

Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Annual Plan
2022-2023

President's Message

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the employees of the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) I am pleased to present the Corporation's 2022-2023 Annual Plan. This document gives an overview of our organization and of **Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan (OPT3)**. Included in this Annual Plan are the main initiatives and Priority Actions and their status, as well as an overview of the Community Inclusion Networks.

Fiscal year 2022-2023 will be the third year of OPT3 five-year plan. The plan includes nine priority actions that were developed following a successful public engagement process that took place across the province in the winter and spring 2019.

In the coming fiscal year ESIC will:

- Continue to focus on the OPT3 Priority Actions, as presented in the table on page 8.
- Continue supporting the Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) in the development and implementation of their respective regional plans. Funding will continue to be made available to the CINs for the implementation of their community development projects, which are geared towards economic and social inclusion, as well as poverty reduction.
- Continue to focus on the development, implementation, and enhancement of community transportation services across the province.

With the introduction in December 2021 of the Reform on Local Governance, ESIC will be playing a crucial role in the development of mechanisms to help Regional Service Commissions (RSCs) across the province build their capacities around community development. The main component of ESIC's this work is the successful integration of the CINs into the RSCs.

Finally, we cannot ignore the negative impact that COVID-19 has had on the lives of all New Brunswickers in the past two years. ESIC will continue to closely monitor the situation and adjust its efforts based on this everchanging situation and related data and evidence as it becomes available. ESIC believes New Brunswick will emerge stronger as a result of this worldwide pandemic, thanks to the resilience of all New Brunswickers.

I am looking forward to seeing ESIC continuing to be a leader in community development in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Eric Beaulieu
President
Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation

Mandate

The prevention and reduction of poverty in New Brunswick is complex. The causes and effects are many, and not one solution is universal in preventing or eradicating poverty. It is important that all members of our society work together to provide opportunities for all New Brunswickers to reach their potential.

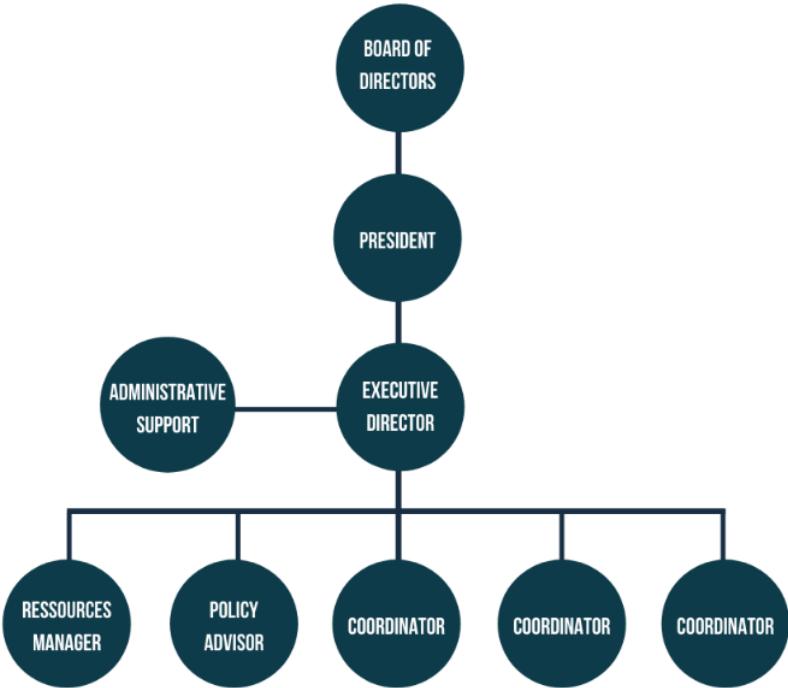
Following an extensive engagement process based on public dialogue with New Brunswickers from all walks of life, the province's first poverty reduction plan, *Overcoming Poverty Together: The New Brunswick Economic and Social Inclusion Plan, 2009-2014 (OPT1)* was developed.

Under the ***Economic and Social Inclusion Act***, the Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) was established to implement and manage this unique approach to addressing the issue of poverty in New Brunswick.

