



SKILLS **4** Success

4-YEAR
ACTION PLAN
2016-2020





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A Message from the Minister



As Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, it gives me great pleasure to share with you the *Skills 4 Success: 4-Year Action Plan 2016-2020*. This Action Plan supports the Government of

the Northwest Territories' *Skills 4 Success 10-Year Strategic Framework* which contains four foundational goals that will achieve the Skills 4 Success vision: "*NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success*".

We want northern residents to be first in line for jobs in the NWT. We also want to help build and expand a skilled workforce to meet our future labour demand. To do this we must ensure that our education and training system keeps pace with the changing dynamics of the labour market, so that all NWT residents gain the skills required in a 21st century economy and job market. This Action Plan will do just that.

Part of our work was to understand our changing labour market and we partnered with The Conference Board of Canada to develop the most comprehensive up-to-date information for the NWT. What we have learned will assist us in determining appropriate adult and postsecondary education and skills training programs, supports and pathways that link to our labour market needs. We have focused this Action Plan on jobs that are in-demand to prepare NWT residents for the many employment opportunities that exist today and will be needed in the future.

The NWT has an entrepreneurial spirit and our work includes supporting residents in communities both big and small, to develop their skills and abilities to meet their potential as well as territorial labour demand. Skills 4 Success supports employment and enables the prosperity of future generations to make the NWT an attractive place to live and work.

The Action Plan outlines the planned actions that our Skills 4 Success goals and priorities will achieve. Additionally, it provides the Skills 4 Success initiative with a foundation





for implementing evidence-based actions that will help NWT residents succeed in adult and postsecondary education and skills training pursuits that lead to employment.

On behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment worked with many partners to develop this Action Plan.

The Department held many public engagement sessions, some of which included regional focus groups, a territorial symposium, and online surveys. We captured feedback from over 1000 residents and organizations from across the NWT including educators, trainers, students, apprentices, job seekers, employers, employees, policy makers and retirees. I express my utmost appreciation to everyone who participated for your valued contributions.

During the course of the Action Plan's development we heard a collective call for change to build a strong culture of education that is linked to employment in the NWT. This is reflected prominently in the Action Plan, and is

also supported by the 18th Legislative Assembly's priority for learning, skills development and training that is linked to employability.

The Skills 4 Success initiative builds on a continuum of strategies that are essential for education and employment success in the territory. Over the next four years we will continue to look ahead and take the steps necessary to build the NWT's workforce with the Skills 4 Success vision, evidence-based data, and stakeholder support. Our success will be measured by how well we work together to implement the actions in this plan, and I call on all residents with an interest in improving our existing system to join us in this work. I am encouraged by what we can accomplish when we all pull in the same direction.

Honourable Alfred Moses

Minister of Education, Culture and Employment



Executive Summary

On behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE), developed the *Skills 4 Success 10-Year Strategic Framework* (Framework), with the vision, “***NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success***”.

The Framework identifies four fundamental goals with priorities designed to develop NWT residents’ skills through education and training, close education and employment gaps through streamlined supports, address recruitment and retention challenges, and provide reliable labour market data for informed decision making. These goals and strategic priorities will be pursued over the 10-year life of the Framework.

Reliable and up-to-date labour market information for the territory is essential to assist residents, businesses and governments to make informed decisions and enable people to make important life choices. As part of the Skills 4 Success initiative, the GNWT partnered with

The Conference Board of Canada to produce the *Northwest Territories Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment*. This information is the first of its kind in the NWT and provides valuable labour market information that identifies what jobs will be in-demand in the territory over the next 15 years.

The 15-year forecast tells us there will be between 28,500 and 36,700 job openings in the NWT. This represents a major challenge, but this foresight provides an opportunity to prepare so that NWT residents have the skills to be first in line for these future job openings.

The Skills 4 Success initiative is designed to prepare for the future. It is about improving employment success for NWT residents by closing skill gaps for in-demand jobs, and more effectively responding to employer, industry and community needs. It is part of the GNWT mandate and addresses the Legislative Assembly’s strategic priority to foster lifelong learning, skills development, training and employability.





