Urban Aboriginal Organizations in British Columbia and Alberta: Review of Services Provided and Service Gaps

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Introduction

This report is one of four regional reports commissioned by the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN). With over 50 per cent of the Aboriginal population in Canada now residing in urban areas, the provision of services and service gaps through urban Aboriginal organizations is an issue of considerable importance to the well-being of that population. Reviews of service provision and service gaps were undertaken in the four regional UAKN research centres, Western, Prairies, Ontario and Atlantic. They will be synthesized into a national report. This is a stand alone report for the Western region.

Methods

In order to identify urban Aboriginal service providers, geographical hubs in British Columbia and Alberta were first selected ensuring representation from major urban centres as well as smaller regional and remote hubs. This led to the selection of ten urban locations in British Columbia and eight in Alberta.

Within these locations, a list of urban Aboriginal organizations was developed focusing on Friendship Centres, as major service providers and as a partner in the UAKN; as well as other organizations providing services on housing, child welfare, and employment and training. These latter three services were chosen as being the major service areas.

Contact was made with the organizations identified to gauge their interest in participating in this survey. This proved a challenge in itself, as out of date contact information and automated answering machines were not uncommon; this reduced the size of the pool. In the end, a total of twenty-two organizations agreed to participate, thirteen in British Columbia and nine in

Alberta. The organizations ranged widely in capacity from those employing few staff and relying primarily on volunteers, to those with in excess of two hundred employees. A list of the organizations and a list of the locations are provided in Appendix A.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Executive Directors of each organization. Each was provided with an introductory letter outlining the scope of, and rationale for, the project, together with advance notice of the interview questions. Participants were informed of the research ethics protocols and their consent was obtained. All participants were guaranteed anonymity and the quotations and views summarized in this report are presented without attribution.

Findings

The major theme that emerged from the interviews was the centrality of relationships in the provision of services. Primarily this means building effective relationships with clients in order to provide the services that address their specific needs. But in order for this to be achieved other relationships are also important: internal organization relationships; relationships with other organizations, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal; relationships with government; and relationships with industry.

This report therefore uses these five relationships as the structure in which the interview findings will be reported. Each relationship is discussed in detail below. On the basis of these findings, those relationships that require strengthening are identified and discussed in the concluding section on service delivery gaps.

5 Themes

Relationships with Clients

"Our job is to ensure all children are safe with their family of origin, with opportunities to grow in their home community with family and culturally appropriate services."

The relationship between urban Aboriginal organizations and their clients is paramount. Three key points arose from the interviews. The first is that a relationship of trust must be established both immediately and maintained over the longer term. Secondly, the importance of family was stressed and the need to keep families together. Thirdly, the need to support transitions into economic stability and economic security was emphasized.

In terms of establishing trust, relational success with clients is dependent upon meeting people where they are at. The challenge for urban Aboriginal organizations is to ensure that a positive relationship is established at the outset. However, it was noted that sometimes the system is not working for clients: *"Windows of opportunities are missed – I want to go today – we need to act on that – we cannot wait 6 weeks."* Decades of mistrust and lip service has hardened some of the Aboriginal population and it was stressed that sometimes the Aboriginal organization only has one opportunity to make things work for the individual. Either the organization does what it says it is going to do or trust is lost. Once that initial trust has been established, it is essential that it be maintained and, as a result, creating safe spaces for Aboriginal people is central to many of the organizations interviewed. A safe place gives the Aboriginal community a voice and a place of celebration. It is important that trust is fostered between the organization and the client over time. Ideally whole families are supported, who can then contribute towards creating a healthier community; a ripple effect is created.

Having effective programs and funding in place is critical for the advancement of Aboriginal people and for fostering effective working relations. The organization's job is to ask the community what they need and ensure transparency. The organizational consensus revealed, *"We must build relationships, trust, and support the healing journey as they overcome hardships."* Time spent with individuals and families builds trust, but stable funding ensures organizational credibility as they follow through with programs and service delivery. Additionally, it is important to recognize, *"Aboriginal people are stronger than we give them credit for – we need to keep families together by providing them the proper tools and resources for the healing journey. We are here for the clients and to accommodate the uniqueness of the individual. There cannot be any blanket statements – each client/family must be looked at individually."*

The importance of programs for families, especially children, was often made. For some agencies, the goal is simple: Keep kids safe - Keep kids out of care. Regardless of their particular organizational mandate, each interview participant agreed their interactions must be grounded in culture as they build relationships, strengthen the connections and keep families together in a safe way. This client-centered, holistic approach allows for respectful programming to individuals and families accessing services.