ESIC was established to:

- Ensure the implementation of OPT and development and adoption of any other economic and social inclusion plan.
- Co-ordinate and support the Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) in developing their plans and in reaching objectives of the provincial plan set out in their regional plans.
- Administer the Economic and Social Inclusion Fund established under section 29 of the Economic and Social Inclusion Act, and
- Exercise the other functions or activities authorized or required by this act or the regulations or as directed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

ESIC is governed by a board of directors. Under the *Economic and Social Inclusion Act*, the board administered the business and affairs of the corporation, including financial, operational, setting policies, and monitoring the progress of OPT.



Historical Background

In 2008, the provincial government undertook a public engagement initiative that gave New Brunswickers the opportunity to become involved in reducing and preventing poverty. It was decided that everyone should be included in finding solutions to the economic and social problems related to poverty.

After a comprehensive consultation process that included almost 2,500 participants, including people living in or who have experienced poverty, representatives from the non-profit community, the business community, the provincial government and the official Opposition, Overcoming Poverty Together (OPT1) was developed and adopted.

The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC) was created to incubate, foster, and drive the plan. *The Economic and Social Inclusion Act* was adopted at the Legislative Assembly of New Brunswick to support the plan and the corporation's efforts in its implementation.

The act stipulates that the plan must be renewed every five years through a public engagement process.

OPT1 and OPT2

Through the collaboration of governments, business and non-profit sectors, persons living in poverty and individuals – all men, women and children in New Brunswick – shall have the necessary resources to meet their basic needs and to live with dignity, security and good health. Furthermore, all New Brunswickers shall be included as full citizens through opportunities for employment, personal development, and community engagement.

Another public engagement process took place in the spring of 2019, leading to the creation of the third plan: Overcoming Poverty Together 2019-2020 (OPT3). This third plan, which has a new vision, was presented to New Brunswickers on March 5, 2020, just prior to the pandemic arriving.

OPT3

Everyone living in New Brunswick has the opportunities, resources, and security to thrive and actively participate in community life.

Delivery and accountability

The success of the poverty reduction initiative has its roots in the recognition that all individuals and sectors of society play a key role in the reduction of poverty. There is an ongoing commitment to continue this partnership in a governance model with the following components:

1. Community economic and social inclusion networks established at the local level composed of representatives of persons living in poverty, non-profit, business and government sectors.
2. A provincial economic and social inclusion board consisting of representatives of the provincial government (ministers and deputy ministers), community, business, and low-income persons, presided over by four co-chairs.
3. A central unit providing coordination and administrative support to the board and community inclusion networks.

OPT3 places emphasis on community capacity building. It recognizes that each individual and community has a role to play in fostering economic and social inclusion and suggests that communities be empowered to tackle poverty reduction and other issues in New Brunswick.

Global Objective

In alignment with Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy and the United Nations 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals, the global objective of the OPT3 Plan is to reduce income poverty by at least 50% by 2030. A 50% reduction in the Market Basket Measure for New Brunswick would decrease it from 14% to 7% in 2030. Achieving this target would mean lifting 50 000 New Brunswickers out of income poverty.

Priority actions

OPT3 includes 9 priority actions, grouped in three pillars:



1. Income Security

Supporting New Brunswickers to move through the income security continuum and providing adequate income support to those who cannot work.



2. Coordination of Programs and Services

Helping New Brunswickers access the programs and services they need.



3. Inclusion and Healthy Communities

Helping New Brunswickers live with dignity.

The 9 priority actions are listed in the table on page 8.

Community Inclusion Networks

The Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation oversees 12 Community Inclusion Networks (CINs) that have been established either independently or through the support of existing community-oriented organizations. The CINs' objectives are to identify, through a collaborative process, regional poverty issues and priorities; and to develop and implement a regional poverty reduction plan that aligns with the OPT plans.



The CINs are at the heart of building community capacity and raising the level of engagement through collective and collaborative impact. They play a coordination 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. The CINs provide a new model for economic and social inclusion. Rather than relying on the various levels of government to eradicate poverty, ESIC in partnerships with the CINs have empowered communities and individuals to participate and contribute collectively.

Projects funded by ESIC generate community engagement that comes in various ways: financial contribution, in-kind donations, and volunteer time. The percentage of community investment per project is a representation of this community engagement.

About 80% of ESIC's budget is invested into communities. For the 10 years ending in March 2021, ESIC has invested \$9.4 million in community projects.