This Action Plan focuses on the Framework's four goals: skills development, supports, NWT workforce partnerships and labour market information, and represents the work that will be pursued over the next four years. It will then be assessed and a new multi-year action plan will be developed to achieve the Framework's goals and priorities.

The Action Plan outlines the highest priority actions developed from engagements with over 1,000 NWT residents and organizations, including educators, students, employers, job seekers, governments and the public through 30 regional engagement sessions, the Skills 4 Success Symposium, meetings and online surveys.

Comprehensive performance measurement metrics will be used to develop a Monitoring, Evaluation and Accountability Plan to evaluate success of the actions over the 4-year timeline.

The GNWT will report on its progress and make adjustments as necessary to ensure that its actions continue to support the Skills 4 Success Framework.





Context for Action Plan

This Skills 4 Success Action Plan supports the 18th Legislative Assembly's strategic priorities on education, training and youth development, and economy, environment and climate change:

The 18th Legislative Assembly will foster lifelong learning, skills development, training and employability by expanding opportunities for postsecondary education, trades-oriented learning, and northern educational institutions.

The 18th Legislative Assembly will lead economic diversification and environmental stewardship in the NWT by making strategic investments in transportation infrastructure and workforce development, and utilizing partnerships with northern and Aboriginal businesses.

In 2015, the Department of Education, Culture and Employment developed the *Skills 4 Success 10-Year Strategic Framework* on behalf of the GNWT, with the following vision:

"NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success".

We want a thriving NWT economy and healthy, educated people with the means to support themselves and their families in whatever livelihood they choose. Placing priority on skill development and closing education and employment gaps will support northern residents and help drive positive social and economic outcomes across the North.

The GNWT supports the promotion and development of sustainable economic and community-based opportunities that create employment for NWT residents. This work is led by the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI) and includes exploring local and conservation economies to enable economic diversification. When new economies are identified and skill development is needed, the GNWT works closely with all stakeholders to develop the local labour market.

In support of the Framework, the GNWT engaged The Conference Board of Canada to develop a labour market forecast and needs assessment to help stakeholders better understand the characteristics of the NWT's current labour market and help anticipate employer hiring needs up to the year 2030. The report identified key in-demand jobs which are defined as those job categories forecasted to have a high number of job openings over the next 15 years.





10-Year Strategic Framework

The 10-Year Strategic Framework established four foundational goals with strategic priorities designed to close education and employment gaps and address recruitment and retention challenges.

The Framework's goals and strategic priorities will be pursued over the 10-year life of the Framework with supporting multi-year action plans. This Action Plan represents the work that will be pursued in the first four years of the Framework, after which time, the progress made will be assessed and a new multi-year action plan will be developed to achieve the Framework's goals and priorities.

The Framework identifies higher education as fundamental to individual health and welfare, social well-being and developing local economies. Education is defined in this context as including adult and postsecondary education, and skills training programs, supports and pathways. This definition incorporates not only expert knowledge

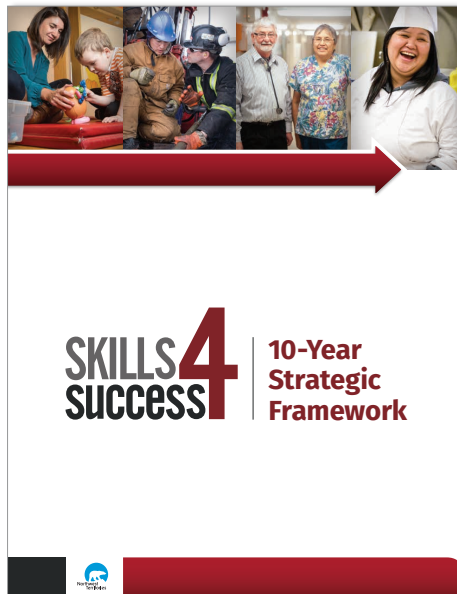
and technical skills for specific occupations and activities, but also the broad range of generic employability skills such as personal responsibility, teamwork, communication, creativity, problem-

solving, life skills and essential skills including literacy and numeracy.

The Framework sets out a vision over the next decade that will allow partners in education, training and employment to work towards the same end goals.

Action Plan 2016-2020 was developed in partnership with other governments and organizations, and education, training, industry and business partners, and provides

direction on how the GNWT plans to achieve the priorities that will realize the Framework's vision and goals. It includes actions and ways to measure the success of those actions to ensure NWT residents acquire the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success.





