



MEETING SD 44-20-24

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2024
DET'ANCHOGH KÙÉ - EAGLE ROOM / ZOOM
1:30 PM**

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Review and Adoption of Agenda
4. Declarations of Conflict of Interest
5. Public Matters
 - a) Public Briefing on Housing as a Human Right with Housing Rights Canada
 - b) Public Briefing on Food Security with Food Banks Canada
 - c) Public Briefing on Food Security with Nutrition North
6. In Camera Matters
 - a) Debrief
 - b) Workplan
7. New Business
 - a)
8. Date and Time of Next Meetings:
 - a) Friday, December 6, 2024 at 900AM
9. Adjournment

Application of the Right to Housing

Margaret Flynn, Director of Policy and Law Reform

December 4, 2024



Key Points

1. Right to housing framework
2. Applying the framework
3. Recommendations for renters' rights

Right to housing framework

The right to housing framework

All Canadian governments have a duty to use **maximum available resources** to **work towards progressively realizing** the right to housing.

Prioritize the groups most in need

Plan for the long term

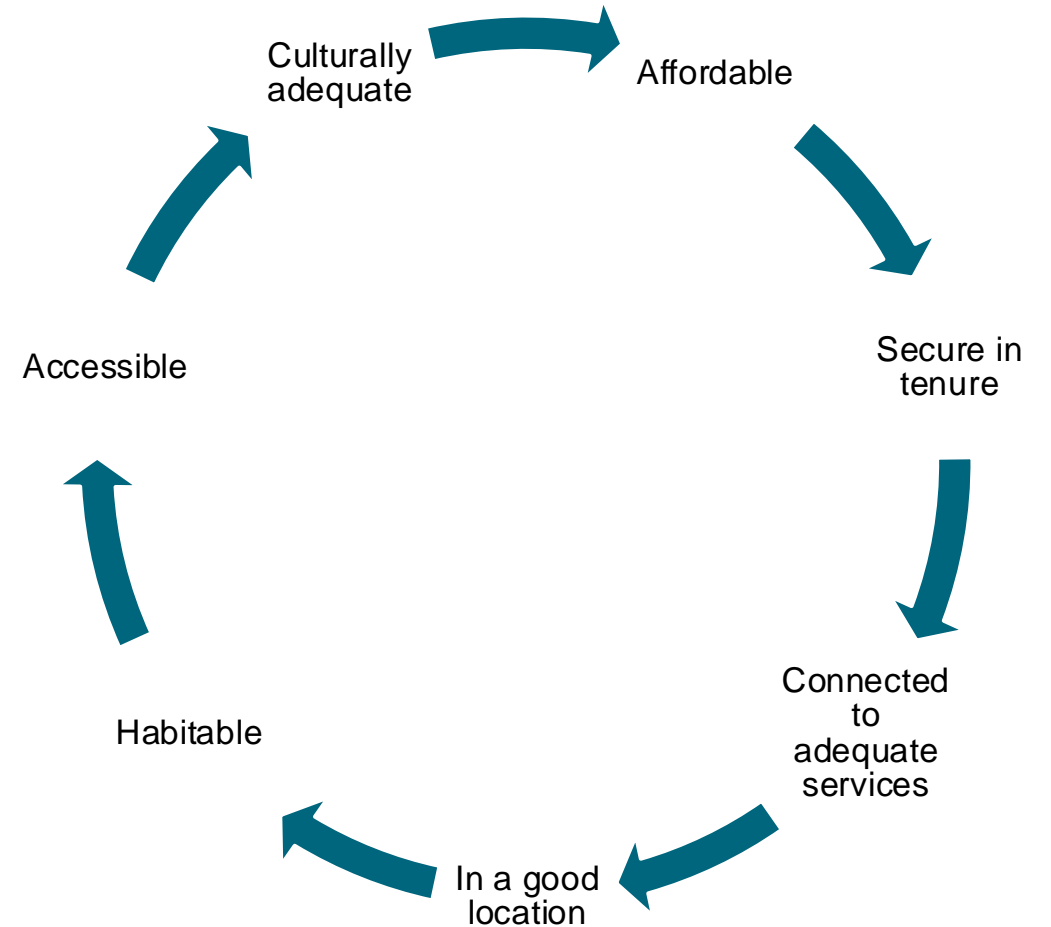
Use maximum available resources

Implement plans swiftly

Engage meaningfully

The right to housing framework

The right to housing means everyone should have a **safe** and **adequate** home that is:





The right to housing framework

Housing should be offered in a **dignified, non-discriminatory** way.

