

Investments to close socio-economic gaps in funding and basic services for FN in Atlantic Canada?

Our Liberal government has made historic investments to close socio-economic gaps in First Nations communities. For example:

- We have invested more than \$1 billion in new funding into First Nations housing, with over 16,100 housing units being built, renovated or lots serviced since Budget 2016, benefitting 443,000 people in 568 communities.
- We have invested over \$2.7 billion into safe water and wastewater systems in First Nations communities, including the lifting of all long-term drinking water advisories by 2021. To date 87 advisories have been lifted, and we are on track to lift the remaining 56 by our target date.
- We co-developed a new funding model for First Nations K-12 education to ensure predictable core funding for First Nations K-12 education, which ensures for that base funding is equitable to provincial systems across the country, based on factors like remoteness, school size, and support for support language and culture education.
- We are providing new resources which will support full-time kindergarten in every First Nations school for children aged four and five.
- We have invested nearly \$1 billion to build and renovate First Nations schools. To date, 60 projects have been completed, and another 60 are underway, with 240 First Nations communities benefitting from this work.
- We established a new definition of the Jordan's Principle program, to ensure First Nations children have access to the health and social supports they need. Since July 2016, more than 341,000 requests have been approved under Jordan's Principle for vital health, social, and educational services (includes speech therapy, educational supports, medical equipment, mental health services) since April 2019. In 2019, we committed \$220 million to establish a similar program to support Inuit children.
- We have invested over \$470 million towards the construction, repair and renovation of First Nations health infrastructure, including health centres nursing stations, addictions treatment centres, and Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve facilities. 178 projects have been completed, and 29 are ongoing, across 164 First Nations communities.
- We co-developed and passed Indigenous child and family services legislation (Bill C-92) to reduce the number of Indigenous children and youth in care and strengthen child and family services.
- We are addressing the funding pressures facing child and family service agencies, while also increasing prevention resources for communities, so that children are safe and families can stay together by providing more than \$2 billion in new funding for First Nations Child and Family Services. As a part of this work, we partnered with First Nations to develop a remoteness quotient to ensure child and family services in remote areas saw increases to their funding in recognition of the higher costs of delivering services in these communities.

We know that while good progress has been made, there is a lot more work to do.

That is why we have committed to move forward with making high-quality health care a reality for all Indigenous Peoples, we will co-develop First Nations health care legislation – backed with the investments needed to deliver this care – to guarantee the right to health, mental health, and wellness care, and will continue to work with First Nations communities to ensure Indigenous control over the development and delivery of services.

To address this infrastructure deficit in First Nations communities, we have also committed co-develop and invest in First Nations community infrastructure plans, and will move forward with addressing critical infrastructure needs – such as housing, all-weather roads, high-speed internet, health facilities, treatment centres, and schools – in First Nations by 2030. We will also move forward with new investments to support the ongoing operation and maintenance of this infrastructure.

To reduce the number of Indigenous children in care, and affirm the inherent rights of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities to care for their kids, we will ensure that the Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families is fully implemented. We will also move forward with long-term, predictable, and sufficient funding to support the full implementation of the Act.

And to ensure that First Nations communities directly benefit from major resource projects in their territories, we will move forward with a new national benefits-sharing framework.

Ensuring First Nations Communities have access to safe drinking water?

All Canadians should have access to safe, clean, and reliable drinking water. Since 2016, we have invested \$2.7 billion to support ongoing efforts to eliminate and prevent long-term drinking water advisories and strengthen First Nations water and wastewater systems across the country.

Our Government is on track to meet our commitment to lift all long-term drinking water advisories on public systems on reserve by March 2021. The results are encouraging with 87 long-term drinking water advisories lifted so far. Work is underway to end the remaining 56 long-term advisories and prevent further short-term advisories from becoming long-term.

But we know there is more work to do. We will continue to work with First Nations partners to ensure every community has access to clean drinking water in their communities.

Strategy to ensure young First Nations workforce can participate in the Atlantic Economy?