Success in keeping families together includes the organizations supporting and facilitating ways to connect with culture and to help with the healing journey. The impact from Residential school and intergenerational trauma continues to affect the Aboriginal population. The reconciliation process requires the layers of hurt and years of mistrust to be removed. One participant professed, *"Families need time to heal – not just a program. We are providing services to a vulnerable population that is going to take generations to heal – historical trauma*

is deep rooted, the work is difficult." As many participants agree, more time and resources are needed and there must be healing from the historical losses. The root issues need to be addressed and in order to get to the root more time and energy is required to spend with the people.

Historical trauma is not the only issue organizations are confronting; contemporary practice is also a challenge. The status of Aboriginal children in care in Canada is contrasted to Residential school where one interviewee claimed, *"In the Western provinces there are more kids in group care/foster care/kinship care than ever were in Residential School. We have had to move children off reserve into the urban area just so that they could receive services. We need to stop bringing kids into care."* Furthermore, *"the underlying issues need to be addressed so that we keep families healthy and kids out of care. It is proven that the family is stronger within the Aboriginal family than with non-Aboriginals. The focus must be on what the client needs: by keeping the family together. Making sure the family is first."* The importance of listening to the clients was emphasized repeatedly. As one participant noted, *"the system isn't broken; it is our interactions or lack thereof that is the problem."*

Education and training are keys to help strengthen the individual and family. If there is economic stability child welfare cases are reduced. As one participant explained, *"Child welfare is related to poverty; no money = no food. We need to mitigate poverty and help them to recover from inter-generational trauma."* The reality is kids come into care because of poverty issues and we are challenged to address poverty issues. As one participant said, *"This disparity can be fixed – there was 27 billion spent on fighter planes – we can surely fix poverty in Canada – it is wrong to allow this to continue – how can we subsidize corporations and not feed kids? It is wrong that we don't have clean drinking water – this all fixable."*

Organizations that delivered employment and training services and programs are trying to create equal employment opportunities that lead to self-sufficiency. The agencies recognize Aboriginal people are an over-represented population. The agencies work hard to ensure success throughout their client's individual journey, from assessments, employment counseling, job referrals and return to work action plans. The philosophy is: *"Whatever they need to find and maintain employment– you can do this, we can support."* However, enabling learned dependency is an area of concern and measures are taken to ensure the same person is not being funded for training, over and over.

The issues are cyclical in nature. Employment, education and housing are intricately linked. Lack of affordable housing and homelessness is restricting Aboriginal people from economic participation. As one participant succinctly stated, *"How can you go to work if you don't have a house?"* One further surmised, *"First Nations people are not given the same supports to establish housing, urban-cultural, or economic stability off-reserve."* The need for ongoing wrap

around social supports is vast. Provision of safe, healthy, and affordable housing for Aboriginal people of all incomes, ages and capabilities will help individuals and families move towards self-sufficiency and assist them as they take their place in the community.

As organizations work respectfully with clients and bring culture and education to the urban Aboriginal communities, the organizations are also attempting to bridge cultural gaps between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal population. As one participant discussed, their organization is a place to provide services and opportunities for people to make connections outside of the Aboriginal community

Establishing and maintaining trust, providing services that keep families together and facilitating transitions into economic security are therefore the critical activities that urban Aboriginal organizations perform. Their ability to do this, however, depends on a number of other relationships which we explore further below.

Relationships Internally

"Our staff often times start as being clients first. We want to support them to success"

Positive dynamics within an urban Aboriginal organization are critical for success. Issues which participants identified as being important included: succession planning and the associated need within the organization to support internal capacity building, training and education; and retaining key staff who posses the understanding and empathy to work effectively with a highly marginalized population.

