

Literacy Development and Poverty Reduction Seven Recommendations for Action



Nunavut Literacy Council
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Nunavumi Taiguaiakhaiyut Katimayiit
Le Conseil d'alphabétisation du Nunavut

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This report was developed in response to the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction's call for contributions to Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan.

Contact our head office in Cambridge Bay or visit our website for more information about this report and to access other resources for language and literacy development in Nunavut.

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Executive Summary

Literacy development in the Inuit language and English is essential to alleviating the challenges of poverty and meeting our visions for Nunavut. Literacy impacts all of the major factors of poverty reduction identified in the NRPR's community and regional dialogue reports and will be a key aspect of any successful poverty reduction strategy.

The social and economic costs of low literacy in Nunavut are monumental. Literacy levels impact the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and families; physical health, nutrition, and food security; personal and cultural identity; and, economic development, productivity in Nunavut workplaces, and the effectiveness of education and training programs.

Evidence the Nunavut Literacy Council has collected as part of this submission demonstrates that changes in policy and practice can substantially increase the literacy levels of Nunavummiut and reduce poverty. Such action will be most effective when it is long-term and sustained. Learners of all ages need a variety of formal and non-formal, long-term, stable, and predictable programs in order to reach their language goals.

The following seven recommendations from the NLC are key actions to support literacy development and poverty reduction now.

1. Support the development of oral language and literacy skills in the Inuit language.

Given the current status of the Inuit language in Nunavut, the Inuit language must be prioritized in order to achieve stable bilingualism. Stable bilingualism will strengthen Nunavut with access to the best of all worlds and will positively impact community and economic development. Research has also demonstrated that a strong foundation in an individual's mother tongue best supports the development of advanced language skills later in life. Investment in Inuit language skills will support the development of English language skills. Most importantly, increasing support for the Inuit language will meet a variety of urgent needs in our territory—language is part of the foundation of personal, familial, and cultural identity and stability. The Inuit language is inextricably linked to intergenerational relationships, skills and knowledge transmission, and communal wellbeing. By supporting the Inuit language, *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* will be strengthening the healthy, independent, and sustainable core of our territory.

2. Research, develop and support embedded literacy programming.

Embedded literacy programs purposefully integrate oral language and literacy skill development into other subject-specific learning contexts. Embedding literacy has been shown to

be highly effective in many learning contexts, but two particularly promising applications of this model in Nunavut are to trades/vocational training and non-formal community programs. Embedding literacy into trades programs makes such programs accessible for participants who are interested in a particular vocation but who do not already have sufficient literacy skills to meet the demands of the course or the workplace. Non-formal, community based programs that embed literacy skills invite participation by community members with low literacy skills who are not prepared for more formal academic programs.

3. Increase non-formal learning opportunities that include embedded literacy programming.

Non-formal programs are planned and structured programs that normally take place outside the classroom or institution. Non-formal programs are community developed and delivered, and respond to the unique needs and goals of the community. Typically, these programs do not lead to certification or academic credit, which allows the curriculum and pace to be fully adapted to each participant. There is considerable documented evidence of the value and impact of non-formal programs on youth engagement and poverty reduction. Embedding literacy into these programs further increases the excellent results reported by participants in non-formal programs.

4. Conduct language and literacy audits of all training programs in Nunavut.

Significant investments have been made into training programs by NGOs, businesses, Inuit organizations, and territorial and federal government departments. But, many training programs are developed and delivered without sufficient consideration for the cultural and linguistic context of Nunavut or the literacy levels of participants. This contributes to increased anxiety and fatigue for participants, less successful learning experiences, and high attrition rates. Language and literacy audits would ensure that our collective investments lead to training experiences that are more effective and accessible for a greater number of participants. To allow program deliverers to remain competitive while making such improvements to their programs, we recommend that language and literacy audits be required elements in all RFPs for training and education programs in Nunavut.

5. Research, develop and support customized workplace education programs.

Workplace education is a promising but under-developed practice in Nunavut that can fill a critical gap in support for Nunavummiut who are employed but impacted by language and literacy challenges. Workplace education programs embed language and literacy skill development into workplace activities and support employees to develop the knowledge and skills needed to learn,

understand and communicate orally and in writing at work. High quality, effective workplace education programs are developed based on the unique needs and goals of a particular workplace and its employees. Research shows that, in addition to increased language and literacy skills relevant to the workplace, the benefits of workplace education include greater employee retention, improved workplace communication, enhancement of opportunities for promotion, and greater ability for employees to benefit from other training opportunities.

6. Support family literacy programming.

“Family literacy” describes the way children and adult family members share and use language skills, literacy skills and cultural information to do day-to-day tasks and keep important traditional and cultural knowledge alive. Family literacy programs that teach parents and caregivers how to read to their children have a significant and lasting impact on their children’s literacy skill development. Family literacy programs are effective in supporting mother tongue language development for all ages in complex, bilingual environments like Nunavut. Family literacy programs strengthen and promote the development of healthy family and community bonds and pride in language and skills in literacy, which supports family members young and old in their education.

7. Increase and improve support for non-governmental, community-based work.

Non-profit and community-based organizations in Nunavut can play a dual role in poverty reduction. As well as delivering programs and services that contribute to poverty reduction, the organizations themselves directly contribute to employment and economic development in Nunavut. Non-profit organizations are in the best position to engage the public using existing grassroots networks to tap into the assets already present in communities. These are the stakeholders who can directly support individuals and families living in poverty in Nunavut, therefore it is vital that they are included in the development of *Nunavut’s Poverty Reduction Action Plan* and have increased access to longer-term, stable funding.

Introduction

Literacy development and poverty reduction are closely related. Action that reduces poverty impacts literacy development positively; literacy development, in the Inuit language and English, is essential to alleviating the challenges of poverty in Nunavut. The causes of poverty are complex and interrelated, so *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* must call for action in several areas simultaneously, and literacy development must be one of those areas.

In a recent report that outlines the “ten major policy areas that comprise the core of a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy,” the Caledon Institute on Social Policy describes literacy and education as “the most important springboards out of poverty” (Torjman, 2008), adding that:

[k]nowledge and learning are keys that unlock the doors to both economic wealth and social well-being.

The NRPR's Community Dialogue Reports and the four “Options for Action” reports from the 2011 Regional Roundtables for Poverty Reduction concur that education, training, and skills development are a key area for action to reduce poverty in Nunavut. All four regional roundtable reports name language and literacy development specifically.

Literacy development contributes to employment and economic growth,¹ as much research and statistics show, but as we develop *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan*, we must also consider how literacy development contributes to individual, family, and community wellbeing. Social inclusion, health and wellness, incarceration rates and self-worth are all factors of poverty that are positively affected by literacy development (van der Berg, 2008). Margaret Roger of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives cautions,

[w]e have become so accustomed to measuring success in economic and statistical terms that we are seriously at risk of forgetting that literacy is also about individuals being able to “read their world”, inform themselves about choices, engage in community projects, or just help their children with homework (Rogers, 2011).

In the 1990s, the NLC conducted a series of community workshops on language and literacy across Nunavut. At a workshop in Gjoa Haven, the interpreter shared a definition that he had heard during a recent Elders' workshop: literacy is the ability to “see your world and know what you are seeing.” Advanced language skills, including literacy, enable a person to engage critically and proactively with the systems around them. Without such skills, an individual may experience barriers to

¹ UNESCO has shown that literacy levels are tightly tied to employment outcomes internationally: per capita income in countries where the literacy rate is less than 55% is about \$600 whereas those with a literacy rate about 96% have average incomes of \$12 600 (“Why does literacy,” 2008).

learning, employment, health and wellbeing, societal and political participation, personal development and healing, and informed access to public services.

Like the other factors of poverty reflected in the NRPR's reports, literacy affects multiple aspects of individual and community life simultaneously and also affects our collective wellbeing. Strong literacy skills are part of the foundation of healthy and sustainable lives, families and communities. Literacy skills impact our ability to understand our world and our ability to contribute to and make changes in our world.

Literacy Statistics in Nunavut

Many youth and adults struggle with low literacy levels in the Inuit language and in English. These struggles are exacerbated by the unique complexities of living and working in a linguistically unstable, post-colonial environment.