People should have **access to justice** with regard to their housing.

Applying the framework

Applying the framework

The Northwest Territories government can:

- Use the framework to help analyze where existing laws, policies and government approaches have gaps.
- Look to how others have used the framework in, for example:
 - Community engagement & advocacy
 - Legal challenges

Applying the framework

Analyzing existing laws and policies

- Was this law/policy/approach developed after **meaningful engagement** with the people most impacted?
- Does this law/policy/approach:
 - **Prioritize** the needs of those most impacted?
 - Promote **safe and adequate** housing?
 - Promote housing that is affordable, secure, habitable, accessible, close to services, in an acceptable location, culturally appropriate?
 - Treat people in a **dignified** and **non-discriminatory** way with regard to housing?
 - Offer a plan for monitoring and enforcement?
 - Use maximum available resources for housing for the most vulnerable people?

The right to housing framework in action



The right to housing at the territorial level

Review laws and policies around housing and homelessness, including:

- Rental housing
- Shelters and transition homes
- Alternatives to affordable rentals (home ownership programs, etc.)

Ask questions from a right to housing framework:

- Do these laws and policies work towards (or against) the right to housing?
- Do these laws and policies reflect consultation with those most affected?
- Do these laws and policies direct maximum available resources towards affordable and adequate housing, and do they prioritize people who are most vulnerable?
- Where new laws and policies are needed?

The right to housing at the territorial level

Rights-based territorial housing approaches

How/where the territorial government can have the most direct impact:

- Affordable housing preservation and development
- Renter protections and supports
- Ensuring access to justice
- Public consultations

Indigenous and
community
partnerships

Culturally
supportive
housing

Rent
regulations

Rental
assistance
programs

Access to
justice

Advocacy and political pressure

Communities can use right to housing language to call governments to account.

One level of government can also use right to housing language to call another level of government to account.

Individuals, groups, and First Nations, Inuit and Métis nations and governments can also call on the Federal Housing Advocate to investigate a systemic housing problem, report on it, and make recommendations to the federal government about it.

