

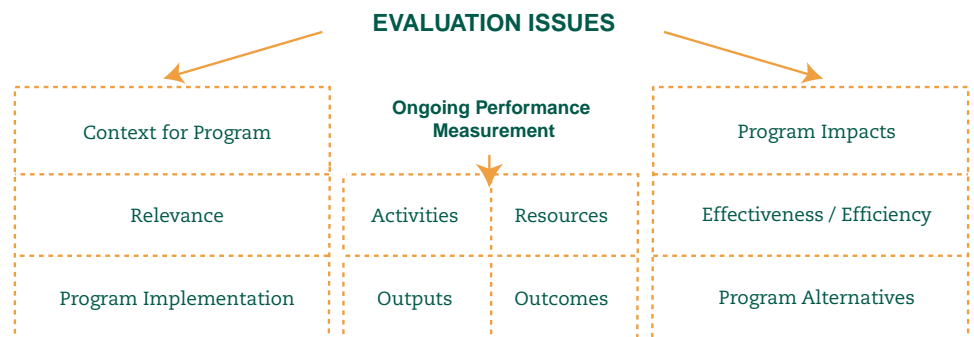
Ongoing monitoring and periodic evaluation of the National Child Benefit reflects the need for the program to meet departmental and Treasury Board accountability requirements. As well as for First Nations to have access to information to determine program performance. As the National Child Benefit reinvestment is administered separately from the federal-provincial-territorial program, a separate evaluation framework was developed to monitor and evaluate the First Nations National Child Benefit reinvestment component.



The approach taken in the evaluation process emphasizes a working relationship between INAC and First Nations. First Nations participation in the evaluation process includes working together with the Assembly of First Nations; First Nations members participating on the First Nations National Child Benefit Evaluation Working Group; First Nations communities developing projects that reflect their priorities and how they measure "success" through self-evaluation workshops; First Nations self-evaluations of their reinvestment projects; and First Nation members conducting interviews and facilitating dialogue circles for the interim and final evaluations.

THE EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework for the NCB for First Nations is made up of both ongoing performance measures and evaluation issues:



TYPES OF OUTCOMES INDICATORS

Short-term outcomes include:

- improved day care facilities
- increased school attendance
- increased level of support for parents

Medium-term outcomes include:

- improved child well-being
- improved parenting/life skills
- increased employment opportunities

Long-term outcomes include:

- reduction in the depth of child poverty
- increased attachment to the labour market for First Nations

Performance measurement is the ongoing process of measuring how well a particular program is achieving its goals. Ongoing performance measures serve community, regional and departmental needs for continuous data about program activities, outputs and outcomes.

Evaluation issues provide information about program rationale, objective achievement, impacts and effects, and program alternatives. Evaluation indicators are derived from evaluation issues and questions, and are intended to complement ongoing performance measures.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Information on the effectiveness of the National Child Benefit will be derived from four primary sources:

Ongoing monitoring - a continuous activity to provide information on program activities and outcomes;

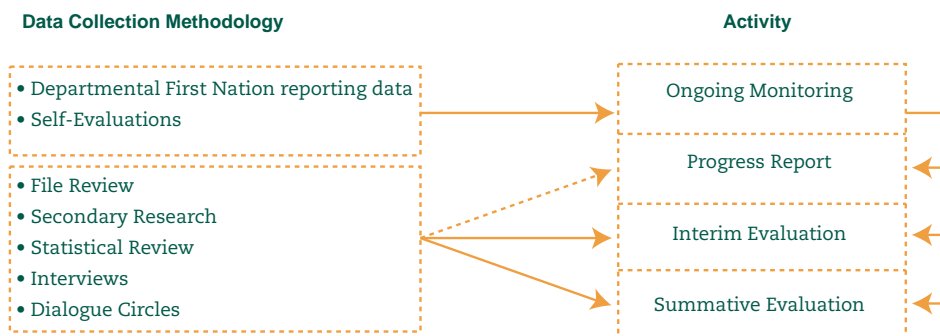
First Nations Progress Report - produced annually to share information with First Nation communities and the general public on the progress of the National Child Benefit;

Interim evaluation - to be completed May 31, 2001 to assess how well the program has been implemented, satisfaction with the program among participants and the short-term impacts; and

Summative evaluation - to be completed March 31, 2003 to assess the effectiveness and impacts of the program and to contribute to future policy recommendations.

The following table summarizes which data collection methodology corresponds to each activity. These common data collection methodologies for program evaluation are combined with culturally appropriate methods, such as dialogue circles and self-evaluations:

DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGY BY MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES



These programs are...like seed money and we're not too sure where its going to go, but I know one thing for sure, that without it we won't see them [children] blossom.

- Chief Victor York, Lower Nicola First Nation

THE SELF-EVALUATION PROCESS

Self-evaluations enable communities to evaluate their own projects using their own success criteria. The benefit of self-evaluations is that they measure the ongoing impact of the programs. They can also be used as a governance tool within communities and provide feedback into the policy process at INAC.

A process and guide for self-evaluating NCB reinvestment projects within First Nations communities was developed in 1999. This was presented in self-evaluation workshops with 18 participating First Nations communities representing all regions (except the Atlantic) in March 2000. In September 2000, all participating First Nations came together in Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatchewan to feed into the self-evaluation process - what worked what didn't.