Skills 4 Success Goals



Goal 1

PROGRAMS

Increase skill levels through relevant education and training

Skills development and postsecondary education programming addresses labour market demands and builds long-term capacity.



Goal 2

SUPPORTS

Bridge education and employment gaps through targeted supports

NWT residents access supports and incentives that are relevant, effective and aligned with territorial labour market needs.





Goal 3

NWT WORKFORCE

Grow the NWT workforce through partnerships

NWT employers are able to recruit a capable workforce that expands and capitalizes on residents' skills, attracts newcomers to fill shortages, and retains people in the territory to contribute to the ongoing growth of the economy.



Goal 4

INFORMATION

Improve decision making with relevant labour market information

NWT residents, other prospective workers and territorial employers have easy access to relevant, accurate and timely labour market information to make informed career and business decisions.



Factors Critical to Our Success

There are a number of factors that are critical to the success of this Action Plan, among them: coordination of program delivery across the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT), a strong long-term commitment by the GNWT, and partnership with other stakeholders.

Coordination

This *Skills 4 Success 4-Year Action Plan* is a GNWT initiative led by the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE). It is part of a continuum of strategies across government and builds off the success of other ECE initiatives, including:

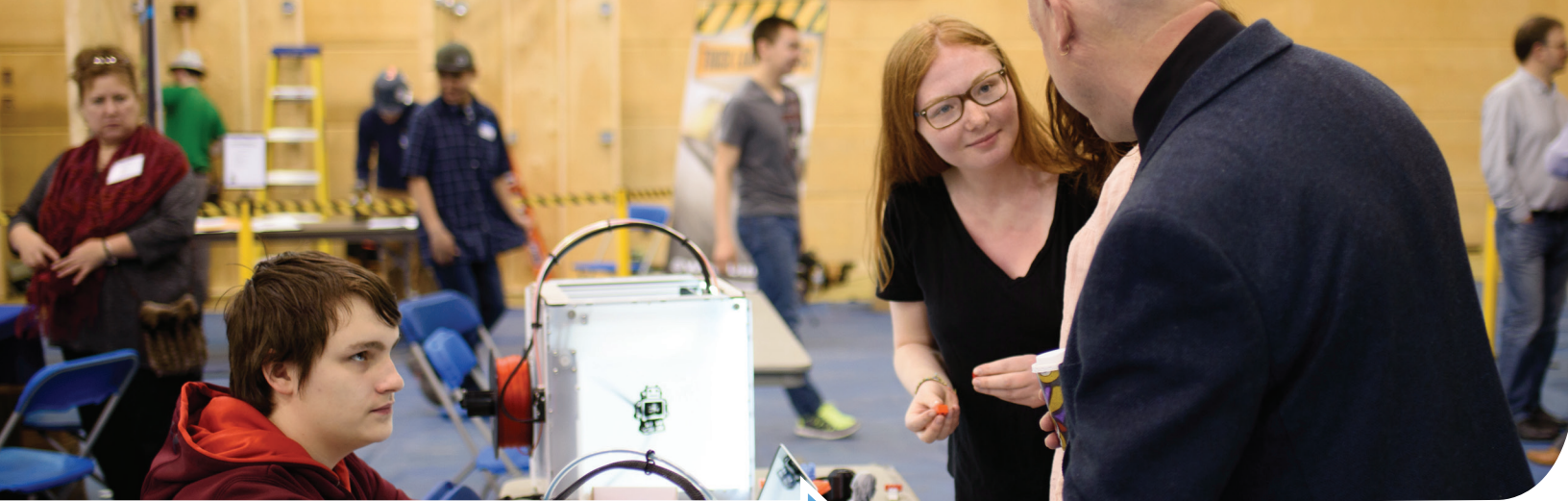
- ***Right from the Start:*** a framework for early childhood development in the NWT;
- ***Education Renewal and Innovation Framework: Directions for Change:*** to improve the outcomes for students transitioning to higher education and into the workforce; and

- ***Strong Cultures, Strong Territory: GNWT Culture and Heritage Strategic Framework:*** that features the important and relevant connection between the diverse cultures and heritage in the NWT.