This ESIC investment has also generated leveraged contributions from community partners of another \$32.8 million, for a total impact of \$42.2 million. So, every dollar invested by ESIC generates a financial impact of \$4.49 at the community level.

The CINs have demonstrated a high level of resilience and adaptability in maintaining services to communities. They have worked continuously to develop, maintain, and expand their services, particularly those related to transportation where some regions have even gone so far as to develop and add a delivery component to existing services. While ESIC funds have been directed to these essential transportation services, additional efforts have been made by the CINs to seek funding from many external organizations to ensure the continuation of various programs, such as food security.

There are currently 12 community transportation services in New Brunswick. Funds have been granted to the CINs by ESIC via different programs to ensure the viability of transportation services that became essential during the pandemic.

A large number of participants and volunteers have contributed to the transportation services throughout NB. These participants ensured that services like the delivery of food and other goods to households without transport were maintained and carried out safely and efficiently. These people brought support to community transportation and the delivery of essential goods in a time when New Brunswickers needed it most. This helped to ensure communities could keep access to needed services, during different lockdown phases of the pandemic. During 2020-2021, over 10,600 New Brunswickers benefited from services linked to CIN community transportation programs and the delivery of goods.

9 Priority Action Progress

Overcoming Poverty Together 3

OPT3 is not a government plan or a business plan or a non-profit plan or a citizen's plan. It is the New Brunswick poverty reduction plan, created by New Brunswick, for New Brunswick.

The objective of OPT3 is to reduce New Brunswick income poverty by at least 50% by 2030. As measured by the Market Basket Measure this is a decrease from 14% to 7% in 2030. Achieving this target means lifting 50,000 New Brunswickers out of income poverty. And progress is being made.

Please note: Under the Government of New Brunswick Local Governance Reform legislation announced in December 2021, enhanced Regional Service Commissions (RSC) are now mandated responsibility for regional transportation programs and community development. As a result, ESIC is working closely with the 12 RSC's to integrate with the Community Inclusion Networks (CIN's).

This collaboration will support improved community development outcomes within each RSC and include building and improving community and regional transportation services. The **target date** to complete integration of the RSC's and the CIN's is January 1, 2023 which is also the **Key Performance Indicator** for this work.

OPT3 Priority Actions	Lead	Comments	Next Steps - 2022-2023	KPI
<p>1. Conduct a social assistance reform to remove barriers to employment for employable clients and provide adequate income support for multi-barriered clients who do not have the capacity to work.</p>	<p>SD</p>	<p>Reform has been launched. Social assistance recipients are eligible to receive more income as of Oct. 1, 2021. This is an annual investment of \$10.8 million. Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefits no longer reduced if clients also receiving child support payments, the Can-NB Housing Benefit or compensatory money re personal injury. - Wage exemption increased, allowing clients to keep up to \$500 of income earned each month, plus 50 cents of each dollar earned over \$500. - Clients no longer have social assistance reduced if living with parents or spending less than 25% of monthly assistance on housing. - Updated definition of deaf in SA programs, as per stakeholders. - Nurse practitioners authorized to sign medical forms for SA clients applying for disability designation. - Indexing of all SA rates to annual inflation. 	<p>A task force has been established to review disability support services and programs offered by SD, including income support.</p> <p>Task force includes reps from primary and allied health care, Premier's Council on Disabilities and the New Brunswick Disability Executives Network, individuals, and family with first-hand experience with disability support services and programs.</p> <p>Work to conclude by Spring 2022. The task force will advise SD on enhancing support services and co-ordinating delivery of these services. Members will propose a comprehensive model, including recommendations for implementation.</p>	<p>Launched by SD in 2021-2022.</p> <p>ESIC will continue to monitor SD's progress.</p>
<p>2. Consult on changes to the <i>Employment Standards Act</i> to better support low-income workers by addressing the overtime rate, improving sick leave provisions, repealing the exemption of domestic workers, and benchmarking the minimum wage to the Atlantic average by 2021, which would continue to be indexed annually.</p>	<p>PETL</p>	<p>PETL senior leaders are reviewing a draft plan for consultation in 2022 on the <i>ESA</i>.</p> <p>PETL has completed a statutory review of minimum wage. The current minimum wage is \$11.75 per hour. The minimum wage has been annually indexed to the NB CPI since March 28, 2019 and is set automatically on April 1 of each year.</p>	<p>As of April 1, 2022, the minimum wage will be \$12.75 per hour. As of October 1, 2022, the minimum wage will be \$13.75 per hour.</p> <p>There will be special minimum wage rates for certain categories of employees in government construction work (road, bridge, and building construction); and counselors and program staff at residential summer camps.</p> <p>The minimum overtime wage rate to increase from \$17.63 per hour to \$19.13 per hour as of April 1, 2022 and to \$20.63 per hour as of October 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Launched by PETL in 2021-2022.</p> <p>ESIC will continue to monitor PETL's progress.</p>