In order to ensure ongoing First Nations feedback on the implementation of the NCB reinvestment component, in future years, the self-evaluation process will feed into the overall reporting procedure for the National Child Benefit. It is anticipated that the process will be implemented as a type of "rolling" evaluation, whereby First Nations from each region will be selected at different intervals to undertake a self-evaluation, use the information at the community level and submit the report to the Department to be included in the annual First Nations Progress Report.

The following First Nations communities contributed to the self-evaluation process during the last year:

OPASKWAYAK CREE NATION (OCN), MANITOBA

The OCN has established a number of programs to encourage youth in their educational endeavours. By developing work-related skills in dependent children of families on social assistance, the *High School Summer Student Program* provides summer work experience to children between the ages of 14 and 17 attending or returning to high school. Providing financial sponsorship and incentives, the *College Preparation Program* offers formal training opportunities to families with children seeking to upgrade their skills before entering post-secondary institutions.

LIARD FIRST NATION, YUKON

To address the lack of Kaska history in school text books, the *Elder Teachers in Elementary School Program* was initiated to provide a level of cultural awareness with the children and to bridge the gap between parents and the school system. The program brought an elder into the classroom to teach the children history and crafts and to become a positive role model. The children in the community look forward to the elder's teachings, and the community is looking to continue the program.

TSARTLIP FIRST NATION, BRITISH COLUMBIA

The development of the *SenĆoten Language Program* addressed the importance of reinforcing the SenĆoten culture. There are approximately 5,000 SenĆoten people living in Saanich First Nations, with only 70 people fluent in the language. Recently, there has been a resurgence of pride in the culture and a desire to speak the language again. The program was developed and offered to all surrounding communities and has provided an opportunity for community members to achieve a new awareness of the SenĆoten culture.

CARCROSS/TAGISH FIRST NATION, YUKON

The community used its National Child Benefit reinvestment funds to assist families with child care costs and to provide supplemental services to ensure quality care is provided. Services included the hiring of additional staff to improve the staff-to-child ratios for all age groups. The existing ratios are four infants, or six toddlers or six preschool age or eight school-aged children to one adult. The increased staff provides an increase in available services for children in a structured setting to prepare them for their entry into kindergarten.

KWANLIN DUN FIRST NATION, YUKON

Using reinvestment funds, the community set out to develop and implement seasonal recreational programming for the children and youth of Kwanlin Dun that were community-based and community driven. These programs were to be affordable, accessible to everyone, and culturally appropriate to the families within the community. This program was part of a larger strategy to support a community-based recreation council and to support opportunities for recreation and leadership training for youth and adults with children in the community. Resulting activities include a youth drop-in centre, an alternative kindergarten program, a summer recreation and youth leadership project, and other generally seasonally based recreational activities (e.g., education, cultural, community development).

TIMISKAMING FIRST NATION, QUEBEC

Reinvestment strategies for this community include *Youth Social Dinners*, *Social and Vocational Training*, *Pidaban Child Care Centre* and *Life-skills and Language* activities. Each program was implemented to address a specific need within the community. For example, a large number of parents involved with training initiatives or going back to school led to a need for quality child care services. This resulted in the establishment of the *Pidaban Child Care Centre*. Another example of how the community used its reinvestment funds is through the development of life skills and language enrichment activities, to address a lack of stimulation in language development and early learning experiences. This program involves teachers using the parents in the assessment process to inform them of the individual education plan for the child at school. It also provides parents with the tools they need at home to assist their children in speech and language development.

ABITIBIWINI FIRST NATION, QUEBEC

To enable children of low-income families to benefit from extracurricular activities, the community developed an art program that taught children new skills in painting. This program involved 35 children, who after its completion, showcased their works for parents and other community members in their own forum. The children also received a certificate of achievement for their accomplishments. In order to gauge the satisfaction of the participants and their parents, a survey was conducted. The results from this survey will impact on how the course is developed for the following year. This program was considered to be a success based on the positive responses from those who participated in the program and from those who attended the art show.

STURGEON LAKE FIRST NATION, ALBERTA

The Sturgeon Lake First Nation implemented four programs using National Child Benefit reinvestment funds including a hot lunch program at the local school and a recreation program that focussed on participation in minor hockey. NCB funds were also used to support the local training facility and single parents.

SADDLE LAKE FIRST NATION, ALBERTA

The Saddle Lake First Nation developed several programs which supported employment opportunities for social assistance recipients with children. For example, some members of the community received training and were subsequently hired in the fields of security, social development, communications (Osakdo Radio), water trucking services and home improvement. Other training opportunities, in the form of apprenticeships, were provided for carpentry, plumbing and electrical trades. These training opportunities built on the existing community's *Capital Housing Program*, which provides housing units for members living on-reserve. In addition to focussing on training and employment opportunities, the community developed and supported a Christmas hamper program and a local food bank, and provided recreation programs for children and youth (e.g., hockey, swimming, out-door wilderness, etc.).



MOHAWK COUNCIL OF AKWESASNE, ONTARIO

Developed a program to address a specific group within the community that council members feel is under represented, young males with children, aged 18 to 24. The program is known as *Nuts and Bolts* and seeks to motivate participants to become involved in a variety of trades. Academic activities, ranging from computer skills and mathematics to English courses, are provided in the mornings, while the afternoons are spent working at various trades (e.g., auto care, electrical training, welding and woodworking). In each session participants learn how to use the tools of the trade and job safety techniques. The program has given participants the opportunity to improve academic skills including, in some cases, basic literacy skills, while also allowing them to gain work-related expertise.