



Alternatives North

GNWT Anti-Poverty Framework A Good Basis for Action

YELLOWKNIFE, NT (June 6, 2013)— The Government of the Northwest Territories' *Building on the Strengths of Northerners: A Framework for Action on Poverty*, released today, is a basis for moving forward on action to eliminate poverty in the territory.

"The Framework strengthens the understanding of poverty in the Northwest Territories," says Alternatives North spokesperson Julie Green. "Statistics show that 20 per cent of the population lives on an income of just over \$16,000 a year. Despite the diamond boom, unemployment remains high, especially in the small communities, and some people struggle to afford the basics," she added.

Alternatives North and 29 other organizations and community governments have been calling for an anti-poverty strategy since December 2009. They pointed to the growing disparity between high and low income earners and larger centres and small communities. Alternatives North participated in the public consultations, roundtables and committee work to complete the Framework on behalf of the No Place for Poverty alliance.

"The completion of the strategy is a step forward, but implementation will be the big test. We look forward to working with others on actions that will make a difference in the lives of people living on low incomes," says Ms. Green. "This is urgent work since we now know that the stress of poverty has serious health costs for adults and affects brain development in children."

The Framework is not everything Alternatives North recommended, but a compromise document achieved through lengthy and detailed discussions with the GNWT, business and the Aboriginal governments participating in the development process.

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