Across the country, Indigenous-led businesses are helping to create jobs, build strong communities, and make real progress on the important work of economic reconciliation. But there is more we can do to ensure their success. We are committed to working with First Nations partners to continue to increase First Nations participation in the Atlantic economy. To create more opportunities for these businesses to succeed and grow, we will move forward with a new target to have at least five percent of federal contracts awarded to businesses led by Indigenous Peoples.

Every First Nation child deserves the best start in life, and this starts with a high-quality and culturally-appropriate education. We have invested nearly \$1 billion to build and renovate First Nations schools. To date, 60 projects have been completed, and another 60 are underway, with 240 First Nations communities benefitting from this work.

With a new co-developed education framework, we finally started funding First Nations K-12 education on an equitable basis compared with non-Indigenous children. Plus, we're funding language and cultural programs, full-time kindergarten and special education. As National Chief Bellegarde has said, "This is a significant step toward closing the gap in education outcomes for First Nations children and students."

We also increased funds available through the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program, which was co-developed with Indigenous partners to provide greater flexibility for organizations to design programming to meet the needs of their people and communities. Our new distinctions-based strategy recognizes, respects and reflects Canada's Indigenous peoples, but also addresses urban/non-affiliated service delivery needs.

How will you support and implement UNDRIP?

We supported Bill C-262 as an important step in the recognition process. However Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer used his Conservative Senators to block it from passing in the Senate.

If re-elected, we will co-develop and introduce government legislation to fully implement the Declaration, the content of which will see C-262 as floor, not the ceiling, in terms of the contents of the legislation we will propose.

Our Government is also working to renew the relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on the recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership. We followed through on key legislative initiatives that support the implementation of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including:

- Legislation to support the inherent right of First Nations to their languages, and measures to revitalize and protect them;
- Legislation to support the inherent right of First Nations to control their own child and family service systems.

How will you support full implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action?

The Liberal Party is committed to renewing and repairing Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership, and the Calls to Action (CTA) are an important framework for advancing the relationship.

In 2015, we committed to working with partners to implement the 94 Calls to Action, and in the four years since, have made real progress in implementing this commitment, including:

- We have fully implemented Jordan's Principle (CTA 3), and to date, over 340,000 applications for critical services and supports - like medical equipment, speech therapy, educational supports and mental health - are now being fully funded.
- We co-developed and implemented Indigenous Child Welfare legislation - C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children (CTA 4).
- We co-developed and implemented a new funding approach to First Nations K-12 education, through which First Nations children are finally receiving equitable funding, compared with non-First Nations students (CTA 8).
- We co-developed and implemented new Indigenous languages legislation - Bill C-91, the Indigenous Languages Act - which acknowledges that Aboriginal Rights include the right to language, and takes real steps to protect and revitalize Indigenous languages across Canada (CTA 13-15).
- We are establishing, and funding the National Council for Reconciliation (CTAs 53-56).

- We supported Bill C-262, which called for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And when Andrew Scheer's Conservative Senators blocked the Bill from passing in the Senate, we committed to introducing government legislation to implement the Declaration if we are re-elected (CTA 48)

A re-elected Liberal government would continue working in partnership with First Nations to implement the Calls to Action, as a part of our shared work to advance meaningful reconciliation and build a future where Indigenous peoples can succeed and prosper.

We will continue to work with First Nations to create a national action plan to implement the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls' Calls for Justice.

We will also continue to support Indigenous-led processes for rebuilding and reconstituting their nations, advancing self-determination and, for First Nations, the transition away from the Indian Act. To ensure timely and just resolution to specific claims, we will continue ongoing work with First Nations to re-design federal policies on additions- to-reserves, and the Specific Claims process.

We will continue to make progress on Indigenous priorities, meeting regularly through the Assembly of First Nations – Canada Memorandum of Understanding on Joint Priorities, the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee, and the Métis Accord.

We will also host a First Ministers Meeting on First Nations, Inuit, and Métis priorities, and continue to advance meaningful inclusion of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis partners in federal and inter-governmental decision-making processes that have an impact on Indigenous rights and interests.

How will your party support the development of a First Nations Designed and Driven Atlantic First Nations Housing Strategy?