Skills 4 Success is also supported by, and supports other important strategies the GNWT is undertaking, including:

- ***NWT Economic Opportunities Strategy:*** a plan to connect businesses and communities to economic opportunities in the NWT by nurturing a climate for growth, building on success in key sectors, and investing in NWT residents; and
- ***Northwest Territories Mineral Development Strategy:*** supports long-term sustainability of the NWT's mineral sector while maximizing resident employment and business opportunities.





Long-term Commitment

The issues related to the labour market are complex and are not suited to short-term solutions. Skills 4 Success has a 10-year Framework that will be supported by multi-year action plans. Long-term commitment to the Framework is needed to achieve the actions set out in this Action Plan.

The following goals, priorities, actions and measures form the first 4-year Action Plan for Skills 4 Success. They support the Skills 4 Success vision: *“NWT residents have the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success”*. The goals, priorities, actions and measures consider and are aligned with initiatives throughout the GNWT that work to enhance employment success for NWT residents, close skill gaps for in-demand jobs, and more effectively respond to employer, industry and community needs.

Partnership

Although Skills 4 Success is a GNWT-led initiative, it relies strongly on the active participation and engagement of other governments and organizations, education and training partners, industry, business, and non-governmental stakeholders. Just as coordination and participation across GNWT departments and strategies support this Action Plan, so too does continued coordination, engagement, and participation with partners external to the GNWT.

Success of the Skills 4 Success Action Plan, and the Framework as a whole, depends on authentic engagement and commitment to collaboration among all partners.



PROGRAMS

This goal is about connecting northern residents with adult and postsecondary education and skills training programs and pathways that lead to employment. The goal's priority is to ensure that the skills development and postsecondary education programs are aligned with NWT labour

market demands. Adult and basic education programs should lead to employment, and programs offered should support employment as well as build long-term capacity for existing and emerging northern economic opportunities.

Priorities

- 1.1** Skills development and postsecondary education programs are aligned with labour market demands
- 1.2** Adult and basic education programs lead to employment
- 1.3** Pathways exist where high school students earn dual credits towards postsecondary or job related credentials
- 1.4** Programs focus on achieving defined outcomes in support of employment
- 1.5** Programs build long-term capacity for existing and emerging northern economic opportunities





Actions

1. Work in partnership with Aurora College to create a renewed strategic plan that develops the NWT's labour market.
2. Work with all postsecondary partners to ensure postsecondary programming aligns with in-demand occupations and supports NWT labour market needs.
3. Improve access to programs to meet the needs of all learners.
4. Align adult education and training to increase employability and essential skills.
5. Promote educational achievement by providing credits to high school students for completion of external programs and dual credits for completion of postsecondary courses and/or programs.
6. Encourage skill development and experiential learning through work placements, internships, co-op placements, summer employment, and other programs.
7. Increase the number of apprentices and journeypersons in the NWT by implementing a comprehensive apprenticeship strategy.

Measures of Success

- Publicly-funded NWT postsecondary institutions offer programs that respond to NWT labour market needs.
- NWT residents have increased opportunities for in-demand employment or further adult and postsecondary education and training through upgrading, retraining, and ongoing skills development that links to employment.
- NWT high school students receive credits for completion of external programs and dual credits for completion of postsecondary courses and/or programs.
- NWT employers have more resident journeypersons working with apprentices.

PROGRAMS



Goal 2: Bridge education and employment gaps through targeted supports



NWT residents access supports and incentives that are relevant, effective and aligned with territorial labour market needs.