Several of the agencies included in the survey are able to ensure there are familiar staff faces in the building; people who have been there for a long period of time. However, other agencies struggle to keep their qualified staff, as they cannot compete with the government agencies that pay more and offer better benefits packages. The inability to provide competitive wages and benefits at the same level as mainstream organizations is a huge concern for many Aboriginal organizations. As one participant explained, *"We are not here to build an empire – but to share opportunities for services to be in community. We are always looking to partner, but paid positions are required internally first."* This internal push for secured workers goes deep. *"We are volunteer run – I feel like a beggar walking around with my hat out all the time."* Not having adequate funds to hire staff creates a constant cycle of staffing uncertainty; a program cannot be successful without job security for those who deliver the programs. Reducing staff turnover provides the opportunity for the building of long-term trust and relationships with clients.

Lack of funds for workers can lead to other problems such as staff burnout and lateral violence. Addressing areas of concern internally takes time, energy and resources away from directly serving the clients. In some organizations, various mechanisms have been put in place to support the staff's personal health and wellbeing. For example, one organization provides its staff with a reduced rate to the counselors, massage therapists, and acupuncture services which it provides to clients to ensure the workers are physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually prepared to work with the Aboriginal population. Another organization ensures their workers are safe by training their staff to be *"friendly workers, not a worker who is a friend"*. This distinction is crucial for ensuring boundaries are in place for both the worker and client.

A healthy workplace ensures internal relations are strong. One participant in this study explained that, *"as staff, we look for ways to serve each other which translate to that same effort going out to our supplier and our clients. Our goals are to deliver client-centered, holistic and respectful programming to individuals and families accessing our services. Our guiding values and beliefs are embedded in respectful and culturally appropriate practices as directed by Elders and other leaders versed in traditional ceremonies."* Creating safe spaces is therefore seen as essential for the psychosocial health of an individual worker and for the organization.

Relationships with other Organizations

"All service areas require partnerships. We need partnerships for everything; we cannot do this alone. The Urban Aboriginal needs to be the hero in the story again; we are here to teach them how. We need to be our own heroes again"

Partnerships with other service providers, whether they be government ministries and other state sector agencies, or other urban Aboriginal organizations, can be invaluable in terms of ensuring that clients' needs are met, opportunities for resource sharing and knowledge exchange are available, and spaces are created for dialogue that assists organizations to understand the lessons learned as well as their shared responsibility in serving the urban Aboriginal population.

However, neither type of partnership (with government ministries or other urban Aboriginal organizations) is always straightforward. With respect to the former, some agencies are concerned with how interactions and partnerships occur on various levels. For example, one participant said, *"There is a disconnection between municipality, province, and service providers regarding how they engage with the Aboriginal populace. We are expected to fit into 'mainstream' society but that is backwards. They are on our traditional territory – this mentality needs to be reversed. They need to be aware of traditional territory, protocols and respect them.*

We are trying to work with the community to help them understand." Other agencies are working together to identify gaps and bridge them. They believe in community involvement. *"We cannot do our work in isolation – we use a relational governance model and build capacity, honor protocols and value relationships."* The value placed on partnerships is evident. *"Six years ago we created a protocol agreement for working with the local First Nation community that was not just acknowledging their traditional territory. We created a critical partnership that involves the Elders, gifting, ceremonies. We had to take the time to ensure the pieces were in place [to] build an authentic community."*

Partnerships create a space for dialogue and allow for a shared understanding of the historical trauma and how not to perpetuate the historical oppression. Teaching cultural safety and educating individuals and agencies will help mitigate the shame some clients have when trying to access services. Several agencies stated, *"Our clients feel discriminated against when trying to access services, such as housing or support for MH&A issues."* There are also real concerns around how to partner when child protection issues arise. One participant professed, *"Child welfare has become a business and our organization is about the people – how do we reconcile the two?"* It was argued by one participant that a shift from the top down approach by ministry/social workers, who tend to make the decisions and policies, to one of client inclusivity, would be more beneficial.

There are agencies that work really well together and share files to ensure that common, consistent strategies and best practices are implemented. This level of collaboration and cooperation is very beneficial when working with a marginalized population. One area where partnerships could be improved is between urban aboriginal organizations and police forces. There are some Aboriginal organization employees that have established working relationships with the police and have a commitment to address issues with the shared client, but that relationship is often individual. As one participant said, *"It is the luck of the draw on who you get."* Meaning it is a working relationship between two individuals, not their respective employers. However, there are other Aboriginal agencies that struggle to engage with the police force. *"Our relationship with RCMP is fractured – their views differ greatly from ours. We are approaching the Aboriginal population with two different perspectives. Police are not willing to sign/agree with protocol agreements – we have seven different police forces in our jurisdiction. The police works with the MCFD but not with us – we need to reduce the level of resistance with the RCMP working with (finding) at risk youth. We are told, 'Send us their dental records'."*

The participants shared a general perception that there is an imbalance of power, with much of the power located outside of the Aboriginal community. They feel that power and decision making needs to be restored to the Aboriginal community for true reconciliation. It was stated

that, *"We need to be able to make the decisions that affect our people."* For some, building successful partnerships with non-Aboriginal service providers has proven difficult terrain in many areas.