But, stable bilingualism and literacy development in the Inuit language and English *are* possible. Many successful models for language and literacy development have already been developed in Nunavut over the years and delivered in most communities on a small scale. Successful language and literacy development, in part, is simply a matter of increasing the range and availability of high quality, effective programs so that Nunavummiut who want to access language and literacy training have the opportunity to do so. While the *Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy* addresses literacy comprehensively, consultations are currently underway by the Government of Nunavut's Department of Education to develop a detailed *Nunavut Literacy Strategy*. This new strategy is important and will support new partnerships and awareness, but we must move quickly now and focus on immediate plans for action. Collectively, we have already gathered good information. We have consensus on what needs to be accomplished to support language and literacy development. Now, it is time to take action together.

In 2003, Nunavut took part in the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALLS). The NLC, in partnership with the Government of Nunavut and Statistics Canada, undertook the survey to confirm the extent of literacy challenges and understand ways in which we can address them. Note: the IALLS test was administered only to those individuals who stated that they were fluent in English or French (due to the international research parameters). These individuals took part in a series of tests that examined their English or French prose, numeracy, and problem solving abilities.

According to IALLS (Barr-Telford, Nault & Pignal, 2005):

- Over 70% of the Nunavut respondents scored at level 1 and level 2². This has serious implications. Many experts say that level 3 is the minimum level needed for most occupations and that professional and technical occupations require much higher levels. The jobs available in Nunavut are requiring increasingly advanced literacy skills.
- Over 80% of Nunavut's youth, between the age of 16 and 25, scored below level 3. This is particularly alarming because youth have the most time to contribute their knowledge and skills in their jobs, within their families, and in their communities.
- Over 60% of respondents who are employed in Nunavut scored below level 3. This has serious implications for employees *and* employers. Employees with low literacy levels have higher absentee rates, have more accidents on the job, are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs, and are more likely to make mistakes.

Statistics for literacy in the Inuit language indicate that it also requires immediate attention. The SLCA (Survey of Living Conditions in the Arctic, 2007) results show that 89% of adults in Nunavut report that they can speak and understand the Inuit language well; but, according the Statistics Canada, only 62% report they can read "relatively well," 13% with effort, and 11% only a few words (Aboriginal People's Survey, 2006).

These statistics indicate literacy and language challenges, but the veracity of the data is questionable. The problem may be more serious than we understand because surveys that rely solely on self-reporting can be inaccurate. Over-reporting about socially positive behaviour is well documented; in *Validation of Self-Report: The Research Record*, the research shows that as many as 42% adults over-reported on voting in elections and 16% in owning a library card (Harrell, 1985). Mother tongue language and literacy are much more closely tied to identity and therefore the propensity to over-report may be greater.

According to Statistics Canada's report on *Inuit Language Indicators for Inuit Children Under the Age of Six in Canada*, 64% of Inuit children under the age of six had the Inuit language as their mother tongue. This percentage has remained the same since the 1996 survey. In the Aboriginal

² The literacy tasks covering the prose, document, and numeracy literacy and problem solving categories were scaled by difficulty from 0 to 500. This range was then divided into five broad literacy levels. Level 3 is considered as the minimum desirable threshold in many countries but some occupations require higher skills.

Children's Survey, other language concepts were looked at including how well children could express their needs or understand the language. While 70% could understand the language, only 61% were able to express their needs ("Inuit language indicators," 2008). The issue of decreased Inuit language acquisition and use by children is also confirmed by research conducted by the NLC. The research found that "[m]any younger Inuit have not had the opportunity to develop advanced oral or written skills in the Inuit language, but see these as important for their futures. There is some evidence that the majority of Inuit are not confident and effective readers and writers of Inuktitut or English" (Tulloch, 2009). When asked which language they spoke in the home, 53% said Inuktitut only, 0.2% said Inuinnaqtun only, and 44.2% said English ("Nunavut census: language," 2006).

A disturbing trend that further indicates the Inuit language is under threat is demonstrated by the data in the 2002 Nunavut Household Survey. Self-reported proficiency in oral and written Inuit language decreases with age. Of respondents aged 55 and up, 99% said that they spoke the Inuit language well or very well, but the percentage decreased with each age category, to a low of 81% for 15 to 24 year olds. This trend is mirrored in the self-reported ability to read and write in syllabics. This data shows that "while, among adults, oral competence in the Inuit language remains relatively high, the skills are not necessarily being passed on to the next generation. The percent of children who can speak and understand the Inuit language is lower than the percent of adults, for almost every community" (Tulloch, 2009). With each subsequent generation strength in both oral and written Inuit language skills are being lost.

These language and literacy statistics and trends, for both the Inuit language and English, show that Nunavut must implement strategies and programs that support language and literacy skill development in both languages. Addressing language use and acquisition in Nunavut is a key issue to include in a poverty reduction initiative. Stable bilingualism, strong literacy skills, and the strength of the Inuit language in Nunavut are matters economic strength and matters of societal, community, and individual wellbeing

Seven Recommendations for Action

Recommendation 1

Increase support for the development of oral language and literacy skills in the Inuit language.

The creation of a “stable bilingual” society whose foundation is the flourishing of the Inuit language is a key factor in poverty reduction in Nunavut. As Shelley Tulloch writes in *Building a Strong Foundation: Considerations to Support Thriving Bilingualism in Nunavut*, a report commissioned by the NLC, “[I]anguage is necessary to act out the values that underpin what Nunavut should be, and strategies for achieving a strong society involve language” (1). Stable bilingualism offers the best of all worlds to Nunavummiut:

Bilingualism contributes to individual and community wellbeing through enhancing an individual’s ability to make sense of and contribute to the world and by making such participation more possible through increased communication, access to knowledge and information sharing. In the Nunavut context, bilingualism is a means for achieving equality that Inuit have not historically enjoyed in Canada, ensuring the language’s vitality, and making sure Inuit have choices and the opportunity to build the society they have envisioned. (13)

But, Nunavut is considered an “unstable bilingual” environment because of the shifting strength and prevalence English. Though the Inuit language is widely used now, trends in literacy and language use among young adults and children indicate that the Inuit language is declining rapidly in use and advanced fluency. To foster a stable bilingualism, therefore, we urgently need to increase support for the Inuit language. In *Building a Strong Foundation*, Tulloch confirms that “all evidence suggests that thriving bilingualism will only be achieved by putting the Inuit language first” (13).

The frequency of references to the Inuit language in the NRPR’s community dialogues and regional roundtable reports reflects the shared understanding across Nunavut of the importance of the Inuit language to poverty reduction. Language use contributes to the foundation of cultural and personal identity and impacts all of the issues raised in the NRPR’s dialogues on poverty reduction,

including intergenerational relationships, healing, social justice, and the acquisition of traditional skills and societal values. These issues, in turn, impact more concretely recognizable poverty issues, including food security and access to country foods, access to employment, and housing security.

The strength of individuals' oral language and literacy skills in the Inuit language also impacts the development of advanced language skills in English. As Tulloch notes, "[r]esearch supports the idea that individuals will be most successful acquiring advanced language skills, including literacy, when they have the opportunity to do so first in their mother tongue, then in a second language" (1). Tulloch defines "advanced language skills" as "the ability to use language in increasingly complex ways, for example: reading, writing, storytelling, poetry, use of specialized and advanced vocabulary, translation between languages" (155). In this way, an investment in the development of advanced Inuit language and literacy skills is also an investment in the development of advanced language and literacy skills in a second language, such as English.

Strong skills in the Inuit language also impact the strength and nature of intergenerational and familial relationships, which are essential to human development. Strong intergenerational relationships and communication support individual and community wellbeing in holistic and sustainable ways that no institutionally produced program, service or policy for wellbeing could. By supporting the development of oral language and literacy skills in the Inuit language, we are supporting the healthy and self-sustaining core of our territory.

Community-based programming that supports the development of oral language and literacy skills in the Inuit language also offers many immediate benefits in addition to the long-term strengthening of the Inuit language. Such programming can establish and expand informal community support networks and can support participants to strengthen their confidence in learning overall. Such programming fosters hope and inspiration and can mobilize participants to reach personal and community visions. (See *Recommendation 3* for a detailed description of the benefits of community-based, non-formal language and literacy programming.)

Much good work is already being done by the Department of CLEY, Inuit organizations, and other groups engaged in language issues. Many individual Nunavummiut are also engaged in strengthening the Inuit language in their own families and communities. Nunavut is in a strong position from which to create a stable bilingual society, but it is necessary that we increase our efforts now.