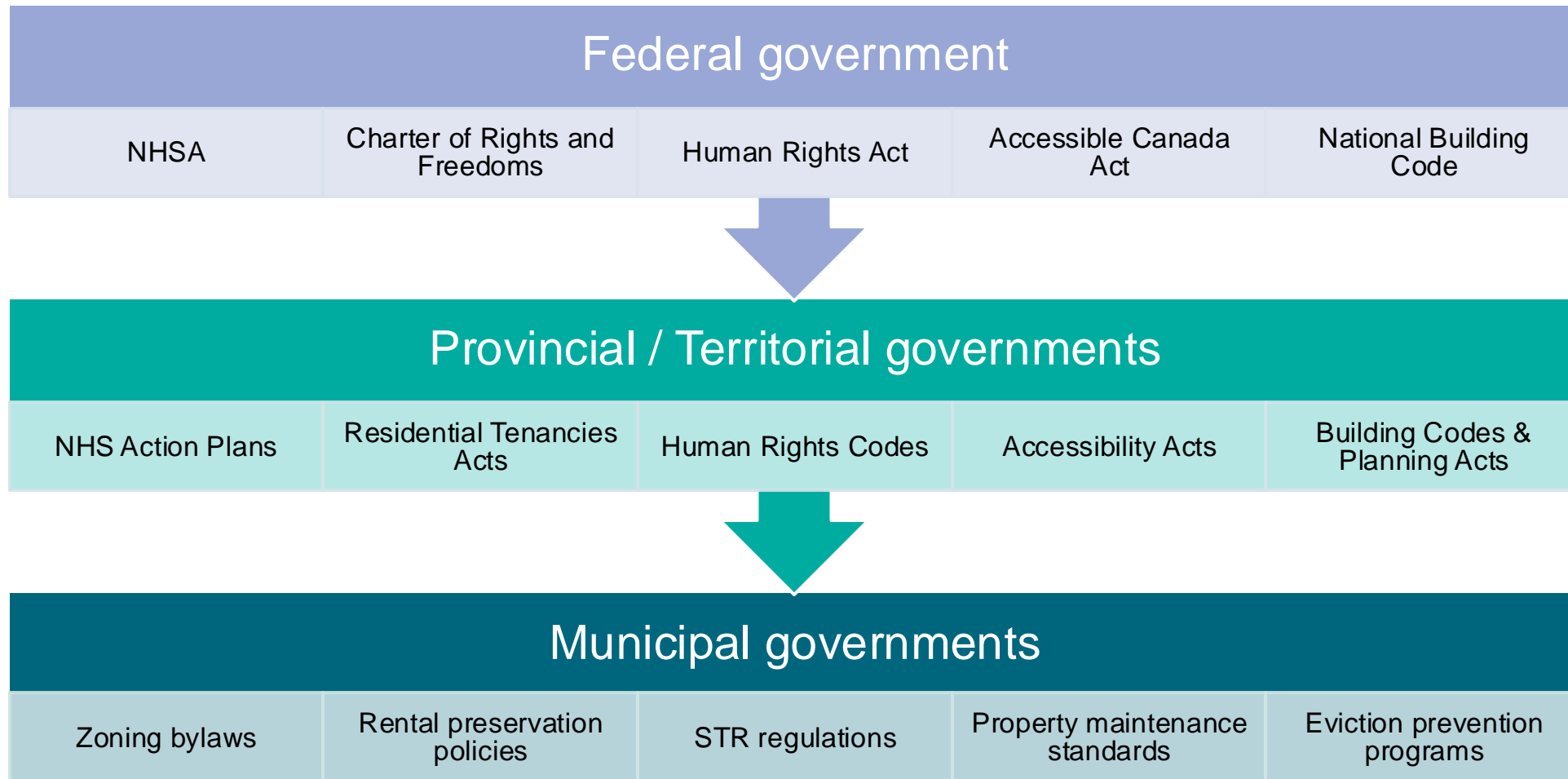
Legal framework

Certain right to housing principles are also protected in various laws:

- The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*
 - Right to life, liberty and security of person
 - Right to be free from discrimination
- The *NWT Human Rights Code*
 - Right to have access to and enjoy housing, free from discrimination
- The *NWT Residential Tenancies Act*
 - Right to safe (well maintained) housing
 - Rights around eviction
- Other safety and zoning laws and bylaws

While bringing a complaint about a violation of one of these laws, one can also refer to principles in the *National Housing Strategy Act*, and international laws and principles around the right to housing.

Legal framework



Legal framework: Application

Courts in Waterloo and Kingston, Ontario, found that municipalities cannot evict residents of homeless encampments unless they have first offered them “truly accessible” accommodation alternatives. Otherwise, they would be in breach of section 7 of the *Charter* (the right to life, liberty and security of the person).

Accommodation alternatives must be low barrier and meet the **individual** needs of people experiencing homelessness. Standard shelters will not work for everyone.

Truly accessible accommodation alternatives should offer:

- Daytime sheltering;
- Space for couples or families;
- Space for pets;
- Accommodations for people who use substances, and for people who need to be distanced from substances;
- Storage space for belongings;
- Safeguards for personal security.

Recommendations for renters' rights

Affordability

- Right to an affordable rent
 - Rent increases by a guideline percentage only, reflecting the cost of living
 - Guideline applied to units rather than tenants (i.e., rent control and vacancy control)
 - Above-guideline increases allowed in extremely rare circumstances only: should require specific approval of the Northwest Territories Rental Office in a process that tenants participate in; should require clear proof of landlord expense; and should never exceed a maximum percentage threshold set in legislation
 - Enact a primary residence requirement for short-term rentals

Security of tenure, and location

- Right to protection against unnecessary, unfair and/or automatic eviction
 - Evictions as a last resort only
 - Strong protections for people facing gender-based violence
- Right to remain in the rental unit through continuing tenancies
 - No fixed term leases
 - Protections around redevelopment (including continuing tenancies)
 - Ability of non-named occupants to stay on
- Right to sublet and assign a rental to another renter
- Right to have guests and roommates

Habitability and access to services

- Right to timely repairs and maintenance
 - *Onus on landlord to do the repairs, not on tenant to report the need*
- Right to essential services: drinking water, sanitation, heating/cooling, etc.
- Right to housing that is resilient against the effects of climate change, and that incorporates Indigenous and community knowledge



Accessibility and cultural adequacy

- Right to accessible and culturally adequate housing
- Right to accommodations and/or adaptations for accessibility and cultural adequacy



Equity/equality

- Right to equitable treatment in accessing and maintaining housing – at both the individual but also systemic level

Access to justice

- Right to transparency in rental pricing and landlord information
 - Rental registry
- Right to clear, accessible legal information and supports
- Right to legal counsel
- Right to effective, procedurally fair dispute resolution
- Right to effective, timely enforcement of rights which recognizes the imbalance of power between landlords and tenants, includes strong accountability and enforcement mechanisms, and places the onus wherever possible on housing providers to prove that they are following the rules – instead of on tenants to advocate for their rights
- Right to a landlord who knows the law
- Right for tenants to organize and collectively bargain without penalty

Thank you!