In terms of relationships with other urban Aboriginal organization providers, protocols have proven to be important and useful. The success of an agency is based on a level of support from other agencies. Most organizations agree, *"We cannot do this alone – it is a shared responsibility. We need a community development model with inter-connected work where we are hand-in hand with a shared vision. We need to understand who we are as an organization and what we are here for. We need to work together. We all have a piece - one organization cannot do everything."*

In an era of diminished funding, when many organizations' needs are greater than the available funding, partnerships are important. As well, it raises the question whether available funding is being allocated in the best way possible. Some participants believe that duplication of services is a waste of resources, whereas others claim duplication of services is warranted, as they cannot meet the needs of their client numbers. One agency explained the importance of knowing what it means to share the same clientele, *"We need to shift our understanding of how services are delivered and ownership over issues. You want to join us? You are welcome, let's go share – breakdown divides. Quit stove piping services, we all need to work together. We need partnerships to survive."* However, this philosophy was not shared by all participants. As another participant claimed, *"Aboriginal organizational relationships are difficult. We are competing for the same dollars and there are territorial boundaries and disputes. The poaching mentality is all about the survival of the organization."* Another participant shared their perspective in the following manner, *"Don't step on toes (taking money) or create waves."*

The fear expressed by many organizations is that the competition for funds has the potential to divide and can lead to a potential lack of focus on what matters most - what is best for the client, not individual organizations. The issue of funding was a central concern of many organizations and is considered further in the section below of relationships with government.

Relationships with Government

"Facilitate success – look at the birthrate of the Aboriginal people – educate the Aboriginal population – they are the largest population – the Aboriginal people will have to save the country once again – just like they did with the settlers."

The relationship with government goes beyond ways of partnering with ministries and other

agencies in service delivery and extends to how urban Aboriginal organizations themselves are expected to deliver their own programming. One expressed concern in this regard was whether government reporting and funding structures are harming service delivery by compromising Aboriginal values.

One participant explained, *"We do things differently; we plan for next season, in accordance to tradition."* Because of funding requirements there are some organizations that feel they have stopped being Aboriginal People in the way service is delivered. *"Currently, everything is going through mainstream programs – no cultural awareness and the knowledge does not meet the needs of Aboriginal populations. There is a lack of empathy from government, lack of understanding for Aboriginal issues and needs, and there is historical trauma. Government delivers services and changes programs without looking at us through an Aboriginal lens. The government spends more money on court battles rather than on funding the programs that work. Particularly, outcomes based contacts don't always work, as the numbers do not make sense without the story. One cannot measure the impact and change to one's life. That is not what this is about. Does it matter how many people were there? It is the strength that is gained – how do we measure that?"*

There is much frustration around the funding process. Programs are proposal driven and require much time and effort. Constantly writing proposals that are annually based and come in at different times makes the organizations feel like they are in a continuous battle trying to secure funds when one could be delivering more services. And when programs end or are interrupted the consequences are serious. One organization discussed the impact on the client when funding is cut and the possible ramifications. *"What happens to the client when funds are cut and the programs end for a few years at the most critical time in someone's life? What if the client was fourteen and there's no programs for three years? That is an eternity in a child's life. That client is now seventeen and what has happened to that person in those three years? That is a huge gap. They are so vulnerable. They have nowhere to go and become involved in things that are not safe. The risk is not the client is going to get a bad mark for a couple of years…the risk is much, much higher than that. The risk is so high we are now potentially becoming sisters in spirits - looking at vigils. The risk now equals potential vigils."*

The need for funding structures to be transformed was made clear. At this time, programs are funded the old way with annual funding which is a lot of work and uncertainty. One agency remarked, *"We are cleaning up historical trauma – it is not going to happen in a year or two – we need more time. Two years makes a difference. What we really need is blocked funding in five year chunks. Then we have security knowing we can move forward."* It is believed that there would be better outcomes if there were more consistent, secure programs with stable funding. Without security it is difficult to secure good workers and the organizations cannot commit to

guarantee permanent positions required for staff retention. The ongoing application process limits program delivery and ultimately the clients suffer. In order to meet the client's needs, flexible funding while organizations develop programs would be more beneficial. For example, one organization has discovered creative ways to engage clients and now offers an equine therapy program that works. Flexible and secured funding is one way to build sustainability internally and assist with healthier community development for the clients.