We recommend that *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* formally recognize the correlation between the vibrancy of the Inuit language and the wellbeing of families, communities and territory. We also recommend that *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* include specific

steps to support oral language and literacy skill development in the Inuit language. The six other recommendations in this report provide affordable and highly effective ways to do so. Such actions will lead to immediate *and* long-term benefits in the lives of Nunavummiut.

Recommendation 2

Research, develop, and support embedded literacy programming.

Embedded literacy skill development is a relatively new concept in the literacy field. An embedded literacy program purposefully integrates or weaves literacy skill development into another subject-specific learning context, such as a computer skills course, vocational or trades program, or an Inuit traditional knowledge program.

Skills development programs that include embedded literacy development are more effective than conventional training. In embedded program models, low literacy skills are not a barrier to learning the main subject material, so more individuals can participate and more participants complete their training successfully. Embedded literacy programs are *also* more effective in developing language and literacy skills than conventional, stand-alone literacy training programs, because in embedded programming the literacy skill development is immediately relevant to participants' purpose, interests, and activities. Research conducted in the UK has shown that "young people who are reluctant to take up literacy, language and numeracy learning opportunities welcome an embedded approach" (Rogers 2005). Embedding literacy skill development into other learning contexts is an efficient use of resources for program providers, training participants, and program funders.

Embedding literacy is effective in any learning context, but two particularly promising applications of this model in Nunavut are to trades/vocational training and non-formal community programs. Embedding literacy into trades programs makes such programs accessible for participants who are interested in a particular vocation but who do not already have sufficient literacy skills to meet the demands of the course or the workplace. Non-formal community based programs that embed literacy skills invite participation by community members with low literacy skills who are not prepared for more formal academic programs.

Qualities of Embedded Literacy Programs

- **Customized** – Responds to individual participants’ learning needs and interests
- **Contextualizes learning** – Language and literacy skills acquisition is supported by contextualized and immediately relevant content
- **Builds on prior learning** – Values the knowledge, skills, and experience of participants
- **Safe and supportive** – Provides a safe and supportive learning environment
- **Enhances established programs** – Builds on and values the good work of relevant and successful programs already operating in Nunavut
- **Values all ways of learning** – Not just formal, conventionally academic learning

Advantages of Embedded Literacy Programs

- **Accessibility** – Programs are more accessible to participants who may not have sufficient literacy skills to otherwise successfully meet program demands
- **Effectiveness** – Literacy skill and content skill learning reinforce and support each other. Immediate and relevant application of literacy skills improves participant motivation and engagement in course content. And, Language and literacy skill development in one content area is applicable and supports improved learning in other content areas.
- **Decreased attrition** – Lower rates of attrition and high levels of participation and attendance.
- **Flexibility** – Embedding models can apply to both the Inuit and English languages, depending on the goals and focus of the program as well as the participants’ needs.

Research on embedding literacy into vocational training in the UK suggests that instructors teaching a vocation—and are therefore most familiar with the specific literacy skills associated with the vocation—are best positioned to embed literacy into their programs (Rogers, 2005). However, our findings suggest that embedding literacy skill development into program content is not always an obvious or intuitive process; it requires careful planning and specific skills and knowledge for effective outcomes.³ Vocational instructors and program coordinators may require training or other

³ NLC pilot project: Literacy Development in Nunavut Non-decentralized Communities.

support to most effectively embed literacy skill development into their programs. Investing in such training and support for program coordinators and instructors would result in the wide range of vocational training in Nunavut becoming more accessible, effective, and efficient.

Embedding literacy into more programs and training opportunities in Nunavut will lead to better outcomes for learners in training programs, workplaces and in our communities. Putting resources into the following areas will support literacy skill development:

- researching programs and specific methods of instruction that support literacy skill development in embedded models;
- developing partnerships with vocational, trades training, and non-formal community program providers;
- developing resources that support program instructors to embed literacy skills into course content;
- training instructors to embed literacy into program development and delivery; and,
- piloting and promoting vocational/trades programs and non-formal community programs that embed literacy skills within course content.

Investment in these areas will result in increased literacy skills in the Inuit language and English, improved employment skills, and increased participant engagement and success, which are all essential to reducing poverty.

Recommendation 3

Increase non-formal learning opportunities for youth and adults, and include embedded literacy programming.

“Non-formal” programs are planned and structured programs that typically take place outside a classroom or institution. They do not normally lead to certification or academic credit. For example, a family literacy program held weekly at the local library is a non-formal program. Community-based traditional skills programs, such as land programs and sewing programs, are also non-formal.

Formal literacy programs and other education programs can be an effective way to improve the skills of many learners. But, for a variety of reasons, formal education is not always an accessible option for many youth and adults. As such, there is substantial value in increasing opportunities for “non-formal” community-based approaches to literacy and other skills development.

Non-formal programs offer many significant benefits to youth and adult learners. There is considerable documented evidence of the value and impact of non-formal programs on youth engagement (Eccles, & Appleton-Gottman, 2002) and poverty reduction. Non-formal literacy programs are more effective at engaging and retaining youth ("Beyond the rhetoric," 2003) and adult learners who are marginalized, especially those who have not fared well in the formal school system ("Recognizing non-formal and," 2010). Also, non-formal programs tend to act as bridges, providing learners with the basic skills and self-esteem they need to feel prepared to move on to formal, accredited programs or employment.

Non-formal, community-based programs put learning into a dynamic context that enables learners to use their prior knowledge and experience. This participatory and learner-centred approach that is typically part of many non-formal programs is essential for adult learners and youth who may have had negative experiences in the formal education system. Critical pedagogy argues that, for true learning to happen, the voices of marginalized groups must be heard and fully engaged in the learning process. The norm, however, is still a formally structured approach with emphasis on mastering reading, writing and numeracy within a specified time ("Education for life," 2005).

Through the NLC's youth ("Barriers to youth employment," 2007), workplace/workforce ("Improving essential skills for," 2007), and family literacy (Strengthening Our Communities Project, ND) research projects, stakeholders have consistently voiced concern over the need to develop educational programming to engage marginalized youth (those who have dropped out and who are not employed). Recommendations for the development of flexible, non-formal, community-based programs were identified within all of these stakeholder groups as being a top priority.

Culturally-based programs, such as caribou skin preparation and sewing, and traditional tool making are well suited to offer youth a way to reconnect with their cultural traditions, learn in a non-threatening, community-based setting, and interact with Elders and other community role models (Antone, & Gamlin, 2003). "Community programs can expand the opportunities for youth to acquire personal and social assets and to experience the broad range of features of positive developmental settings (Eccles, & Appleton-Gottman, 2002).

Support Non-formal, Culturally-based Programs with Embedded Language and Literacy

Embedding language and literacy skill development into other non-formal, culturally-based programs is highly effective for adults and youth. Such programming offers many positive benefits beyond the acquisition of traditional skills and literacy skills. Embedding literacy into programs

that are culturally-based, non-formal and situated away from the classroom provides children, youth and adults with opportunities to receive guidance from Elders and other role models and to enrich their connections to the community and workplaces. This can impact participants' overall wellbeing, personal and cultural identity, and self-confidence. And, as with all non-formal programming, many youth and adults who would not feel prepared or comfortable engaging in formal training programs are eager for the flexibility, support, and communal environment of non-formal learning opportunities.

The 2008 *Nunavut Economic Outlook* recommends that Nunavut “organize programs for children and youth including inter-generational programs that help transfer knowledge” (Clinton, 2008). The *Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy* also recommends that we “provide access to non-formal, community-based literacy programs in order to provide opportunities for those learners who are reluctant to take part in formal programs and as a way to re-engage adult learners in life-long learning” (“Nunavut Adult Learning,” 2006).

A number of groups and organizations across Nunavut effectively deliver culturally-based, non-formal programming that includes embedded language and literacy skill development. The Matchbox Gallery's Traditional Arts & Literacy Program and the Kivalliq Inuit Association's Reclaiming Our Sinew Program and Somebody's Daughter are three examples of highly successful non-formal, context-based cultural skills programs that have been enriched with embedded literacy components.

