participate in the life of their community. It is based on the principle that fulltime employment should allow people to live with dignity. The concept of living wage primarily enables education and advocacy around the issue of working poverty.

Living wage highlights the gap between the lowest legal wage rate and the cost of living a life of social inclusion in specific communities. Living wage rates are based on the inter-relationship between employment income, the tax and transfer system and the availability of social programming and community infrastructure.

The Canadian Living Wage Framework (CLWF) provides a formula for calculating the living wage for cities across Canada. This allows living wage rates to be compared across the country.

The Human Development Council (HDC) in Saint John, in conjunction with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, released New Brunswick's first living wage rate for the city of Saint John on June 20, 2018. The living wage for Saint John is \$18.18 per hour.

The advisory committee on Living Wage and Pay Equity recommends that the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation work with partners to:

- Build on the momentum of the HDC and calculate the living wage rate for other cities in the Province, as data allows;
- Encourage New Brunswick employers to enhance the vibrancy of their communities by becoming certified Living Wage employers; and,
- Research policy tools to reduce poverty, including wage-based policies, targeted subsidies and a guaranteed basic income and consider the availability of public services (e.g. social housing, transportation, child care, senior care, etc.) to determine which policies are expected to lead to the greatest impact on poverty reduction in the province.

Report on One Stop Shop From Call to Service

Summary

Participants at the public dialogues were very clear why a One Stop Shop service was needed for New Brunswick. 880 comments were received about the challenge, almost 1 in 5 of all the comments was about a One Stop Shop service for New Brunswick.

Participants acknowledged the great number of programs, services and supports that exist in their communities. There are many government, non-profit and business programs that exist, however there is not one easy way to access them all.

This was especially difficult if you were in the middle of the crisis that you were trying to get help with the lack of connection between the existing government and community services and the various databases or toll-free lines makes it very complicated for anyone to find their way and figure out who does what and who is offering what services or program.

The "One Stop Shop idea" was not about a brick and mortar solution or a service center, it was about having someone that is aware and connected to all of the existing information that can and will inform and guide anyone through the maze of services, answer their questions and connect them with the an existing program and or service in a timely, professional and caring manner.

So, the New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) began assessing One Stop Shop (OSS) options in November 2015.

A One Stop Shop Working Group (OSS-WG) was formally set up in April 2017.

A Working Group Chair was identified by the Co-Chairs of the ESIC Board of Directors. The remaining members of the Working Group were appointed by the Board from business, government, non-profit organizations, and citizens. Members were selected based on their ability to share information on their understanding of the communication challenges faced by those living in poverty in New Brunswick.

"The mandate of the Advisory Working Group on One Stop Shop was to:

- Research and document the various ways and methods that information about government and non-profit programs and services are made available to the public.
- Recommend a strategy that supports the creation of a one-stop shop that provides updated information about government and non-profit programs. The strategy will also include a detailed implementation plan" (OSS-WG Terms of Reference Document, April 2017).

In April of 2017 the OSS-WG began research on identifying One Stop Shop options. The OSS-WG research effort clearly demonstrated that 211 service is accepted in North America as a standard and sustainable service (70% of Canadians and 90% of Americans have access to a 211 service).

The OSS-WG recommendation was to implement a provincial fully bilingual 211 service for New Brunswick. This document provides four options for ESIC Board of Directors to assess and recommend for implementation.

Report on Rural and Urban Transportation From Surfaces to Services

Summary

This Strategy represents a major contribution to transportation service and policy in New Brunswick. This inclusive and sustainable transportation strategy represents the first time in New Brunswick that a transportation strategy has been developed to look broadly across all aspects of transportation provision in the province.

The focus is on areas which have the greatest opportunity to make a difference by addressing the systematic issues that have resulted in many New Brunswickers not having access to the transportation they want and need.

The strategy presents a thorough and solid approach to positioning New Brunswick to meet the challenges and opportunities of the next 20 years.

There are five main reasons why a new transportation vision is needed in New Brunswick:

Reason #1: New Brunswick has largely achieved its previous vision for automobile-based mobility, but this mobility now makes populations dependent on the ability to own and drive a car.

Reason #2: There is no broad “vision for mobility” for transit, bus and passenger rail services in New Brunswick today, only a duty to provide economical services that have yet to achieve their full potential to attract riders.

Reason #3: New Brunswickers are looking for a “vision for mobility” that improves access for those in greatest need, lessens the costs to citizens, and ensures support for community initiatives that use transportation to foster economic and social inclusion.

Reason #4: New Brunswickers presently look to the automobile to facilitate their economic and social inclusion, therefore changing their behavior can be a long process that needs to begin sooner rather than later.

Reason #5: A common vision is needed by entities responsible for planning and delivering transportation to realize efficiency gains with societal benefits through improved public health and access to employment.

The Committee also realized that achieving any vision requires first understanding whether the pieces are in place to ensure the new vision, whatever it may be, can be enacted.

There are five major requirements that are needed to ensure New Brunswick can pivot to a new transportation vision:

Requirement #1: Coordination and connectivity of services to facilitate access;

Requirement #2: Conditions to foster successful and inclusive alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle;

Requirement #3: Transportation data for decision-making;

Requirement #4: Province-wide transportation planning; and

Requirement #5: Ownership of a provincial transportation planning and service policy.