Keep in touch



[HousingRightsCanada.com](https://www.HousingRightsCanada.com)



[@HousingRightsCA](https://twitter.com/HousingRightsCA)



[@ CanadianCentreforHousingRights](https://www.facebook.com/CanadianCentreforHousingRights)



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Food Banks
Canada

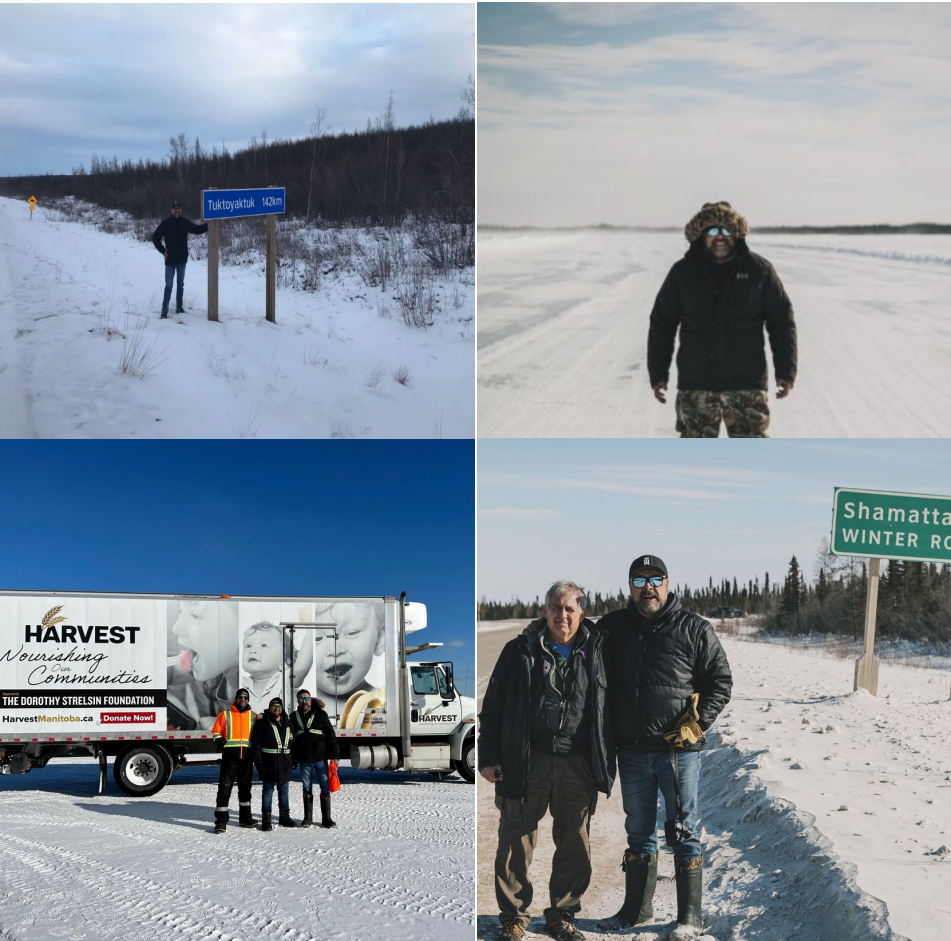


Banques alimentaires
Canada

Northern Programs

Northern Network Manager

Jason Stevens



**First Nation Swampy Cree
from Sapotaweyak Cree
Nation in the Treaty #4
Territory.**

**Background in First
Nation Education and
Human Resource
Management.**

**Knowledge and
experience in working
with and addressing food
insecurity issues on
Indigenous communities
and organizations.**

**Collaborating to support
community led food
security initiatives.**

Hunger is a big problem in Canada



There has been a

90%

increase in food bank visits since 2019¹

The highest number in history.

8.7 M People live in households that report some form of food insecurity²

29% worry about feeding themselves.³

This stat jumps to:

41% for racialized people.³

Over **2 million**

visits to food banks in March 2024¹

40% receive social assistance or disability-related support¹

33% are children¹

18% are employed¹

28M lbs of food distributed by Food Banks Canada in FY⁴23⁴

¹ Food Banks Canada, 2024 HungerCount

² Statistics Canada. Canadian Income Survey, 2022. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240426/dq240426a-eng.htm>

³ National poll of a representative sample of Canadians (N=4089) conducted by Pollara from March 22 to April 5, 2023 on behalf of FBC

⁴ Food Banks Canada, Annual Report FY24

Food Banks Canada's unique role

Relieve Hunger Today.