Relationships with Industry

"The key to success is with mentorship opportunities - There must be a good fit between journey person and apprentice"

In the Western provinces relationships with industry are and continue to be an area where relational and capacity building is needed. It was noted by many that urban Aboriginal organizations are struggling to build effective working relationships with business and industry. Most of the organizations have mixed feelings about how and when to engage with industry and what that would even look like. Even though some of the urban Aboriginal organizations have no direct dealings with industry they have stated they would like to develop them. Others immediately backed away and said they don't even go there, as it is such a contentious issue for their organization; major decisions such as industry engagement are therefore left up to the board. However, engagement with industry is occurring on some levels such as trades' forums and mini trade fairs but it is a slow process.

Although most of the work on industrial projects is, in one form or another, occurring on traditional territory, many of the urban Aboriginal organizations feel they are not included in talks particularly when industry is meeting with on-reserve communities. One agency reported, *"With industry tightening their belt, there is a bit of panic out there, and barriers are increasing – making it harder for people to engage."* The unwillingness to have all parties represented is viewed as quite problematic since 60% of Aboriginal people live in urban centers and transition between the two locations quite regularly.

Another area of concern is that part of the funding criteria to run some programs requires an organization to have industry support. However, this is not as easy as it sounds as one agency described, *"The government does not back the agencies to garner support from industry. Instead, the government gives jobs to the foreign workers. Industry was not asked to or forced to support local workers."* Agencies understand that the industry's needs are focused on immediate needs, but there is no commitment from industry to hire workers once training is complete.

The urban Aboriginal organizations that provide education and training have a desire to connect with employers to understand what they are looking for in employees and to develop programs based on their needs in order to ensure that the organizations' clients will be hired. However, it was reported that engaging with industry is a challenge since, *"They tell you they don't know how to approach/engage with the Aboriginal organizations."* One participant revealed concerns, *"We say we will work with you – they do not commit to hire. Even when they partner with us, they only commit to interview clients, not to hire them, and then pass them off to the oil patch or sub-contractors, who don't have the same degree of investment in the success of our people."* In some instances, it was claimed that reluctance to hire Aboriginal workers/youth is because of prejudice. It is believed that discrimination is based on past experiences and pre-conceived notions of what Aboriginal workers are like.

Even though there are employment programs designed to assist Aboriginal workers obtain the necessary skill set and credentials that lead to self-sufficiency, many believe the design is flawed and sets Aboriginal people up for failure. For example, there is support at the start of a program but that slowly tapers off and there is no continued support throughout the educational journey. Attendance issues are paramount, but no one is really looking at why people cannot continue the training and/or program. This is where Aboriginal people are falling through the cracks and it needs to be looked at more systematically.

Many organizations claim that businesses have now backed away due to low oil prices that have resulted in layoffs and less donations. Organizations are working to ensure equal economic participation for the Aboriginal population and looking for opportunities to demonstrate their skilled workforce. Overall, the consensus is that working with industry is a challenge. Stronger partnerships between industry, local First Nations communities and urban Aboriginal agencies can develop to ensure that Aboriginal people are adequately represented. However, a prerequisite would be to focus on ending racism and discrimination. Employers need to overcome myths and attitudes around the Aboriginal population through Aboriginal Awareness Workshops.