<p>3. Make investments through a new social finance fund to increase the capacity and sustainability of social enterprises within non-profit organizations in New Brunswick.</p>	<p>ESIC</p>	<p>Access to GNB supports for SE development in NB has been established. Contract for SE support and development services from PDC has been signed and project is proceeding. Three meetings of the new NB SE Advisory Committee have occurred with positive results.</p>	<p>Next steps are based upon advice flowing from the NB SE Advisory Committee.</p> <p>In 2022, training programs and operational supports are being established for existing and new social enterprises to grow and develop around NB.</p>	<p>In 2022-2023 ESIC plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Convene 4 sessions of the NB SD Advisory Committee. -Launch SE training platform for non-profit organizations. -Commence SE training for NPO's. -Launch new SE Investment and Development Fund.
<p>4. Conduct a review of government programs, services and tax policies targeted to low-income individuals and families to eliminate areas of duplication, simplify complex application requirements, and ensure program effectiveness to better support New Brunswick residents.</p>	<p>FTB</p>	<p>A complete review of GNB programs, services and tax policies targeted to low income individuals and families can only be fully undertaken after the pandemic ends.</p> <p>Effective January 1, 2021, the province lowered its tax rate on the first personal income tax bracket from 9.68% to 9.4%. This tax rate applies to the first \$43,835 of taxable income for 2021.</p> <p>Also, the threshold for the Low-Income Tax Reduction was increased from \$17,630 to \$17,840, for the 2021 tax year. Under that income level a single tax filer will not pay provincial income tax. For families, the income threshold where no prov income tax is paid is higher than a single individual. The LITR is phased out so it benefits other lower-income New Brunswickers as well.</p>	<p>Annually, the department updates its tax expenditure program summary, which includes programs that benefit low-income New Brunswickers and families.</p>	<p>Launched by FTB in 2021-2022.</p> <p>ESIC will continue to monitor FTB's progress.</p>
<p>5. Implement a One-Stop-Shop to help New Brunswickers access information and navigate government and community programs and services they need more easily.</p>	<p>SD</p>	<p>Provincial 211 Service launched Oct 15, 2020. This service is operational 24/7 and 365 days per year.</p>	<p>ESIC will continue to provide support and advice to the NB 211 service as it develops and grows.</p>	<p>Completed by ESIC in 2020-2021.</p>
<p>6. Improve access to mental health and addictions services</p>	<p>Health</p>	<p>All data suggests the need for supports and services will continue to climb.</p>	<p>The Addiction and Mental Health Action Plan is being implemented over the next 24</p>	<p>Launched by Health in 2021-2022.</p>

<p>and reduce wait times.</p>		<p>On Nov. 17, 2021, GNB released the Inter-departmental Addiction and Mental Health Action Plan Priority Areas for 2021-2025.</p> <p>This plan is based on a client-centric stepped care model that moves along a continuum from promotion of population health and prevention services, up to higher intensity specialized services.</p>	<p>months and will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Walk-in services 14 addiction and mental health clinics. - An overdose prevention service to help people with substance use disorders. - Additional beds in Campbellton to treat mental illness and substance use disorder. - A suite of online mental health services (launched recently) for adults and youth to provide a timely alternative to traditional services. -A new, five-year pilot project designed to prevent youth substance use in several communities around NB. -Expanded mobile crisis units to further support citizens experiencing an addiction or mental health crisis, and ensure they receive crisis intervention. - A new prov phone service to ensure addiction and mental health crisis response services are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. -Young people with complex needs living in therapeutic foster homes and group homes throughout NB will have access to a clinical consultation team to work with the youths, their families, and the homes on a common plan to help the individual. -Mental health staff working in hospital ER's across the province so that people experiencing an addiction or mental health crisis receive more timely support through an established mental health-care team and co-ordinated follow-ups with community services. 	<p>ESIC will continue to monitor Health's progress.</p>
<p>7. Develop and implement regional transportation</p>	<p>ESIC</p>	<p>ESIC provides leadership, financial resources, operational support, and strategic advice to regional community transportation service</p>	<p>The CIN's will be integrated into the RSC's by January 1, 2023. The RSC's will bring stakeholders and local</p>	<p>In 2022-2023 ESIC plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Convene, fund, and work with key stakeholders and