Our party fully supports First Nations-designed and led initiatives to control the delivery of services and supports in their communities, whether it be on education, child care, child and family services, health and mental health.

In our platform, we have committed to community-based infrastructure planning that will close major infrastructure gaps - including in housing - by 2030. This approach fully recognizes, welcomes and would support an Atlantic First Nations Housing Strategy.

How will you support Nation-to-Nation based relationship with First Nations in the Atlantic?

Since 2015, we have worked to re-build the relationship with Indigenous communities and leaders around the country, and to transition to a nation-to-nation relationship. How that works is dependent on the communities themselves, in terms of how they think we can best work together in that way. We have also provided \$100M in funding as of 2018, to support First Nations in the work they are doing to rebuild and reconstitute their nations, and will continue that work if we are re-elected.

What will your party's strategy be to address implications of Climate Change on First nations communities?

Canada is warming at twice the global rate – with Northern Canada heating up at about three times the global average.

Our government helped to spur global ambition and strengthen resolve by pushing for the 1.5°C objective into the Paris Agreement in 2015, which has guided our climate policy ever since. The 1.5°C limit matters for Canada, which is warming at twice the global average – and at three times the global average in the north.

Under the previous government, Canadians heard a lot about climate targets but saw virtually no action to meet them. We took the opposite approach, getting straight to work on actions to cut pollution. We negotiated Canada's first-ever national climate plan, and we've been working every day since to implement it.

Our plan to address climate change – the Pan-Canadian Climate Change Framework, which was developed in partnership with First Nations - has over 50 measures including putting a price on pollution and helping northern communities get off diesel and switch to cleaner energy by 2030 which will reduce emissions, lead to cleaner air, and save people money.

In the past four years, that approach has delivered the biggest projected cut to Canada's emissions ever. That's a big step, but it's just a first step. We know there's much more to do. The Paris Agreement requires us to increase our ambition over time, and that's exactly what we'll do – through legislation, regulations, smart policies, and international commitment and leadership.

A re-elected Liberal government would adopt a net-zero GHG target for Canada for 2050. We would immediately work with First Nations to co-develop a plans to achieve it drawing on their recommendations.

Our government delivered on our promise to put in place a new Impact Assessment Act which has better rules for major projects that restore public trust, protect the environment, advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, and ensure good projects can go ahead in a timely way.

How will your party support a new fiscal relationship between First Nations and Canada, including the provinces?

In 2015, our Liberal government committed to advancing a new fiscal relationship with First Nations. Over the last four years, we have co-developed with First Nations a new fiscal policy for self-governing First Nations, as well as the new 10-year transfers that provide predictable stable funding for eligible First Nations communities. So far, over 80 communities have signed onto these new agreements, with as many more asking to participate in the future.

Both of these new policies help ensure sufficient, stable and predictable funding for First Nations, so that they can do long term planning, and invest in critical needs in their communities. We also forgave and began repaying \$1.4 billion in loans provided to Indigenous communities to facilitate their participation in treaty negotiations. More than 200 communities will receive these reimbursements, which can be re-invested back into community priorities that increase the health and well-being of community members.

We've also Invested \$100 million in 2019 towards supporting Indigenous communities in their work to re-constitute their nations, which were dismantled through colonial approaches of the past, including the imposition of the Indian Act.

We know there is more work to do, and we will continue to work closely with First Nations to advance and improve the fiscal relationship between the Crown and First Nations, and in doing so, are always open to new co-developed processes that can further advance the relationship.

Our 2019 platform has proposed one such new measure: a new national benefits-sharing framework to ensure that First Nations communities directly benefit from major resource projects in their territories.

What measures will be taken to implement all recommendations made by the National Inquiry on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls?

We have begun the work to develop a national action plan – as called for by the Inquiry – to implement the Calls for Justice. This action plan must be developed in partnership with First Nations, and with the families of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQIA people, and survivors. The Trudeau government's response to the Inquiry's interim report also included nearly \$50 million in new funding to: provide health and support services to survivors and their families; support a national investigative body at the RCMP, and; support a review of police policies and practices.

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