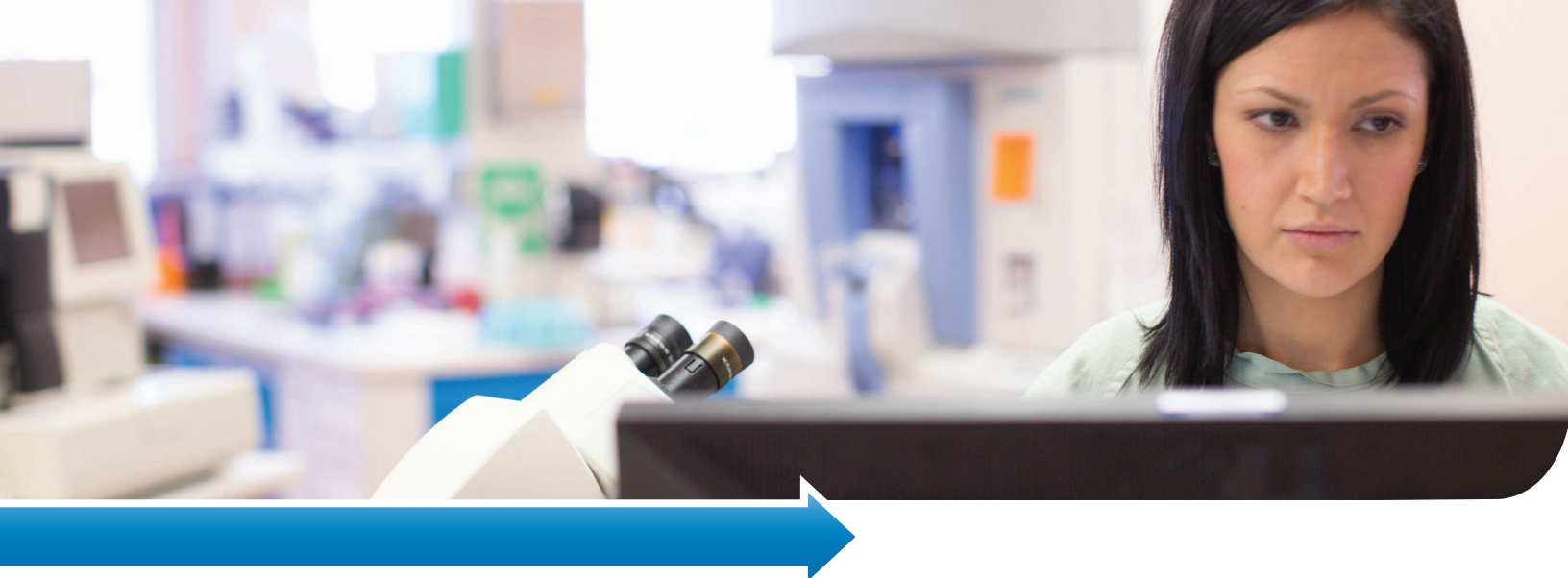
There is an ongoing need for targeted supports to help underrepresented segments of the labour market to overcome barriers to education and employment. People want labour market programs and services that are easy to access regardless of what government or organization

is responsible for delivering them. A more coordinated system between service delivery agents in the NWT can reduce duplication, address gaps in service, and expand the reach of services to employers and individuals needing supports.

Priorities

- 2.1** Partners work together to streamline the delivery of career development supports and services
- 2.2** People have supports and incentives to increase competencies and improve individual well-being and employability to move into available jobs
- 2.3** People are supported through postsecondary education to develop skills that lead to employment
- 2.4** Employers are supported through partnerships and incentives to hire and train NWT residents



