



Five-Year Departmental Evaluation Plan 2024-2025 to 2028-2029

June 2024
ISC Evaluation



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Canada

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
AASB	Audit and Assurance Services Branch
CFRDO	Chief Finance, Results, and Delivery Officer
CFSR	Child and Family Services Reform
CIRNAC	Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
DRF	Departmental Results Framework
ESDPP	Education and Social Development Programs and Partnerships
FAA	<i>Financial Administration Act</i>
FNIHB	First Nations and Inuit Health Branch
FTE	Full-Time Equivalents
GBA Plus	Gender-based Analysis Plus
Gs & Cs	Grants and Contributions
ISC	Indigenous Services Canada
LED	Lands and Economic Development
MRAP	Management Response and Action Plan
PMEC	Performance Measurement and Evaluation Committee
RO	Regional Operations
SMC	Senior Management Committee
SPP	Strategic Policy and Partnerships
TAG	Treaties and Aboriginal Government
TBS	Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
UNDA	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act
UN Declaration	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UPIP	Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples

Deputy Head confirmation note

I approve the Departmental Evaluation Plan for Indigenous Services Canada for the fiscal years 2024-25 to 2028-29, which I submit to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat as required by the Policy on Results.

I confirm that the following evaluation coverage requirements are met and reflected in this five-year plan:

- Plans for evaluation of all ongoing programs of grants and contributions with five-year average actual expenditures of \$5 million or greater per year;
- Meets the requirements of the Mandatory Procedures for Evaluation; and
- Supports the requirements of the expenditure management system, including, as applicable, Memoranda to Cabinet, Treasury Board Submissions, and resource alignment reviews.

I will ensure that this plan is updated annually and will provide information about its implementation to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, as required.

Original signed on _____, 2024, by:

Gina Wilson
Deputy Minister
Indigenous Services Canada

1.0 Introduction

This document presents the Five-Year Departmental Evaluation Plan (“the Plan”) for Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) covering fiscal years 2024-25 to 2028-29. The development of this Plan adheres to the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) Policy on Results (2016) under which the federal evaluation function is called upon to provide evidence that helps the Government of Canada demonstrate that its spending contributes to results that matter to Canadians. This five-year rolling Plan has been informed by an annual planning exercise that identifies the timing of the individual evaluations.

The primary purpose of the Plan is to help the Deputy Minister ensure that credible, timely and neutral information on the ongoing relevance and performance of planned spending and ongoing programs of grants and contributions is available to support evidence-based decision-making.

The Plan also:

- Provides an opportunity to align evaluations to ensure that the information needs of the Department and other evaluation users (e.g., Indigenous partners and other government departments) are being met;
- Helps ensure that evaluations supporting program redesign and transformation are planned and completed in advance of shifting priorities and program renewal dates;
- Outlines the evaluation innovation work in the context of service transfer and efforts to build internal and external evaluation capacity.
- Initiates regular communication and consensus-building on evaluation needs and priorities across the Department;
- Provides central agencies with advanced notice of when evaluations will be available to inform their work (e.g., in support of Memoranda to Cabinet, Treasury Board Submissions, etc.);
- Allows departmental units responsible for the development of the Departmental Plan and the Departmental Results Reports, as well as other groups engaged in strategic planning and reporting activities, to identify when evaluations will be available to inform their work; and
- Ensures transparency with partners and the general public regarding availability of evaluation results, planned evaluations and program spending. Moreover, the Plan serves as an important tool for the Department’s Head of Evaluation and ISC Evaluation to manage project workflow and plan the activities of its human and financial resources.

2.0 Planning context

In 2016, the Government of Canada adopted and committed to the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN Declaration)¹. In 2021, the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (UNDA) came into force. The Act affirms that the UN Declaration has application in Canadian law and commits Canada to create and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of the UN Declaration. The [2023-2028 Action Plan](#) outlines the actions Canada must take in partnership with Indigenous Peoples to implement the principles and rights in the UN Declaration and to further advance reconciliation in a tangible way.