End Hunger Tomorrow.



Sourcing food to share

Procured Food

Pledged Production
After the Bell
Marketplace
Emergency Response
For GOOD Foundation

Recovered Food

National Food Sharing System
Food Transformation
Food System Research and
Greenhouse Gas Calculator



Supporting the network

Food Bank Network Investment

E-learning
Workplace
National Conference
National Logistics
Standards
Capacity Boost
Northern Food Security
Access



Conducting research

Research

Network Survey
Participatory Action Survey
Population-based Surveys
HungerCount
Material Deprivation Index
Mapping
Accessibility and Equity Guide
Link2Feed

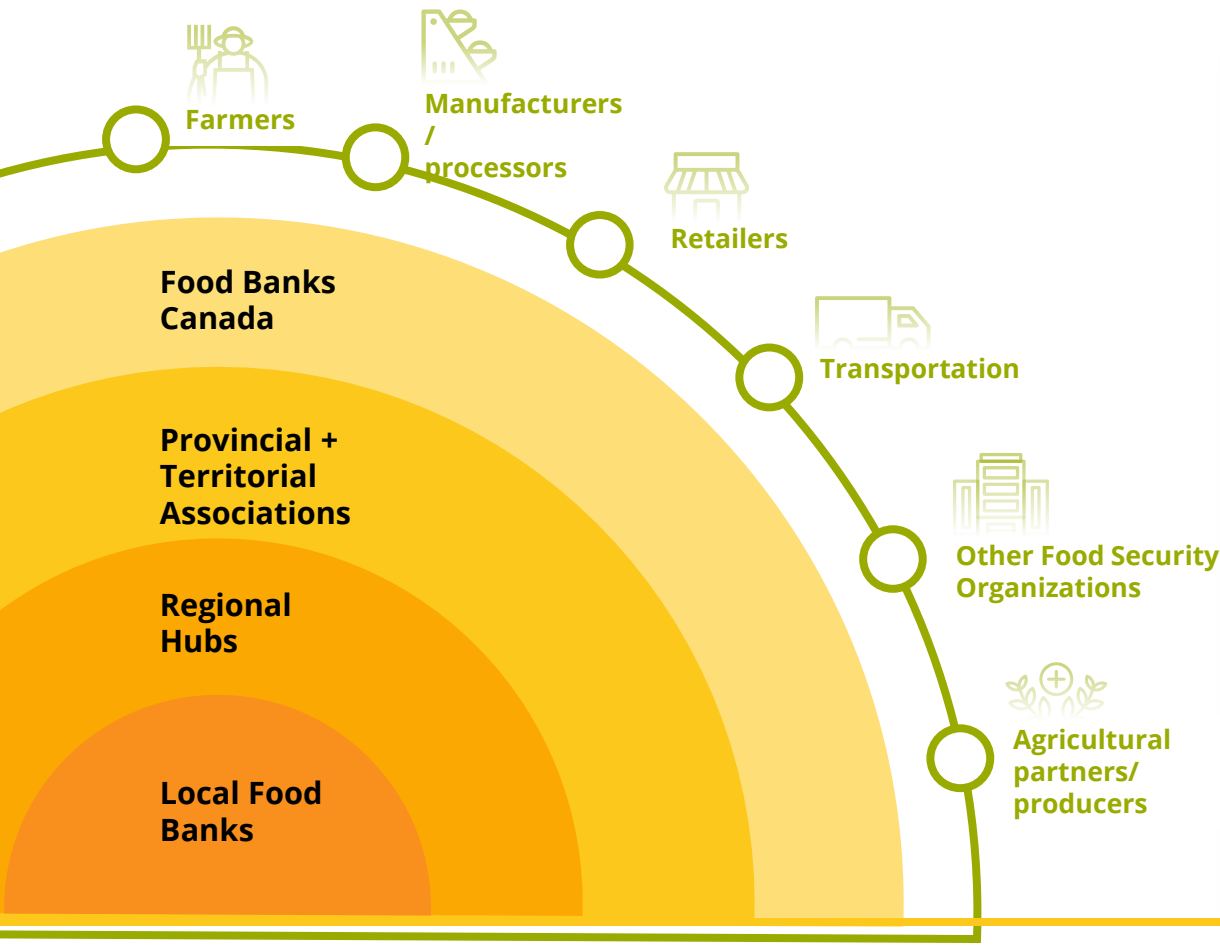


Advocating for policy change

Advocacy

National Advocacy
Poverty Report Cards
Advocacy Toolkits
Government Relations Updates
Advocacy Training
Policy Research and
Recommendations
Tax Clinics