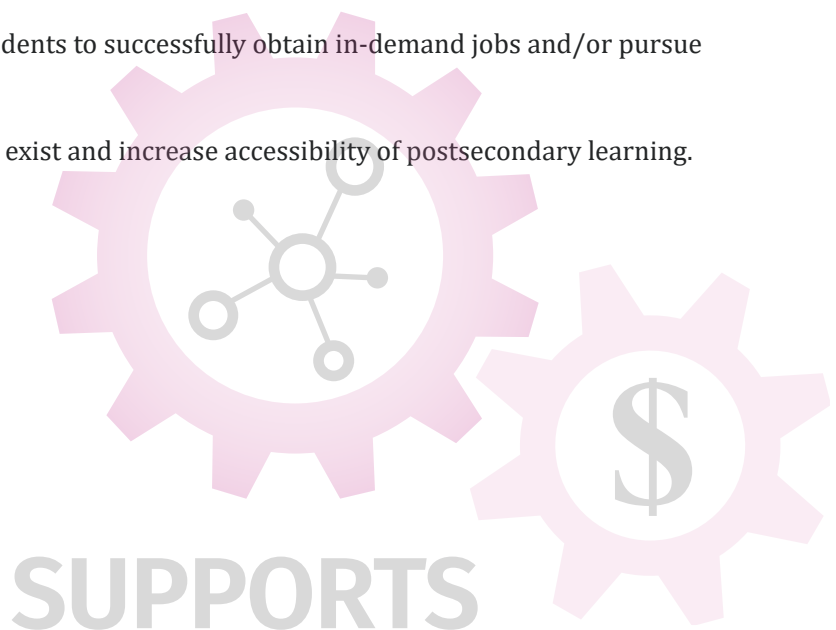


Actions

8. Support learners with career and educational counseling, coaching, and mentoring to pursue and be successful in achieving adult and postsecondary education and training.
9. Optimize the use of community learning centre services to deliver programs that lead to jobs.
10. Increase labour market participation by removing barriers to employment.
11. Improve accessibility of postsecondary learning through learning technology and platforms.
12. Encourage students to pursue in-demand jobs through the Student Financial Assistance Program.
13. Increase hiring of students and recent graduates by supporting employers on the development and use of co-op placement, internship, apprenticeship, and work-based learning programs and wage subsidies.

Measures of Success

- Support systems exist for NWT residents to successfully obtain in-demand jobs and/or pursue further postsecondary education.
- Learning technology and platforms exist and increase accessibility of postsecondary learning.





Goal 3: Grow the NWT workforce through partnerships



NWT employers are able to recruit a capable workforce that expands and capitalizes on residents' skills, attracts newcomers to fill shortages, and retains people in the territory to contribute to the ongoing growth of the economy.

There are ongoing recruitment and retention challenges in the NWT with an aging workforce, a population in slow decline and increasing competition for skilled labour across Canada. The lack of an available job-ready workforce can limit economic growth and competitiveness in the NWT.

This goal focuses on ensuring that NWT residents are provided opportunities for postsecondary education and skills training to enter and advance in the workplace while at the same time targeting outside recruitment for in-demand and hard to fill positions.

Priorities

- 3.1** NWT residents are provided opportunity for education and skills training to enter and advance in the workplace
- 3.2** The NWT's resident labour force is the primary focus of recruitment and retention initiatives
- 3.3** New graduates, skilled workers and professionals are provided incentives and supports to stay in the NWT
- 3.4** In-demand and hard to fill positions are targeted for recruitment outside the NWT when needed