¹ United Nations. (2008). United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

ISC is specifically designated as the lead or co-lead of 34 of these 181 measures, alone or in partnership with other federal departments. Within the Action Plan, the Government of Canada also committed to working more collaboratively with provinces and territories to improve fair and equitable access to quality and culturally safe health services and advance measures in areas of education, child and family services and economic reconciliation including meaningful consultation and cooperation with Indigenous partners, organizations and governments.

The need to fully implement the rights enshrined within the UN Declaration and the UNDA has been echoed by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and the most recent Mandate Letter to the Minister of Indigenous Services Canada.

In seeking to fulfill the department's mandate, Indigenous Services Canada is working towards fundamental change in how the rights and needs of Indigenous Peoples and communities are met by the Government of Canada, while putting the emphasis on the right of self-determination. Indigenous control over service design and delivery is essential to ensuring high-quality, culturally relevant services - services that ultimately will lead to better socio-economic outcomes for First Nations, Inuit and Métis individuals, families and communities. This shift will not happen overnight, but gradual advances in individual program and service areas are necessary to move us forward on this principle. The expectation is that ISC will, amongst other operating principles, recognize and promote Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing, as well as collaborating closely with Indigenous Peoples and partners.

2.1 Departmental mandate and vision

ISC's mandate is to work with First Nations, Inuit and Métis to:

- improve access to high-quality services
- improve well-being in Indigenous communities across Canada
- support Indigenous Peoples in assuming control of the delivery of services at the pace and in the ways they choose

ISC envisions itself as being a trusted partner that respects Indigenous perspectives and supports First Nations, Inuit and Métis in controlling the delivery of high-quality services for healthy, prosperous and thriving communities.

The ISC mandate and vision, inspired by the Department of Indigenous Services Act², and the [Department's Strategic Plan](#), set the foundation for the evaluation function's strategic and operating context and priorities. ISC Evaluation acts as a catalyst for meaningful change as the department and partners work together to reform and re-design programs for improved service delivery and gradual transfer of control of services to Indigenous partners. More broadly, the evaluation function aims to work collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples and organizations to influence and shift ISC's internal, organizational culture in favour of becoming more centered on Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews.

2.2 ISC Evaluation - Vision

The role of ISC Evaluation is to offer robust, timely and meaningful evidence to help shape and support the re-design of the Department's policies and programs, and to inform and influence improved service delivery and the transfer of services to Indigenous partners and contributes to

² [Department of Indigenous Services Act \(justice.gc.ca\)](#)

the broader the Government of Canada's commitments to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

ISC Evaluation is transforming its practice to deliver on the following three primary objectives:

1. Ensure that evaluations are grounded in an understanding of the colonial history of the department and co-develop, adapt, and implement evaluation methods and approaches with Indigenous Peoples and partners that are more centered on Indigenous worldviews and knowledge systems;
2. Explore and implement ways to support Indigenous evaluation capacity and advance Indigenous-led evaluation functions in the context of gradual transfer of services to Indigenous partners and peoples;
3. Deliver and manage core work on program evaluations and activities further to the TBS Policy on Results (2016) and the *Financial Administration Act* (FAA);

2.3 ISC Evaluation innovation projects and other priorities

Co-development and Co-creation with Indigenous Partners

ISC Evaluation is increasingly emphasizing models of co-development and co-creation with Indigenous partners in all evaluation projects. In the short- to medium-term, this includes ways to integrate Indigenous evaluation expertise, knowledge, world views and/or Indigenous capacity development at key points in evaluations (planning, methodology, data collections, and development of findings and recommendations, and reporting). In the long-term, the ultimate goal is to support the establishment of Indigenous evaluation functions outside of government. In general, the evaluation innovation projects have the following objectives:

- To support Indigenous evaluators and experts, research institutes, think tanks, and/or organizations to advance the implementation of ISC program evaluations with a focus on service transfer.
- To support Indigenous organizations to strengthen their capacity to implement program evaluations, enhance and coordinate Indigenous policy and evaluation networks, and organize the Indigenous policy and evaluation field (e.g., conferences, a center of excellence, etc.)
- To partner with Indigenous evaluators, researchers, think tanks, and/or organizations to advance evaluations tools, guides, policies, strategies and other evaluative practices that integrate Indigenous knowledge and worldviews.

