

## Thematic Brief

### Social Inclusion

The Social Inclusion theme refers to government services, non-profit sector, community inclusion networks, overall participation in society and recreation.

You may choose to answer one or more of the questions. You may answer directly in the questionnaire and use as many pages as you need. You may also submit a separate document on the topic.

Once the questionnaire is completed, please send it to [esic-sies@gnb.ca](mailto:esic-sies@gnb.ca) or the following mailing address:

Kings Place  
Room: 423 Floor: 4  
P. O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, NB  
E3B 5H1  
Canada

As you are reviewing the questions related to Social Inclusion, we encourage you to consider:

1. The Spirit of the Overcoming Poverty Together Plan
  - At the heart of Overcoming Poverty Together is the desire for every New Brunswicker to be included and to have the opportunity to thrive. True economic and social inclusion cannot be reached without addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and those who are at risk of falling into poverty.
2. That economic and social inclusion means the ability of a person to participate fully in the economic and social activities of society.
3. That poverty means the condition of a person who lacks the resources, means, opportunities and power necessary to acquire and maintain economic and self-sufficiency or to integrate into and participate in society.
4. The realities experienced by people living in poverty or at risk of falling into poverty.
5. The different levels of intervention (local, provincial and national) that impact poverty and inclusion.
6. The cross-sectoral approach necessary for defining the problems and identifying solutions.

The information that you submit will be disseminated and analyzed as part of the Overcoming Poverty Together Plan renewal. Participation in the process is voluntary and the information received during the public engagement process is designed to be collected and

reported on anonymously. You are not required to provide your identifying information in order to submit a brief, but we welcome submissions with names and contact information that will allow us to reach out for additional thoughts and collaboration. We will make every effort to preserve anonymity and dignity throughout this process.

Thank you for seizing the opportunity to be part of renewing the plan to overcome poverty and increase economic and social inclusion in New Brunswick.

**New Brunswick's Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation**

## **Additional Context Related to Social Inclusion in New Brunswick**

### **Government Services**

People experiencing poverty may have difficulty accessing government programs and services. Many of them are discouraged by the complexity of the administrative procedures to apply for assistance or to access the financial programs and tax credits to which they are entitled.

Non-take up means not applying for the help you need and are entitled to. Lack of information about available programs and services, difficulty in understanding them, processing times, and modes of communication are among the main difficulties encountered.

People experiencing poverty often express the need for support in accessing government programs and services. Barriers include inadequate literacy, distance from government offices, the requirements to fill out too many forms, a reluctance to disclose personal information, a general distrust of government and overlapping programs across departments and levels of government.

### **Non-Profit Sector**

The non-profit sector is a very important part of New Brunswick's economic and social fabric. Non-profit institutions provide goods and services, including health care, education, and housing, especially to lower-income groups. They also improve the functioning of other sectors and enhance socio-economic well-being.

Statistics Canada provides information about the different classifications of non-profit institutions including:

Business non-profit institutions include organisations such as chambers of commerce, business associations, protection services, and condominium associations. These organizations do not fall under the direct control of the government, offer goods and services at low cost, and are constrained in their ability to redistribute any surplus they may generate.

Community non-profit institutions include organisations that provide services such as community food services, community housing, emergency relief, religious organisations, advocacy, and sports and recreation. These organisations are not heavily influenced by the government and provide goods and services to households for free or at minimal cost.

Government non-profit institutions include hospitals, universities, and colleges. These organisations are self-governing and exist independently of the government, but are heavily influenced by it.<sup>1</sup>

### **Community Inclusion Networks**

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<sup>1</sup> [Overview of the Non-Profit Sector in Canada, 2010 to 2020 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/28-263-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm)

The objectives of the 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs), established in 2011, are to identify, through a collaborative process, regional poverty issues and priorities; and to develop and implement regional poverty reduction plans that are tailored to local needs and align with the Overcoming Poverty Together plan. The CINs, which became part of their respective Regional Service Commission (RSC) in 2023, are at the heart of building community capacity and raising the level of engagement through collective and collaborative impact. They play a coordination and collaboration role with local organizations and support them in the development and implementation of diverse community projects that promote economic and social inclusion with the aim of reducing poverty.

## **Participation and Recreation and Social Inclusion**

The United Nations has included social inclusion as a primary focus in the drafting of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Indeed, by committing to leaving no one behind and reaching those that were furthest behind first, the signatories to the pledge are recognizing the corrosive effect of social exclusion. We are all too aware that when people feel a disconnection from the opportunities to fully participate in society the consequences of inequality can be devastating. Social discontent and crime, disease and poverty tend to increase while trust in government tends to decrease. Inequality and social exclusion can destroy people's sense of fulfillment and self-worth.

We know that we must create the conditions that are necessary to enable inclusive communities to flourish. Enabling communities to flourish means reducing the barriers to social inclusion. This may mean investing in sports equipment at local libraries or providing funds to cultural groups that assist newcomers with settling in the province.

There are many examples around the province of programs and services that promote social inclusion. However, we know that there are also gaps that exist.

## **Questions Relating to Social Inclusion**

### **Government Services**

1. In your opinion what are the difficulties encountered by people experiencing poverty in relation to accessing government services?
2. What are the courses of action or potential solutions that could improve access to government services for people who are experiencing poverty?
3. What other points could you make in connection with access to government services as it relates to supporting people who are experiencing poverty?
4. In your opinion, do you think that certain population groups face greater barriers when it comes to accessing government services? And if so, which groups? And what additional solutions would you consider to reduce the barriers?

### **Social Inclusion**

5. When you think about the programs and services offered by the non-profit sector and the Community Inclusion Networks in New Brunswick what points can you make about their impact on social inclusion in our province?

6. In your opinion, do you think that certain population groups face greater barriers to social inclusion? And if so, which groups? And what additional solutions would you consider to reduce the barriers?
7. In your opinion, what could we do to increase social inclusion in New Brunswick?
8. Have you personally encountered a situation where you felt that you were not included in your community? What could have been done to better connect you to your community?
9. How important to social inclusion is the ability to participate in recreational activities? Do you think we are making progress on decreasing the barriers to participating in recreational activities? What barriers still exist and how would you tackle them?