Non-formal, culturally-based programs that integrate language and literacy development are effective because they:

- Create unilingual Inuit language domains of use;
- Adapt to local needs, goals, values, and contextually-shaped definitions of literacy;
- Engage marginalized individuals in community life and create local networks of support;
- Welcome participation by individuals with a wide range of skills and abilities;
- Support *holistic* skills development and learning;
- Involve participation by local language and literacy specialists, such as unilingual Elders;
- Increase participants' confidence in personal and cultural identity, social inclusion, and learning.

Reclaiming Our Sinew and Somebody's Daughter programs reported low attrition rates and consistently high levels of participation and attendance. There is anecdotal information that suggests that embedding LES in these programs was key to the success of the programs. In the final report on Somebody's Daughter, the project coordinator observes that "combining traditional Inuit culture with the skill sets needed in today's society always seems to work best." The short-term outcomes of these two programs were not well-documented, but informal tracking of participants of the Reclaiming Our Sinew program suggests all participants engaged in further education or training programs or became employed within months of completing the program.

We recommend that *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* include steps to increase opportunities for learning outside of the formal education system, recognizing the need for non-formal skills development programs and the capacity of such programs to address, *holistically*, many of the themes raised in community dialogues about poverty reduction. We also recommend that *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* recognize the unparalleled effectiveness of combining oral language and literacy skills development and traditional skills development in non-formal, community settings. Non-formal, community-based programming is affordable, effective, and supports healing and wellbeing. Such programming also supports sustainable community development, as its primary required resource is the skills, knowledge, and values of Elders and other respected community members.

Recommendation 4

Conduct language and literacy audits of all training programs in Nunavut.

Significant investments have been made into training programs by NGOs, businesses, Inuit organizations, and territorial and federal government departments. And, program participants themselves invest time, energy, and personal resources to be able to attend training programs. Such investments are essential to poverty reduction and community development. But, many training programs are developed and delivered without sufficient consideration for the cultural and linguistic context of Nunavut or the literacy levels of participants. This contributes to increased anxiety and fatigue for participants, less successful learning experiences, and high attrition rates. Language and literacy audits would ensure that our collective investments lead to training experiences that are more effective, more efficient, and more accessible to a greater number of participants.

Language and literacy audits can help to:

- Increase and deepen participants' understanding of course materials and content;
- Increase participants' engagement;
- Improve learning outcomes, such as increased skill development or knowledge;
- Decrease attrition and the risk of participants having to repeat programs or courses;
- Increase participants' confidence in learning and skills acquisition;
- Create respectful, inspiring, and responsive learning environments; and,
- Ensure that investments in training lead to effective and positive learning experiences for the greatest number of participants.

What does a language and literacy audit do?

- Identify possible learning barriers related to language and literacy;
- Provide a "plain language" audit of the program or course materials;
- Make the program or course content relevant to the northern and Nunavut contexts;
- Examine how the program or course could encourage the use of the Inuit language by instructors and/or learners;
- Assess the intended learning environment;
- Identify possible opportunities to embed language and literacy skills;
- When appropriate, include the development of a comprehensive plan for embedding language and literacy skill fully into a course or program; and,
- Encourage instructional strategies that support:
 - language and literacy skill development generally; and,
 - Inuit ways of learning and sharing knowledge.

Make Language and Literacy Audits an RFP Requirement

Literacy and language audits require skill and time to be carried out and implemented. Effective language and literacy audits require knowledge of:

- language and literacy skill acquisition;
- principles and practices of adult education and instruction;
- the language and literacy context of Nunavut; and,
- Inuit culture and common ways of learning and sharing knowledge.

As such, training organizations may require support and professional development to conduct audits and implement recommendations and strategies.

To support training organizations to meet the additional costs for conducting or participating in audits, funders in Nunavut should make language and literacy audits a necessary element of all training RFPs. This would support training organizations to develop and deliver more effective training while remaining competitive.

Recommendation 5

Research, develop, and support customized workplace education programs.

Workplace education programs embed⁴ language and literacy skill development into workplace activities including training for work and training at work. High quality, effective workplace education programs are developed based on the unique needs and goals of a particular workplace.

Workplace education is an efficient and highly effective way to support:

- Achievement of a representative GN workforce;
- Hiring, retention and promotion of employees in all workplaces;
- Promotion of entry-level employees in all workplaces to higher positions, thereby opening entry level positions for unemployed individuals;
- Making the Inuit language the working language of government;
- Service provision in the Inuit language; and,

⁴ See Recommendation 2 on “embedded literacy” for an explanation of this education concept.

- Development of a larger labour pool for higher skilled jobs.

Each occupation and workplace has unique literacy practices—the specific ways employees use language, reading and writing skills in the production of work. Workplace education supports employees to develop the knowledge and skills needed to learn, understand and communicate orally and in writing at in their specific workplace and industry and according to their specific needs and interests. Workplace language and literacy skills include understanding and using workplace and union related information, being able to confidently complete necessary paperwork and reports, having the ability to work with numbers, communicating orally and participating in all aspects of the workplace, and being able to acquire new skills and knowledge through formal and informal training.

The development of a workplace education program is normally guided by an external workplace education coordinator and governed by an internal workplace advisory committee, comprised of a cross-section of staff members, including entry level, managerial and non-managerial employees. Workplace initiatives are developed *collaboratively*: all employees have input and play a role in guiding the development and delivery of programs. The collaborative nature of developing a workplace education program consistently results in more appropriate, relevant, and effective programming with stronger participant engagement.

Workplace education is different than conventional employee training models:

- Programs are customized to individual participants' needs, interests, and goals;
- Programs are customized to the workplace and integrate current issues and materials from the worksite as part of the curriculum;
- Programs are selected and developed collaboratively by a team in the workplace that includes entry-level, managerial and non-managerial staff (typically with the support of a skilled and supportive coordinator from outside of the workplace);
- Programs take place at the worksite, partially or fully on work time;
- Program time is usually 2 to 4 hours per week and is scheduled over 10 to 20 weeks;
- Program participation is voluntary; and,
- Participant progress and results are confidential and released only at the request of the participant.

Benefits of Workplace Education

- Supports the development of strong oral language and literacy skills;
- Responds dynamically to the specific needs and goals of workplaces and individual employees;
- Provides employers with learning resources and methods that are sensitive to the Nunavut labour market;
- Supports recruitment and retention;
- Increases employee job satisfaction, career pathing, and flexibility;
- Improves workplace communication and strengthens relationships and collaboration;
- Encourages life-long, self-directed learning and supports the development of a culture of learning in the workplace;
- Increases employees' confidence and engagement in the workplace; and,
- Improves employees' ability to access and succeed in other training programs.

Workplace education is used widely in other areas of Canada as an effective practice for employee training, job satisfaction, and productivity; but, it is an underdeveloped practice in Nunavut. Most funding available in Nunavut supports training initiatives for individuals without jobs. But, according to the International Adult Literacy Skills Survey, 60% of Nunavut's workforce has literacy skills below level 3. Workplace education programs could fill the critical gap in providing support to the employed demographic to develop their language and literacy skills.

Research conducted by the NLC in partnership with the Northwest Territories Literacy Council demonstrates that there is significant interest in workplace education by employers in the North, recognizing the need for improving literacy and essential skills; but, most do not have the expertise to develop strategies and programs ("Improving essential skills," 2007). While few employers in Nunavut and the NWT deliver workplace literacy programs, many do offer skills-based training programs and mentoring programs. The Literacy Councils believe that while supporting the development of new workplace literacy programs is necessary, embedding literacy and essential skills within existing skills training programs may be the most effective and efficient first step in addressing workplace needs ("Barriers to youth," 2007).

The NLC is currently working on a three year workplace education pilot project. We have found that in order to expand customized workplace education initiatives in Nunavut the following resources are needed:

- a territorial workplace education coordinator with experience in adult education and program and workplace evaluation and analysis;
- a pool of workplace education instructors with experience in adult education and training in workplace education;
- support from worksite management and unions (where applicable); and,
- funding support to run the programs.

Workplace education is a well-established, researched and supported field in Southern Canada. A wide range of private industries, municipal and provincial governments have used workplace education programs to support the literacy and skill development of employees. With effective support and investment, workplace education models that meet the needs of Nunavut workplaces can work to support both employers and employees in this territory.

Recommendation 6

Support family literacy programs.

Family literacy, also referred to as intergenerational literacy, describes the way children and adult family members share and use language skills, literacy skills and cultural information to do day-to-day tasks and keep important traditional and cultural knowledge alive.