Food Banks Canada – The Network



Food Banks Canada

Works with national corporations and organizations to secure food and funds for a network for 4750 food bank organizations

Provincial Associations

Work with provincial organizations and corporations to secure food and funds for food banks in their province

Regional Hubs

Within each province, hubs work as central distribution points to move food that has been secured nationally and provincially. In some cases hubs also work to secure and share food regionally

Local Food Banks

Acquire food locally and deliver food directly to clients and/or community agencies who provide direct support

Our approach so that no one is left behind

ENGAGEMENT

Encourage and galvanize stakeholders to work together in the movement to end hunger across the country

Increase awareness of food insecurity and poverty

Invest in stigma-busting campaigns

ACCESS

Expanding infrastructure to supply people with nutritious food when and where they need it

Expand Northern food bank network from 4 to 25

Increase perishable food distribution to 60%



ADVOCACY

Championing social policy change to advance support for vulnerable populations

Implement a new policy scoreboard to fully track the progress of policies

Organize 9 advocacy events and start a food security coalition

Our Initiatives & Programs

Emergency Response

This program will help secure 50,000 food packs, strategically staged throughout the country, to respond swiftly when food banks are impacted by disaster. The goal of this program is to deliver emergency support within 48 hours of an event and through recovery.

Food for All

Our food-centered programs focus on recovering and procuring food nationally to share equitably with those in need across Canada. The goal of this program is to provide over 33M lbs of food to communities in need, across the country.

Capacity Boost

This granting program will expand the food bank network's capacity to accept, distribute, grow, or safely handle/store perishable food, so food banks can meet the increased demand for support.

The goal of this program is to increase the volume of perishable food distributed through the food banking network.



Northern Food Security

This program will support Indigenous/community-led initiatives to promote food sovereignty in remote and Indigenous communities. The goal of this program is to fund sustainable programs that increase food security in Northern communities and support the Northern Advisory Committee to build a network to share knowledge and resources.

Improving Access

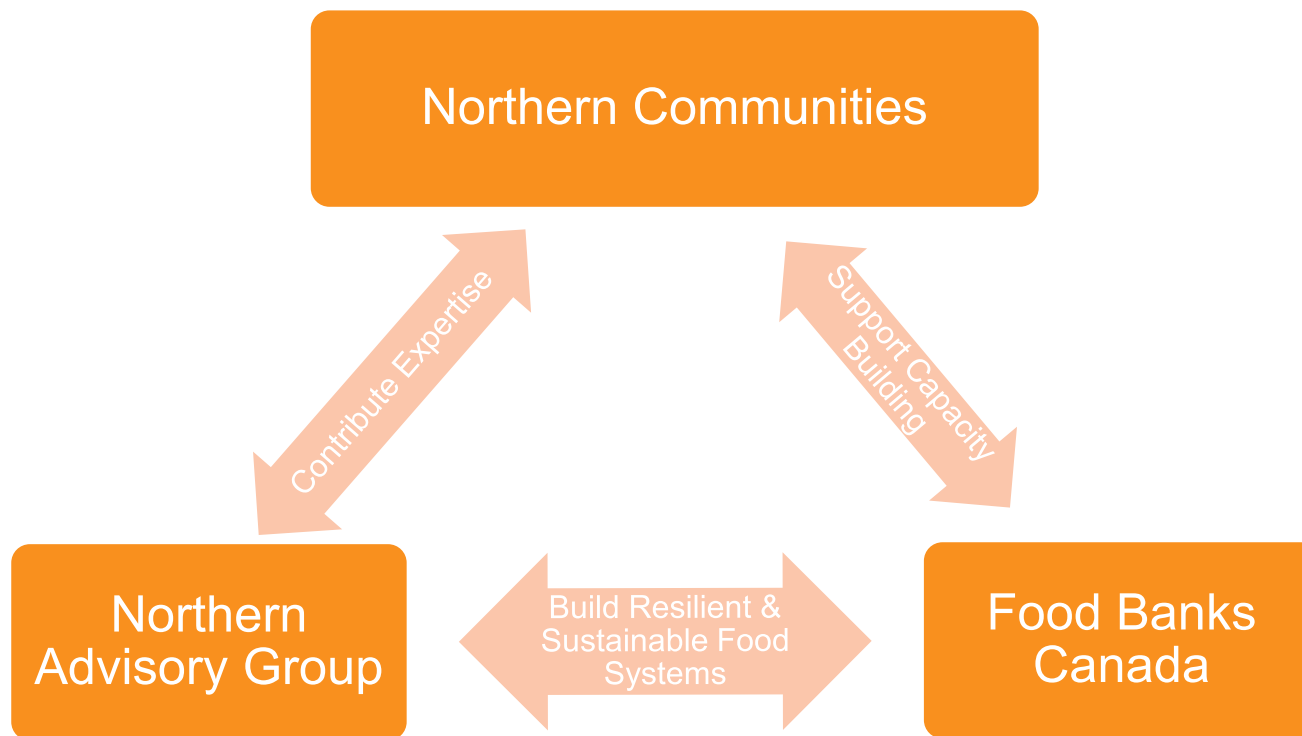
This granting program will focus on breaking down barriers, by helping the food bank network reach more people to ensure all those experiencing food insecurity can access food. The goal of this program is to reach more people by helping local food banks remove barriers to service