<p>plans to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of transportation services.</p>		<p>providers around NB. ESIC continues to develop and support regional transportation plans to increase accessibility, affordability, and availability of community transportation services.</p>	<p>governments together, in collaboration with ESIC, to develop and implement transportation strategies to better serve residents.</p>	<p>local governments to grow and improve community transportation programs around NB.</p> <p>-By Jan 1, 2023 all CIN's and their community transportation programs will be successfully integrated into the RSC's.</p>
<p>8. Leverage partners to provide inclusive opportunities for sport, recreation, and leisure activities for low income New Brunswickers.</p>	<p>Coord. by ESIC</p>	<p>The Co-Chairs and Working Group participants, from a broad representation of sport, recreation, and leisure, have been confirmed.</p>	<p>The Working Group commenced meetings in February 2022.</p>	<p>In 2022-2023:</p> <p>-The research portion of this project will be completed.</p> <p>-The prototype project will be launched.</p>
<p>9. Support children and youth by ensuring there are school food programs in all New Brunswick Schools.</p>	<p>Coord. by ESIC</p>	<p>This is a GNB commitment from the 2020 Provincial Election.</p> <p>An initial pilot project has concluded with no further action to be undertaken from this work.</p> <p>The Community Inclusion Networks are now working to develop ways to meet the need for school food programs</p> <p>A project called Food for All NB is underway, led by the organization Nourishing Minds. This project is to consult key stakeholders; identify current assets, resources, and requirements to support healthy school food environments; and create an online resource hub for community school partners delivering school food programs.</p> <p>Along with the above initiatives, a new working group of stakeholders call the Coalition for Healthy School Food has been formed to contribute on this project.</p>	<p>The Community Inclusion Networks have begun work on a series of new school food project proposals to be submitted to ESIC for funding consideration.</p> <p>The Food for All online resource hub is nearing completion, with launch expected just prior to 2022-2023.</p> <p>The Coalition for Healthy School Food is working actively with key senior GNB departmental leaders on recommendations on the most effective use of newly available federal funding for school food programs in NB.</p>	<p>In 2022-2023:</p> <p>-The Community Inclusion Networks will complete their project funding proposals for school food programs and initiate these programs.</p> <p>-The Food for All online resource hub will be publicly available, with an effective communications plan aimed at potential community school users delivering school food programs around NB.</p> <p>-The Coalition for Healthy School Food will complete their recommendation process. Senior departmental leaders will then be able to move forward toward better meeting their GNB mandates on school food programs.</p>

Financial Information

ESIC Budget Summary Plan

Revenue/Revenus	2021-2022	2022-2023
Funding from GNB / Financement de GNB	\$2,825,000	\$2,825,000
Total Revenue / Totale des recettes	\$2,825,000	\$2,825,000
Expenses/Dépenses		
Community Funding / Financement communautaire	\$2,016,110	\$2,016,110
Board expenses/ Dépenses du conseil d'administration	\$20,000	\$20,000
Priority Actions / Mesures Prioritaire	\$450,000	\$614,000
Total Community Funding / Totale financement communautaire	\$2,486,110	\$2,650,110
Operating Expenses / Dépenses d'exploitation		
Salaries and Benefits / Salaires et avantages	\$536,520	\$585,000
Services	\$262,300	\$287,800
Financial Literacy	\$200,000	\$200,000
Total Operating Expenses / Dépenses totales de fonctionnement	\$998,820	\$1,072,800
Total Expenses / Dépenses totales*	\$3,484,930	\$3,722,910

* Expenses over revenues are funded through the ESIC carryover