Family literacy programs recognize and support the significant role family plays in the development of children’s emerging language and literacy skills. Family literacy programs were started as a practical response to studies in the field of emergent literacy⁵, which demonstrated that the acquisition of literacy skills is a developmental process that is significantly influenced by family and begins well before children enter school. Family literacy programs can take many forms, such as parent and tot reading circles, parent and baby rhyming time, youth and elder oral storytelling.

⁵ “Emergent literacy” refers to those behaviours shown by youngsters as they respond to and begin to approximate reading and writing tasks.

The primary goal of all programs is to support parents or adult caregivers to support the development of their children’s language and literacy skills.

Research confirms that investments in family literacy and intergenerational programs have positive and long term benefits for children, their caregivers and communities:

- Research conducted with 2000 American families that attended family literacy programs showed that literacy intervention reduced participants’ full dependence on public assistance from 67% to 11% (SK Literacy)
- Family literacy programs that teach parents and caregivers about how to read to their children have a significant and lasting impact on their children’s literacy skill development (Sénéchal, 2005).
- Shared-reading interventions can have a significant, substantial, and positive impact both on young children’s oral language skills and on young children’s print knowledge.
- In a report titled “Predicting 4th grade reading comprehension in a low-income population”, the authors say that “... pre-school language and literacy experiences are strong predictors of early language and literacy growth, and that the strongest predictor of children’s early literacy development is the support for literacy in the home” (Roach & Snow, 2000).

A significant benefit of family literacy programs is that they work to build the literacy skills of both children and parents at the same. *And, as parents develop their own literacy skills, they are better equipped to foster the literacy and language growth in their very young children.* (Grinder, Kassab, Askov & Abler, 2004). The double benefit also applies to funders of programs. Every dollar spent on family and intergenerational literacy programs does “double duty” supporting early childhood development as well as adult basic education.

The short and longer term outcomes that family literacy programs produce are of particular value in an unstable bilingual environment such as Nunavut. Family and intergenerational programs are effective at supporting mother tongue or first language development which, in turn, supports second language acquisition:

The level of development of children's mother tongue is a strong predictor of their second language development. Children who come to school with a solid foundation in their mother tongue develop stronger literacy abilities in the school language. When parents and other

caregivers (e.g. grandparents) are able to spend time with their children and tell stories or discuss issues with them in a way that develops their mother tongue vocabulary and concepts, children come to school well-prepared to learn the school language and succeed educationally. Children's knowledge and skills transfer across languages from the mother tongue they have learned in the home to the school language (Cummins, 2000).

Family literacy programs can support children to develop a strong foundation in the Inuit language and prepare them for the development of English language and literacy skills at school. As well, these programs can encourage and give parents support to create and sustain a rich Inuit language environment at home.

Family literacy programs also contribute to the development of family and community bonds and demonstrate support for children and youth to succeed in school. Research shows that one of the most important factors in academic success for children is parents' expectation for their children's educational achievement. Programs that integrate intergenerational literacy support parents in having high expectations for their children's success at school.

Why should Nunavut invest in family literacy?

Family literacy programs:

- Provide a solid foundation in the mother tongue for families living in a bilingual society;
- Support Inuit language environments in families and the community;
- Develop the oral language and literacy skills of *all* participants (including adults and children);
- Strengthen intergenerational, family and community bonds;
- Help parents to support their children's language and literacy development at home and at school; and,
- Strengthen the emergent literacy of young children, which is essential to the development of advanced literacy skills later in life.

The social and economic benefits of family literacy programs have been well established through numerous research studies over the last three decades. The NLC has worked to support and promote the development of family literacy programs in Nunavut over the last ten years. Despite overwhelming evidence of the positive and long term impacts of family literacy programs,

access to funding to develop and deliver these programs remains poor in Nunavut. The NLC currently has the knowledge and resources to support communities to develop stand-alone family literacy programs or embed family literacy practices into existing programs. In order to support communities to develop family literacy programs, sustained funds are required to:

- Develop, deliver and promote programs;
- Create and/or translate age-appropriate children’s books and resources in the Inuit language; and,
- Support and train local family literacy program practitioners.

Family literacy programs are a culturally appropriate and cost effective investment for Nunavut communities. The NLC believes that with sustained funding, family literacy programs will make a significant and long term contribution to poverty reduction in Nunavut.

Recommendation 7

Increase and improve support for non-governmental, community-based work, and involve community organizations in *Nunavut’s Poverty Reduction Action Plan*.

Non-governmental, community-based organizations play an essential role in poverty reduction. They are often in the best position to spark grassroots engagement, build on community assets, respond dynamically to local concerns and goals, and develop holistic and community-driven solutions. Increasing and improving support for non-governmental and community-based work will provide much-needed foundational strength to *Nunavut’s Poverty Reduction Action Plan*. We recommend that support be increased and improved for non-profit, community-based organizations that work in the key areas of poverty reduction, as identified in the NRPR’s community dialogues.

The importance of the non-profit sector in Nunavut and the role it plays in poverty reduction cannot be overstated. Research shows clearly that a strong and dynamic non-profit sector contributes to significant social and economic change (Danaher, 2011). Non-profit, community-based organizations contribute to the local economy, provide jobs, and directly address poverty-related issues at the community level. They also have valuable perspectives, expertise, and networks and connections to share with others working toward poverty reduction. All

Nunavummiut will benefit from a vibrant non-profit sector and from strengthened partnerships between community-based organizations, Inuit organizations, and the Government of Nunavut.

It is important to recognize the unique role that they play in poverty reduction, alongside Inuit organizations and the Government of Nunavut. Non-profit, community-based groups are flexible and can hit the ground running. They are not typically constrained by the bureaucracies that are necessarily part of larger Inuit organizations and governments. They can approach problems in new ways, based on improvisation and local direction, customizing their programs and practices to suit the communities they work in. As a recent report on Nunavut's non-profit sector describes,

There are numerous advantages to using non-profit organizations to carry out a range of important activities. They achieve valued outcomes due to inherent strengths such as strong grassroots links, a process-oriented and participatory approach to development and the energy and commitment provided by the people involved. Non-profit organizations are often less restricted by rules and procedures than government departments. ("Understanding Nunavut's non-profit," 2008)

Non-profit organizations are often in the best position to build on existing community resources and engage the public, using grassroots networks to tap into the assets already present in communities.

In addition to delivering customized and locally-directed programs and services that contribute to poverty reduction, non-profits also contribute to employment and economic development in Nunavut. So, they play a dual role in poverty reduction: they provide much-needed, community-driven services and they contribute to the territory's jobs and overall economy. Data from Statistics Canada shows that, nationally, the non-profit sector in Canada accounted for 7.8% of the GDP or 79.1 billion dollars. The GDP in the core non-profit sector (colleges, universities and hospitals excluded), grew 6.0% to \$35.4 billion in 2008. In fact, the non-profit sector shows annual growth that has outpaced the broader economy over the past 11 years ("Satellite account of," 2010).

How big an economic player is the core nonprofit sector? Well, consider this – in 2006, its economic contribution was more than 2.5 times the size of the agriculture industry and six times greater than the motor vehicle industry (Hall, 2010).

In Nunavut, there are over 450 non-profit organizations ("Not-for-profit groups in," 2007). They provide a diverse range of programs and services that impact social and economic development across the territory. In 2010, the non-profit sector added 10.6 million dollars to Nunavut's gross domestic product—more than fishing and hunting together ("Nunavut real gross," 2010).

It is essential that *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* include steps to support increased collaboration, trust, and the sharing of knowledge between non-profit, community-based groups, Inuit organizations, and the Government of Nunavut. A review of literature on poverty reduction strategies confirms the need for inclusion and support for non-profit and community-based organizations in community development (Tremblay, 2009). And, as part of their resolution to end poverty, the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities undertook a study of poverty across Canada. In their report (2010) the Committee stated:

Community-based organizations that support individuals living in poverty need to be recognized more fully for their vital contributions to improving the welfare of Canadians across the country. The federal government, along with provincial and municipal governments, have come to rely heavily on these organizations and their volunteers. Given the unmet needs of this sector and the essential contribution it makes, the Committee believes that the federal government must strengthen and enhance its support for the myriad of community-oriented, non-profit organizations operating across the country whose raison d'être is to improve the social and economic welfare of those who need it most (111).