After the Bell

This program provides nutritious, child-friendly food packs throughout the summer when school-centered supports are not available.

The goal for Summer 2025 is to provide 215,000 nutritious food packs to children in 235 communities across the country.

NORTHERN FOOD SECURITY



Between 2021 and 2022, food insecurity in the territories jumped from 26% of households to 36%. This compares to 23% in the provinces in 2022. Northwest Territories have the second-highest among the territories with 26.4% food insecurity. Unfortunately, food insecurity rates on reserves are not collected, but are likely much worse.¹

Policy Recommendations

Addressing Northern and Remote Food Insecurity and Poverty

Our Recommendations

01

Examine options for improving the design of the Northern Residents Deduction (NRD).

Making it a progressive, refundable deduction would better help those in need and reduce poverty in areas where it is highest, while maintaining a basic degree of assistance for all Northerners in recognition of the differential cost of living. If developed properly, the new and improved NRD could be the basis for a regional minimum income floor.

02

In collaboration with Indigenous communities and organizations, the government must continue to review Nutrition North Canada to determine why the program is only minimally achieving its objectives of reducing the cost of food in the North and explore innovative ways in which the program can better support communities.

03

Working in partnership with local groups, create a Canada-wide Northern development and revitalization plan that is focused on the research and development of regional programs that aim to train workers and grow commerce in strategic economic sectors like tourism, natural resources, and local/regional business.

As part of this plan, work with territorial and Indigenous governments to develop a long-term community infrastructure vision that will close gaps in access to housing, food production, and broadband Internet to ensure a degree of parity with the standard of living that Canadians in the south enjoy.

04

Develop funding for a national program of community-based representatives whose focus is on connecting their communities to funds and resources that are available to communities in the North but too often go unused because of lack of awareness. These representatives would provide an opportunity for knowledge sharing between communities across the North.

05

As part of the federal government's Critical Minerals Strategy, there must be a clear focus on the development of community infrastructure in Northern communities – for example, housing, educational institutions, and broadband Internet – so that local residents benefit from these resource projects; and the development of incentives and strategies to retain capital in the North and reduce the reliance on temporary workers.

06

Offer additional training for remote work skills and funding for the procurement of work-from-home supplies.



Questions?

Thank You



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada

Nutrition North Canada

December 2024



Canada

Food Security

- Food insecurity is a complex issue, primarily driven by poverty. While it exists in urban areas, it is more prevalent in northern communities due to factors like isolation, lack of infrastructure, and economic challenges, which exacerbate the problem.
- The challenges of the North are vast, and no single entity has the capacity to address economic development and food insecurity alone. A coordinated, whole-of-government approach is essential to tackle these issues – led by Indigenous partners in a manner that centers self-determination, cultural revitalization, and made-in-the-North solutions.



Nutrition North Canada & Food Security

Learn how the expansion of **Nutrition North Canada** is helping to strengthen food security in the North

Nutrition North Canada is a **key piece** of the federal government's food security response in northern communities



RETAIL SUBSIDY

Extend subsidy to include local food producers, charitable organizations and food banks.



HARVESTERS SUPPORT GRANT

More grant funding, broader support for local food production, including food and harvesting infrastructure.



COMMUNITY FOOD PROGRAMS FUND

A dedicated fund to support a variety of community-led food security activities for retail, locally grown, and country food.



NUTRITION EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Continue to support culturally appropriate and community-based nutrition education activities.