In this context, ISC Evaluation continues to support two multi-year evaluation innovation projects with Indigenous partners.

Project A: Centering Indigenous Worldviews within Evaluation Frameworks

Commonly used methodologies for program evaluations are often rooted in Westernized perspectives that do not incorporate the diversity and vibrancy of Indigenous nations, peoples, cultures, worldviews and knowledge systems. These types of evaluation frameworks do not consider Indigenous worldviews when evaluating federal programming, policy and investment. Evaluation frameworks today need to focus on the importance of capacity strengthening, developing relationships based on respect, trust, humility and reciprocity, and the historical, socio-economic conditions and distinction of

nations. The Department is supporting an exploratory research project entitled Centering Indigenous Worldviews within Evaluation Frameworks, which is a partnership between ISC Evaluation and the Indigenomics Institute. This project has included the development of a framework for an evaluation approach that emphasizes overall community-determined well-being and the primacy of relationships, co-designed processes, and multiple mandates. The project is rooted in a dynamic theory of living that considers the complexity of historical, current and evolving relationships with Indigenous Nations, and calls for evaluation processes to be collaborative, inclusive, community-defined, and culturally relevant. The framework is currently being prototyped in the Evaluation of the Economic Development and Capacity Readiness program.

Project B: *Strengthening Indigenous Evaluation Frameworks and Practice*

ISC Evaluation has partnered with Johnston Research Inc. on an exploratory project entitled Strengthening Indigenous Evaluation Frameworks and Practice which aims to build dynamic evaluation tools that are relevant and appropriate for ISC, Indigenous partners and communities. Rooted in the notion that Indigenous Peoples have embedded evaluation into their worldviews and knowledge systems, this project advances a conceptual framework called Awakening the Journey Vision & Model that attempts to overcome the colonial underpinnings of the typical Western logic models. The Awakening the Journey framework has three pillars (Spirit, Relationships and Process) that support a community-centred understanding of priorities, needs, change and visions for the future over a holistic view of time (past, present, transition/evaluation-phase, and future). In order to learn from experience and improve ISC Evaluation's use of this approach, the evaluation of the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples program is currently prototyping the Awakening the Journey framework, with its terms of reference, methodology, data analysis and findings being framed by this approach. Data collection for this evaluation took place in fall 2024, during which the evaluation team travelled to communities in eight provinces to meet with Indigenous partners, build community connections, and see and experience on-the-ground initiatives funded by the program. Ensuring the evaluation remains grounded in Indigenous languages, cultures, and values, a pilot translation project will see high-level evaluation products translated into a range of Indigenous languages.³ The final report for this evaluation is anticipated by fall 2024, in addition to a condensed, accessible, alternate-format community report with a target audience of community members who contributed to the evaluation.

Clustering Evaluations

ISC Evaluation sees clustering evaluations as an effective method to determine how programs are working together and what the overall impact of multiple programs is within communities. The cluster approach means the implicated programs are evaluated as a system rather than at the detailed and programmatic level which has been past practice. Evaluating programs in a cluster provides a more holistic view of the interrelationships between and among programs and the broader impacts of the clustered programs on communities. Additionally, breaking down silos in evaluation work has been an ongoing and important theme with Indigenous partners. New and emerging Indigenous-led evaluation frameworks emphasize holistic evaluation

³ Languages were selected based on prevalence, relevance, and geographical representation. An overview of the Awakening the Journey framework is available* in Plains Cree, Michif and Inuktitut; the evaluation questions and the Executive Summary of the evaluation Terms of Reference are available in these languages as well as Mi'kmaq. The Executive Summary of the Methodology Report is available in Ojibway, Inuinnaqtun, Denesuline. Future translations will include the Executive Summary of the Final Evaluation Report as well as a Community Report, which will present the evaluation findings using innovative means with the goal of increasing accessibility for communities. These translations are available upon request.

approaches as an important way to uncover systemic barriers and to have greater impacts on improving overall community well-being.