Federal government evaluations have also demonstrated a need for federal intervention and a partnership approach with non-profit organizations.

Separately, the organizations and service-providers in Nunavut work with limited resources and are often forced to "reinvent the wheel" due to working in isolation. Increased collaboration and communication are essential to addressing the complex and shifting challenges of poverty reduction. A recent report from the Georgia Institute of Technology, *Innovating through the lens of social entrepreneurship to tackle poverty reduction*, explores the importance collaboration:

Innovations emerge when there are interconnections and interdependencies, when we work outside the parameters of what has

been done before and seek out new possibilities. We all have the ability to connect one idea with another, to find an idea in a different organization, in a different industry or field of activity and connect it with another to solve a problem at hand. This applies to the poverty dilemma as well.
(Martins-Rodriguez, & Viedma-Martí, 2006)

By strengthening our partnerships and inter-organizational communication and respect, Nunavut will be able to use its collective resources more effectively. And, the GN and Inuit organizations will be able to meet many of their own mandates more efficiently by consulting and partnering with non-profit, community-based organizations.

However, the challenges facing non-profit and community-based organizations in Nunavut are greater than those faced by other NGOs across the country ("Understanding Nunavut's non-profit," 2008). *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* must include steps to support the non-profit sector to better meet the administrative and structural challenges they face, which include financial insecurity, the lack of human capital, and the lack of available infrastructure.

The Committee [Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities] was told that community non-profit organizations spend far too much time applying for funding, writing proposals and reporting results. Witnesses felt that the resources devoted to these activities would be better spent providing support to clients. The application process is burdensome, both in terms of the frequency with which applications must be made and the quantity of information that must be supplied to support proposals. Moreover, we were told that organizations are competing with one another for limited funding, which in our opinion is an inefficient use of limited resources in organizations which are already overburdened.

The Standing Committee goes on to say that "Given the unmet needs of this sector and the essential contribution it makes, the Committee believes that the federal government must strengthen and enhance its support for the myriad of community-oriented, non-profit organizations operating across the country whose *raison d'être* is to improve the social and economic welfare of those who need it most" (p. 111).

Non-profits and community-based organizations are the stakeholders who will, for the most part, have direct access to individuals and families who are living in poverty in Nunavut.

Governments and other funders should consider providing funds to non-profits and other groups and organizations who contribute to poverty reduction, to increase their capacity to upscale their programs and improve their quality ("The global literacy," 2008). Governments and other funders should also view all existing funding programs through a poverty reduction lens. Small changes can have a big impact; for example, giving funding preference to high performing groups whose project and program ideas respond to the key issues identified by Nunavummiut as factors in poverty reduction. It is also vital that such organizations have access to longer-term, stable funding. This is also important in terms of engagement and positive outcomes for those living in poverty. Preoccupation with short-term outcomes can result in lower engagement of at-risk youth and adults, pilots and programs that end without lessons learned, and no opportunities to test and refine programs for maximum effectiveness (Bird, 2005).

Non-profit and community-based organizations play a critical role in poverty reduction. *Nunavut's Poverty Reduction Action Plan* must be inclusive of these organizations, benefit from their dynamic positions in communities, build on their corporate knowledge and skills, and provide them with the resources they need to carry out their work.

Conclusion

Oral language and literacy skill development alone will not eradicate poverty; but, we will not be able to eradicate poverty in Nunavut without supporting a stable societal bilingualism and advanced language skill development in the Inuit language and English. The social and economic costs of low literacy in Nunavut are monumental. Literacy levels impact the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and families; physical health, nutrition, and food security; personal and cultural identity; and, economic development, productivity in Nunavut workplaces, and the effectiveness of education and training programs.

Changes in policy and practice can substantially increase the literacy levels of Nunavummiut and reduce poverty. Such action will be most effective when it is long-term and sustained. Learners of all ages need a variety of formal and non-formal, long-term, stable, and predictable programs in order to reach their language goals. The increased development of strong oral language and literacy skills in Nunavut will have a lasting impact on present and future generations in Nunavut. Advanced language skills are essential to the wellbeing and resiliency of individuals, families, and communities—and to the vibrancy and continued success of Nunavut.

Appendices

Appendix A: What is “literacy”?

Literacy is defined in different ways, by different authors, for different purposes. This is entirely appropriate, as literacy is context-specific, acquired for particular needs. Bhola (1994), writing for an international audience of community-based literacy programmers and practitioners, affirms: “Each literacy project, programme or campaign needs to...come up with its own particular definition of literacy in its particular setting.”

The NLC defines literacy broadly as a skill that enables people to interpret and effectively respond to the world around them. Based upon language development from birth, it includes the ability to learn, communicate, read and write, pass on knowledge and participate actively in society. The literacy skills people need shift and change throughout their life, based on personal choices and circumstances such as geography, culture, age, gender, and other social and economic factors.

Appendix B: About the Nunavut Literacy Council

The Nunavut Literacy Council (NLC), founded in 1999, is one of thirteen provincial/territorial non-profit literacy coalitions represented nationally by the Canadian Language and Literacy Network. The NLC is a not-for-profit registered charity⁶ that is governed by an elected volunteer board of directors comprised of 6 regional representatives and 3 executive members. The organization is membership-based and includes adult educators, literacy practitioners, Government of Nunavut departments, non-profit organizations, schools, libraries, and individuals. The organization relies almost exclusively on project-based funding and donations to carry out its work. The NLC is decentralized and currently has eight staff members, living and working in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, Iqaluit and Ottawa.

The NLC’s mandate is unique in Nunavut. It is the only organization within the territory with a sole focus on literacy. The NLC works to promote and support the literacy needs of Nunavummiut in the official languages of Nunavut with respect for the principals and values of community capacity building and development. Since its inception, the NLC has focused its efforts on:

- **Conducting and disseminating original community-based research**

Building a Strong Foundation, Considerations to Support Thriving Bilingualism in Nunavut, includes 33 recommendations to support the development of advanced language and literacy

⁶ The NLC is a registered charity #89084 2123 RR0001.

skills based on the NLC's *Atatittiniq* research project. The NLC is currently researching the outcomes of embedding language and literacy skill development into non-formal community-based programs in the Kasuutittiaqatigiingniq research project.

- **Developing and delivering workshops**

To date, the NLC has delivered bilingual (Inuktitut/English) workshops for over 850 adult educators, librarians, early childhood workers, teachers, parents and community members in communities across the territory on a variety of topics pertaining to literacy and essential skills.

- **Creating original bilingual resources**

The NLC has developed over 60 different resources that are being used by public schools, Nunavut Arctic College, libraries, early childhood education programs and families in Nunavut. Resources are available in English, French, Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun. The NLC regularly receives requests for resources by other organizations across Canada.

- **Participating in policy development and knowledge exchange**

Significant participation by the NLC includes: participation as a member of the working group in the development of the Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy, spearheading Nunavut's involvement in the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey and hosting a literacy and Inuit language policy roundtable attended by senior federal and Provincial/Territorial officials. The NLC is working in partnership with the Nunavut Anti-poverty Secretariat and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. on the poverty reduction strategy and will be taking part in the development of the Nunavut Literacy Strategy.

- **Developing, maintaining and strengthening partnerships**

The NLC collaborates with a number of organizations in Nunavut including: Nunavut Arctic College, the Department of Education, the Department of CLEY, daycares, Aboriginal Head Start programs, libraries, the Regional Inuit Associations, and schools. The NLC is involved in a number of pan-Northern initiatives with the NWT Literacy Council and the Yukon Literacy Coalition and is represented on the Executive Board of the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network and the Nunavut Economic Forum.

Annotated Bibliography

Antone, E., Gamlin, P., & Provost-Turchetti, L. (2003). *Literacy and learning: acknowledging aboriginal holistic approaches to learning in relation to 'best practices' literacy training programs.* Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

Literacy training programs must reflect a broad approach that recognizes the unique ways that Aboriginal people represent their experience and knowledge. Literacy programs must reflect a cultural perspective that allows Aboriginal People to develop their literacy skills broadly as in developing skills related to narrative skills, artistic skills and to hold to traditional values as they go about doing these things.