FOOD SECURITY RESEARCH GRANT

A dedicated grant to support research to gather new information for supporting food security in the North.



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

NNC RETAIL SUBSIDY

- The retail subsidy applies to a wide range of nutritious foods, including those that are fresh and perishable. The program also subsidizes certain essential items like diapers, non-prescription drugs and menstrual hygiene products. The subsidy is applied to eligible items shipped by air, barge/sealift, and ground transportation to isolated communities.
- Customers in [eligible communities](#) can purchase subsidized food from registered retailers or directly from registered suppliers. These businesses must pass on the full subsidy to consumers.
 - NNC is committed to continuous improvement and is currently working with academic and Indigenous partners on improving the subsidy and increasing the transparency and accountability of the subsidy.



NNC Subsidy: Food Banks

- During the pandemic, NNC played a key role in connecting remote communities with food banks to meet essential needs.
- Recognizing the opportunity for immediate impact, NNC partnered with food banks and non-profits to develop more sustainable food security solutions.
- Since 2022, NNC has added three food banks—Harvest Manitoba, Second Harvest, and the Regional Food Distribution Association—to the subsidy program, shipping over 100,000 KGs of donated food to isolated communities.
- NNC is also fostering partnerships between Indigenous governments, organizations, and non-profits to expand and strengthen the Northern food network.



The Harvesters Support Grant (HSG)

- Launched in 2019, the Harvesters Support Grant supports hunting, harvesting, and food sharing activities across 112 isolated communities that lack surface access for more than 8 months at a time.
- The Grant is built in collaboration with land claim, self government and Indigenous organizations, who led in the design and implementation of the Grant.
- The design of the Grant prioritizes local control and traditional decision making, and it ensures the Government is an enabler, not the lead on how funds should be allocated.
- It's designed as a Grant (not a contribution), which allows for funding flexibility and minimal reporting requirements.



HSG Expansions: New Community Food Programs Fund (CFPF)

- Launched in August 2022, the CFPF was added as a new component under the Harvesters Support Grant to support food sharing networks.
- The CFPF supports the sharing of food with those most in need in the community and includes:
 - Expanded support for food-related minor infrastructure (storage and distribution) and repair of equipment and renovation of facilities for food purposes
 - Support for local food programs, including school lunch, elders meal programs, local food banks, etc.
 - Support for buying clubs, revolving loan funds for food purchasing, etc.
 - Support for community kitchens, individuals who prepare meals for elders
 - Support for those that travel the winter road to shop for others in the city or for chartered food delivery
 - Support for pilot projects and other innovations addressing food security



Governance

Nutrition North Canada Advisory Board

The Ministerial Advisory Board provides information and advice to the Minister of Northern Affairs to help guide the direction and activities of the NNC program, and to ensure that northern residents receive its full benefits. In doing so, the Advisory Board supports the program deliver the retail subsidy within budget.

Indigenous Working Group

Nutrition North Canada's Indigenous Working Group was launched in May 2017. It provides Indigenous partners with an opportunity to collaboratively develop updates and improvements to Nutrition North Canada, so that it better serves eligible communities.

Inuit-Crown Food Security Working Group

The Inuit-Crown Food Security Working Group was announced in December 2018 as part of the Inuit Crown Partnership Committee. This working group was created to focus on food security and work towards a sustainable food system in Inuit Nunangat. Nutrition North Canada continues to work closely with the Inuit-Crown Food Security Working Group to help support the unique challenges of Inuit communities.

NNC Subsidy: Constant Improvement



1. Research Grant

- \$1.5 million over two years, aimed at improving the subsidy program.
- Allows academics to partner with communities to research food security solutions that align with local priorities.
- Research must involve Indigenous stakeholders or be conducted in partnership with Indigenous communities. The research will address data gaps on the cost of living, particularly in northern areas, and inform future program expansions. In June 2023, five projects were awarded grant funding. Final reports are expected in March 2025.



2. Academic Study:

- NNC is working with Professor Fred Lazar from York University to examine subsidy operations and passthrough, and produce recommendations to strengthen the accountability and compliance mechanisms of the Program.



3. External Evaluation:

- In October 2024, the Minister of Northern Affairs announced that a Ministerial Special Representative will be appointed in early 2025 to launch an external review of the NNC program.
- The Ministerial Special Representative will meet with national and regional Indigenous organizations and stakeholders, as well as relevant federal government organizations to evaluate NNC's effectiveness, and to make recommendations on how to improve it.

Questions? Comments?

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Nutrition North Canada