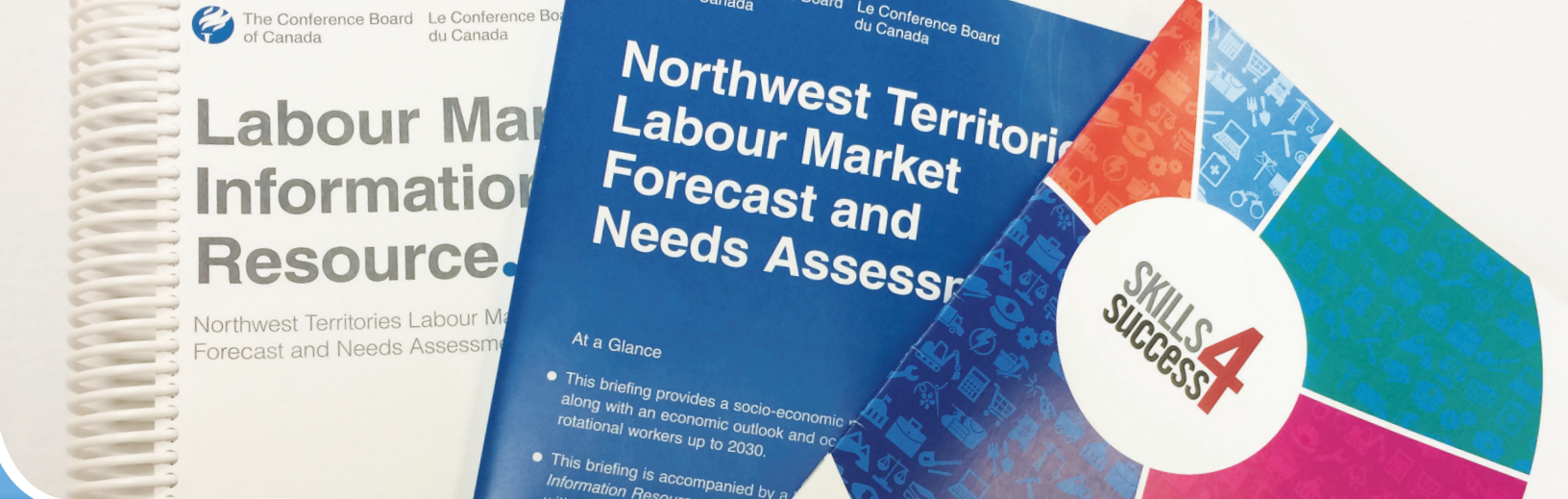


Actions

14. Create a territorial forum for all labour market partners to better coordinate the delivery of training programs within the NWT.
15. Collaborate with funding partners to reduce duplication and focus resources for improved education, training and employment outcomes for NWT residents.
16. Develop and implement a strategy to increase employment in small NWT communities.
17. Support NWT postsecondary institutions to offer programs for in-demand jobs in the NWT through effective partnerships.
18. Increase employment in in-demand jobs in the NWT with a comprehensive immigration strategy to address recruitment challenges.
19. Work with employers to develop strategies to address common retention challenges.
20. Improve quality of student Grade 12 achievement and graduation rates in all NWT communities by supporting NWT Education Renewal and provide greater linkages to postsecondary education and skills development.
21. Partner with NWT employers to present youth with career opportunities and information on the education needed to pursue those careers.

Measures of Success

- Partnerships exist that support substantive skill development for NWT residents to obtain in-demand jobs.
- Pathways exist for high school students to successfully exit the NWT's secondary education system and transition to further education or employment.
- NWT postsecondary institutions offer programming for NWT jobs in-demand either directly or through partnerships with southern institutions.
- In-demand jobs are filled with less need for recruitment efforts.



Goal 4: Improve decision making with relevant labour market information



NWT residents, other prospective workers and territorial employers have easy access to relevant, accurate and timely labour market information to make informed career and business decisions.

The GNWT engaged The Conference Board of Canada to develop the *Northwest Territories Labour Market Forecast and Needs Assessment*, to help the GNWT better understand the characteristics of the NWT's current labour market and resident workforce, and anticipate

employer hiring needs under current market conditions and reasonable alternative scenarios up to the year 2030. This information will be used to ensure programs, services and supports effectively respond to the NWT labour market needs.

Priorities

- 4.1 There is improved awareness of labour market information and its value
- 4.2 Information on career, education and training opportunities, programs and supports is easy to find and use
- 4.3 Labour market information and data is maintained, analyzed and shared among stakeholders





Actions

22. Provide one-window labour market information access for decision making by creating an interactive web portal and related analytics tools for multi-stakeholders including students, parents, job seekers, employers, educators, trainers, counsellors, and policy makers.
23. Raise awareness of labour market information and its value by educating stakeholders on how the information can be used for evidence-based decision making.
24. Respond to the changing dynamics of the NWT's labour market by providing relevant and reliable information on a timely basis.

Measures of Success

- A labour market information portal exists which multi-stakeholders use to make informed decisions.
- Labour market information in the NWT is researched and provides relevant and reliable data for decision making.





Working Together

This Action Plan sets a 4-year course to achieve the goals and priorities of the *Skills 4 Success 10-Year Strategic Framework*. Our work will ensure that adult and postsecondary education and skills training investments lead to NWT residents with the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success. The Action Plan sets the direction that the Government of the Northwest Territories will take in partnership with all stakeholders and NWT residents.

"Our success will be measured by how well we work together to implement the actions in this plan. I am encouraged by what we can accomplish when we all pull in the same direction."

– MINISTER ALFRED MOSES, EDUCATION, CULTURE AND EMPLOYMENT

Together the Skills 4 Success initiative responds to the labour market needs and captures the vibrancy of the people of the North. This Action Plan is intended to discover opportunities to support NWT residents with the skills, knowledge and attitudes for employment success.

For additional resources on Skills 4 Success, visit www.skills4success.ca



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English

French

Cree

Tłychy

Chipewyan

South Slavey

North Slavey

Gwich'in

Inuvialuktun

Inuktitut

Inuinnaqtun

Francophone Affairs Secretariat: 867-767-9343



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