Conclusions and Service Gaps

"We need to acknowledge what is good and what is working"

This research has identified some clear themes and areas that policy needs to address, as well as areas that are working quite well. In terms of areas that are working well, participants identified:

- The creation of safe spaces where urban Aboriginal clients can feel culturally safe and build relationships of trust;
- A pool of dedicated and committed staff in some organizations;
- A recognition of the holistic approach that is needed to address multiple challenges and the design of programs to interact in mutually supportive ways;
- The establishment of protocol agreements which can lead to more effective partnerships;
- Some successful employment and training programs;

However, common concerns were identified in a number of areas, the most obvious of which is concern over existing funding models. Competition for funds has severe implications for both the organization and the clients they serve. There is much distress for the organizations as they feel like the existing grant application process and structure is setting them up for failure. The funding uncertainty creates internal problems for recruitment and retention, as there is no job security for employees who also need to ensure there is a job in their immediate future. This constant staff turnover is also difficult on the clients, as it takes time to build trusting relationships. When the staff constantly changes, unnecessary stress is placed on both the clients and the staff. This makes it more difficult to deliver effective services.

Additionally, proposal writing is time consuming with all the deadlines and the report writing that comes after. Many organizations feel it is difficult to keep up and there is barely enough time to get something developed and implemented before the next call comes out and funding is finished. The concerns are how does an organization stay effective with service delivery when the programs are being cut or no longer around? Moreover, the relational component with clients is equally impacted. Program development requires building relationships to determine clients' needs. Aboriginal people trust the organizations to follow through with what they said they were going to do. When there are changes and cuts to existing programs, this greatly impacts the organization's credibility and ultimately damages relationships. Presently, many organizations believe more time and effort is spent trying to please the funders than the clients. When in fact, the accountability is supposed to be to the communities, but the funder is setting the terms.

As well as the funding model, more funding is required as agencies report that they have been working with the same budgets since 1996 and there has not been an increase in 20 years. As a result, many organizations are looking for ways to become free of the government funding mentality, *"hang around the fort"* attitude, and are looking at social enterprise opportunities. But there are other agencies that do not have the ability or mandate to utilize entrepreneurial opportunities.

Another concern that was clear was the lack of support for the Metis population and organizations. It was quite evident the Métis organizations felt they were being treated as second-class citizens. For example, one agency reported, *"We exist in the moment in a First Nation-centric paradigm –Métis issues are not often front-of-mind and Métis needs are often relegated to the bottom of the priority list. There is not much awareness/focus on Métis – This leads to tokenism, a sash here and there."* Another agency claimed they could not secure any funds for their agency to develop programs for the Metis population and is really struggling to offer any services, as they are strictly volunteer run. A shift in policy/services needs to occur for adequate representation of all Aboriginal peoples.

In addition to these general issues, specific policy gaps were identified which were common to both British Columbia and Alberta. These included:

- How to deal with children in care and the "ageing out" syndrome. Many feel there are not enough supports and resources directed to assist keeping kids out of care and transitional planning needs to be in place for Aboriginal youth to be successful outside ministry care. In essence, the lack of programs and supports translates into another generation of Aboriginal people who are unable to obtain the education required to participate in the economic market and thus are being caught in the cycle of ill-health and dependence;
- Mental health and addiction services and drug and alcohol services are wholly inadequate;
- Suicide prevention and education is essential;
- Lack of affordable housing and homelessness is a major concern. Wrap around social supports that include cultural safety measures are required immediately.
- Elders and the aging population. There are no nursing homes or long-term care facilities designed with the Aboriginal population in mind.

Appendix A

Participating Organizations and Locations

BC (10 communities)

Cranbrook (1)
- Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services

Kamloops (3)
- ATEC Aboriginal Training & Employment Centre
- Secwepemc Child and Family Services Agency
- Lii Michif Otipemisiwak Family and Community Services

Ft. St. John (1)
- Fort St John Métis Society

Prince George (2)
- Prince George Native Friendship Centre
- Aboriginal Housing Society of Prince George
  - Formerly - Prince George Métis Housing Society

Surrey (1)
- Metis Child and Family Services

Vancouver (2)
- Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society
- Aboriginal Housing Management Association

Victoria (3)
- Aboriginal Head Start for BC
- Victoria Native Friendship Centre
- Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services

Alberta (8 Communities)

Edmonton (3)

- Canadian Native Friendship Centre
- Rupertsland Institute Métis Employment Services (MES)*
- Métis Child and Family Services Society

Fort McMurray (2)

- Nistawoyou Association Friendship Centre
- Aboriginal Apprenticeship Initiative

Grand Prairie (2)

- Grande Prairie Friendship Centre

- Western Cree Tribal Council Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Agency

Lethbridge (1)

- Aboriginal Housing Society

Medicine Hat (1)

- Saamis Aboriginal Employment and Training

*Metis Only