Barr-Telford, L., Nault, F., & Pignal, J. Statistics Canada. (2005). *Building on our competencies: Canadian results of the international adult literacy and skills survey.*

The International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey, undertaken in 2003, measured the proficiencies of a representative sample of Canadian adults aged 16 and over in four domains: prose literacy, document literacy, numeracy and problem solving, and benchmarked performance against an international standard. The proficiency scores are compared between provinces, territories and nations, and over time. Moreover, literacy performance is examined in relation to differences in variables such as educational attainment, employment and unemployment, earnings and self-assessed health.

Bird, V. National Literacy Trust, (2005). *Every which way we can: a literacy and social inclusion position paper.* Retrieved from http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/assets/0000/0947/Every_which_way.pdf

This paper is for those concerned with the relationship between poor literacy skills and social exclusion, including policymakers, education professionals and service providers. It includes the evidence after two years of a three-year Basic Skills Agency National Support Project delivered by the National Literacy Trust, and follows an earlier discussion paper, Literacy and Social Inclusion (Bird, 2004).

Bird, V. National Literacy Trust, (2004). *Literacy and social inclusion: the policy challenge a discussion paper.* Retrieved from http://image.guardian.co.uk/sys-files/Education/documents/2004/05/18/Discussion_final.pdf

This discussion paper is for those concerned about the contribution, and consequences, of poor literacy skills to social exclusion.

Bloom, M., & Lafleur, B. Conference Board of Canada, (2007). *Turning skills into profit: economic benefits of workplace education programs.* Retrieved from http://www.conferenceboard.ca/Libraries/EDUC_PUBLIC/Skills_Profits.sflb

This report demonstrates the impact of and benefits of workplace education programs. Evidence shows that increased profits can be generated, workplace injuries reduced, and

productivity increased in many kinds of workplaces either by solely providing workplace basic skills training or combining training that improves employees' skills with other strategies.

Campbell, A. Conference Board of Canada, (2003). *Strength from within: overcoming the barriers to workplace literacy development.*

This final report sums the findings of a two-year research project funded by the National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Development Canada.

Clinton, G. (2008). 2008 Nunavut Economic Outlook. Nunavut Economic Forum.

Cummins, J. University of Toronto, (2000). Bilingual children's mother tongue: why is it important for education? Retrieved from <http://iteachilearn.org/cummins/mother.htm>.

This document says that the cultural, linguistic and intellectual capital of our societies will increase dramatically when we stop seeing culturally and linguistically diverse children as "a problem to be solved" and instead open our eyes to the linguistic, cultural, and intellectual resources they bring from their homes to our schools and societies.

Danaher, A. (2011). *Reducing disparities and improving population health: the role of a vibrant community sector.* Wellesley Institute: Retrieved from <http://www.wellesleyinstitute.com/publication-papers/reducing-disparities-and-improving-population-health-the-role-of-a-vibrant-community-sector/>

Through a review of the literature on the links between population health, the community sector, and community characteristics and resilience this paper explores how a vibrant and responsive community sector can enhance overall population health and ameliorate the impact and severity of health disparities for those communities most affected and identifies the key enablers or success conditions that are needed so the community sector can reduce disparities and promote population health.

Eaton, S. (2010). Formal, non-formal and informal learning: the case of literacy, essential skills and language learning in Canada. Unpublished manuscript retrieved from http://www.infed.org/archives/e-texts/eaton_literacy_languages_and_types_of_learning.pdf

This report investigates the links between formal, non-formal, and informal learning and the difference between them. The report also aims to link these notions of learning to literacy and essential skills, as well as the learning of second and other languages in Canada.

Eccles, J & Appleton-Gottman J. *Community programs to promote youth development.* Washington, D.C. 2002.

After-school programs and other community-based activities have long been thought to play a key role in the lives of adolescents. But what do we know about the role of such programs for today's adolescents? How can we ensure that programs are designed to successfully meet young people's developmental needs and help them become healthy, happy, and productive adults? Community Programs to Promote Youth Development explores these questions,

focusing on essential elements of adolescent well-being and healthy development. It offers recommendations for policy, practice, and research to ensure that programs are well designed to meet young people's developmental needs.

Government of Nova Scotia, Department of Labour and Workforce Development, Skills and Learning Branch. (2007). Making it work: a guide for workplace education project teams in nova scotia

Grinder. , Kassab, , Askov, , & Abler, (2004). Testing the assumption: the impact of family literacy on children's development, summary of findings and implications for practice.

This study demonstrates the important linkage that exists between the parents' education and children's literacy and language development. It reaffirms the assumption of family literacy programs that parents are indeed the child's first and most important early teacher.

Hall, M. (2010). *Change is in the air: the economic realities of Canada's nonprofit sector. The Philanthropist*, 23(1), Retrieved from <http://www.thephilanthropist.ca/index.php/phil/article/download/816/664>

This report is about Canada's growing economic giant. Most Canadians are unaware of the role that the country's non-profit sector plays in our economy. However, data from Statistics Canada continues to show what a key player the non-profit sector really is. It also shatters old stereotypes about non-profit organizations relying mainly on donations and government transfers.. It also shows that its annual growth has outpaced that of the broader economy more often than not over the past 11 years.

Harrell, A. National Institute on Drug Abuse, Division of Epidemiology and Statistical Analysis National Institute on Drug Abuse. (1985). Validation of self-report: the research record.

Hoepfner. Report of the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities, (2010). *Federal poverty reduction plan: working in partnership towards reducing poverty in Canada (40th Parliament, 3rd Session.*). Ottawa:

The Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities undertook a study on the role of the federal government in reducing poverty in Canada. Throughout this study, Committee members listened to a large number of Canadians who shared their experience of living in poverty and to organizations and social policy experts who shared their knowledge about the living conditions of Canadians living in poverty or at-risk of poverty, and who suggested means of raising these groups out of poverty, whether through existing programs or by creating new initiatives.

Human Resources Development Canada, Evaluation and Data Development Strategic Policy. (2000). *Adult literacy: policies, programs and practices*. Ottawa: Retrieved from <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/cs/sp/hrsdcd/edd/reports/2000-000404/alppp.pdf>

This study summarizes lessons learned from policies, programs and practices directed at adult literacy over the past decade, in the context of industrialized economies.

Martins Rodriguez, R., & Viedma Martí, J. (2006). *Innovating through the lens of social entrepreneurship to tackle poverty reduction*. Georgia Institute of Technology. Retrieved from <http://smartech.gatech.edu/bitstream/handle/1853/36255/Blanca%20Martins%20Rodriguez.pdf?sequence=1>

This report looks at a handful of recent initiatives that make us optimistic about start solving the enduring problems of poverty reduction. The report looks at cases from the business world and the prominence they are giving to poverty reduction. The paper builds on these insights and places social entrepreneurship in the centre of the debate of the plausible ways through which to alleviate poverty.

Nunavut Economic Forum, (2007). *Not-for-profit groups in Nunavut—a review*. Iqaluit. Retrieved from <http://www.nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/NEFREPOR/Not%20For%20Profit%20Groups%20in%20Nunavut-%20A%20Review.pdf>

The Nunavut Economic Forum commissioned a Nunavut-wide survey of non-profit organizations, looking closely at both sector specific organizations with a role in the Nunavut Economic Development Strategy, and specific interest advocacy groups.

Nunavut Economic Forum, (2008). *Understanding Nunavut's non-profit sector*. Iqaluit: Impact Economics. Retrieved from <http://www.nunavuteconomicforum.ca/public/files/library/NEFREPOR/Understanding%20Nunavut%27s%20Non-Profit%20Sector.pdf>

This report looks at the non-profit sector within Canada and investigates the specific contributions the non-profit sector is making in Nunavut, its performance in delivering programs and services and its potential. It also investigates current and future challenges.

Nunavut and NWT Literacy Councils, (2007). *Improving essential skills for work and community*. The purpose of this paper is to provide information and analysis, and make recommendations about how to improve workplace and workforce literacy in Nunavut and the NWT.

Nunavut Literacy Council, (2007). *Barriers to youth employment in nunavut: a research report and action plan*. In the course of its ongoing work the Nunavut Literacy Council identified low literacy levels as a barrier to employment for many Nunavummiut, including youth. This paper is the result of a research project to identify other barriers that face youth

seeking employment in Nunavut, re-engaging marginalized youth in education, employment and community life, and the extent that literacy is a barrier to youth employment.

Nunavut Adult Learning Strategy. Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. 2006.

Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, (2006). Nunavut census language by community. Retrieved from <http://www.eia.gov.nu.ca/stats/community.html>

Nunavut Bureau of Statistics, (2010). Nunavut real gross domestic product by industry, 2000 to 2010. Retrieved from http://www.eia.gov.nu.ca/stats/GDP/Realind/Nunavut%20Real%20GDP%20by%20Industry.%202000%20to%202010_dissemination%20%20file.pdf

OECD, (2003). Beyond the rhetoric adult learning policies and practices.

This comparative report provides an overview of the adult learning policies and practices within the participating countries and concludes by identifying a range of desirable features that make for successful adult learning systems.

OECD, (2005). Promoting adult learning.

This publication is the result of an OECD thematic review of adult learning policies and practices in 17 OECD countries. The main focus of the study is on understanding adults' access to, and participation in, education and training and on providing policy options for improved delivery.

OECD, (2010). Recognising non-formal and informal learning: outcomes, policies and practices.

This report talks about the need to validate non-formal and informal learning. It discusses the benefits to non-formal programming and the socioeconomic impact. It also discusses the importance of recognition to improve equity and strengthen access to further education and to the labour market for disadvantaged minority groups, disaffected youth and older workers who did not have many opportunities for formal learning when they were younger.

Quality Improvement Agency, Family literacy, language and numeracy information network. (n.d.). Embedding literacy, language and numeracy learning. Retrieved from http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/pdf/Embedding_literacy_language_and_numeracy_learning.pdf.

This research demonstrates that young people who are reluctant to take up literacy, language and numeracy learning opportunities welcome an embedded approach. Whatever your resources, you will be able to partly or fully embed literacy, language and numeracy in the courses and programmes you offer. All good practitioners will find a context for their teaching that interests and motivates learners. Embedding literacy, language and numeracy in other

courses means that the context provides the base for the learning, and the literacy, language and numeracy skills are integrated into it.

Rahman, R. I. UK Department for International Development, (2008). Does education reduce poverty in rural bangladesh? Bangladesh: Retrieved from www.eldis.org/id21ext/e2rir1g1.html

Using data from a school-level survey and a household survey, the study investigates children's access to primary and secondary school by assessing at the impact of different levels of poverty on enrolment rates. It also considers the link between school quality and poverty.

Roach, K., & Snow, C. (2000). What predicts 4th grade reading comprehension? predicting 4th grade reading comprehension in a low-income population: the critical importance of social precursors from home and school during early childhood. Paper presented at Symposium conducted at the annual meeting of the American educational research association. For many children, school is the primary place where they have rich encounters with literacy. For other children, the literacy activities they engage in outside of school are more interesting, more challenging, and more motivating than those available in their school settings. The existence of rich opportunities for literacy engagement outside of school could be exploited to support school learning, but the children whose reading and writing occur mostly in school need particular attention and support.

Rogers, A. (2005). Literacy and productive skills training: embedded literacies. DVV: Adult Education & Development, 65, Retrieved from http://www.iiz-dvv.de/index.php?article_id=225&clang=1

Rogers, M. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, (2011). Fast facts: literacy, women and poverty. Retrieved from <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/commentary/fast-facts-literacy-women-and-poverty>

This fast fact sheet explains that women are at multiple risk for exclusion from "full participation in economy and society" if they are at the lowest two levels of literacy, and even more so if they are Aboriginal or immigrant.

Sénéchal, M., National Center for Family Literacy, (2005). The effect of family literacy interventions on children's acquisition of reading from kindergarten to grade 3.

This review focuses on intervention studies that tested whether parent-child reading activities would enhance children's reading acquisition. The combined results for the 16 intervention studies, representing 1,340 families, were clear: Parent involvement has a positive effect on children's reading acquisition. Further analyses revealed that interventions in which parents tutored their children using specific literacy activities produced larger effects than those in which parents listened to their children read books.

Statistics Canada, (2009). Incarceration of aboriginal people in adult correctional services. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/090721/dq090721b-eng.htm>

Age, level of education, and employment status can partially explain the representation of Aboriginal adults incarcerated in Canadian prisons, according to a new study that used data from the Integrated Correctional Service Survey and the 2006 Census to analyze factors that could be contributing to the representation of Aboriginal adults in custody.

Statistics Canada, (2010). *Satellite account of non-profit institutions and volunteering.*

Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/101217/dq101217b-eng.htm>

This report highlights the economic value and impact of non-profit institutions in Canada.

Statistics Canada, Canadian Social Trends. (2008). Inuit language indicators for inuit children under the age of six in Canada. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2008002/article/10712-eng.htm>

Torjman, S. (2008). *Poverty policy.* Ottawa, Ontario: Retrieved from <http://www.caledoninst.org/Publications/PDF/720ENG.pdf>

Any serious poverty strategy must be composed of a set of core public policies related to affordable housing, early childhood development, education and training, income security, asset creation and social infrastructure. But any comprehensive poverty strategy must also recognize and should provide support for the wide range of efforts in communities that are making critical contributions through their collaborative efforts, innovative interventions and policy impact.

Tremblay, C. (2009). *Advancing the social economy for socio-economic development: international perspectives.* (p. 44). Public Policy Facilitating Committee of the Canadian Social Economy Hub. Retrieved from <http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/files/ccednet/AdvancingtheSocialEconomy.pdf>

This review highlights international public policies (from academic and practitioner sources) that use the Social Economy as a framework to enhance socio-economic and environmental conditions. The review aims to capture information on ways governments are creating new policy instruments that strengthens the Social Economy in response to challenges such as poverty, social exclusion, income inequality, urban decline, unemployment, environmental and ecological degradation, and community sustainability.

Tulloch, S. Nunavut Literacy Council, (2009). *Building a strong foundation considerations to support thriving bilingualism in Nunavut.* This paper summarizes results from the Nunavut Literacy Council's literature review and field research on bilingual language development in Nunavut. It makes the links between current research, policy, and practice in Nunavut and, based on these, provides points of consideration for policy makers, programmers, and practitioners on how to develop a strong foundation for bilingualism in Nunavut.

World Bank, (2008). *Why does literacy matter?* Retrieved from <http://youthink.worldbank.org/issues/education/why-does-literacy-matter>

Those of us fortunate enough to be literate often take many of its benefits for granted. Have you ever stopped to imagine a life without reading? Apart from depriving a person of great literature, the Web, and newspapers, illiteracy makes many everyday matters hugely challenging.

UNESCO, (2005). *Education for life: literacy for all*. Retrieved from <http://www.uis.unesco.org/Library/Documents/gmr06-en.pdf>

This fourth annual Education for All Global Monitoring Report, invites us to give renewed and bold attention to the global literacy challenge. There are good reasons why literacy is at the core of Education for All (EFA) – a good quality basic education equips pupils with literacy skills for life and further learning; literate parents are more likely to send their children to school; literate people are better able to access continuing education opportunities; and literate societies are better geared to meet pressing development challenges.

UNESCO, (2008). *The global literacy challenge. a profile of youth and adult literacy at the mid-point of the united nations literacy decade 2003 – 2012*. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001631/163170e.pdf>

This report reflects on progress that has been made halfway through the United Nations Literacy Decade, and calls on a stronger basis for action on literacy. The report also demonstrates the need for more integration of literacy learning with poverty reduction strategies.

UNESCO, (2001). *International workshop on education and poverty eradication*. Uganda: Retrieved from www.unesco.org/education/poverty/news.shtml

This study on children in abject poverty in Uganda was undertaken to identify the problems hidden by the fact that the children in poverty are invisible; yet by the very nature of their situation, they are included among those that are classified as the poor in Uganda. Children are subsumed within the poverty categories most often referred to such as households, communities, people – which means that there is a high tendency to focus on adult-related poverty while child poverty is ignored, partly because children have little power and influence within a group that contains adults. Interventions such as universal primary education (UPE) face monumental challenges reaching children in abject poverty.

van der berg, S. Education Policy Series, (2008). *Poverty and education*. Retrieved from http://www.iiep.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Info_Services_Publications/pdf/2009/EdPol10.pdf

Two consistent research findings in the social sciences relate to the relationship between economic and education variables, and therefore between education and poverty. Educational research has consistently found home background (socioeconomic status) to be an important determinant of educational outcomes, and economic research has shown that education strongly affects earnings.