The clustering approach also aligns more closely with the structure of the Departmental Results Framework (DRF) that supports a single 'Core Responsibility' focusing "Indigenous Well-being and Self-determination". The recently instituted structure shifts the organization of the department's programs from service delivery types into those that support outcomes for Indigenous Peoples and communities—aligning with the department's mandate and vision to support and empower Indigenous Peoples to independently deliver services and address socio-economic conditions in their communities.

In general, the conduct of cluster evaluations requires unique yet mixed sets of skills, including expertise in systems and complexity theory, evaluation theory, Indigenous cultural competencies, and to some extent, expertise in the program itself and in other administrative/organizational system-level domains (e.g., HR, Financial, data, etc.). The challenge is that, in many cases, the department's programs were not designed or implemented in a systemic way. Due to this complexity, additional effort is required in the planning and co-development phase. While cluster approaches offer some economies such as common frameworks, a generic theory of change, and the development of common interview guides and data collection tools, this approach does require more time to do as well as substantial financial and human resources.

ISC Evaluation recently applied this method to evaluate six health programs in a single evaluation in order to take a holistic view of how the multiple programs work in concert to improve health infrastructure for First Nations and Inuit communities. The Cluster Evaluation of Health Infrastructure Support for First Nations and Inuit⁴ took a broad strategic approach, and sought to assess whether the mix of "health system infrastructure programs" meets the current needs of Indigenous communities, supports the Canadian Patient Safety Framework, and aligns with the Department's mandate of transformation in the short term and the transfer of programs to Indigenous Peoples in the long term. This evaluation was successful in producing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges that health infrastructure services are facing, reinforcing the need for increased program information sharing between the regional and headquarters staff. It also pointed out the impact of high staff turnover on the capacity to sustain the delivery of services to communities. The evaluation reported the need to clarify roles and responsibilities regarding ISC's mandate on service transfer. Overall, the cluster approach was found to provide a higher-level view of program achievement but it also confirmed the expectation that the cluster approach requires experienced evaluators with strong management and analytical skills to deal with the high volume of information.

The implementation of the Departmental Results Framework (DRF) will demonstrate interdependencies across Service Areas that influence socio-economic outcomes (e.g., the social determinants of health). It will provide better alignment for programs that share common objectives, outputs, and recipients (e.g., home and long-term care, infrastructure programs, etc.), improved performance measurement, and a coordinated approach to departmental engagement by Service Area. It will also simplify engagement with the goal of facilitating greater co-development and direction from partners. Service Areas are emphasized as the priority to ensure that service transfer can be achieved through the many forms it may take both at the community and regional, and at times, national level. There are six Service Areas: Health, Children and Families, Education, Infrastructure and Environments, Economic Development, and Governance.

⁴ Final report published 28 June 2023 <https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1699390763434/1699390789242>

ISC Evaluation is confident that clustering evaluations is an important approach going forward as it is better aligned with Indigenous partners' feedback on evaluation approaches as well as the closer alignment with the new departmental DRF. It is recognized that integrating this new approach will take a couple of years as methodologies are refined and as the planning process evolves year over year, but clustering will be increasingly integrated into the ISC Evaluation practice.

Finally, while cluster evaluations focus on a system, not on individual programs, they still provide a "light touch" evaluation on each program in the cluster and provide high level details on individual program relevance and performance. It is important to also note that this approach does not preclude the conduct of individual program evaluations at the sub- and sub-sub levels as may be determined by the priorities and needs of the department and partners. It is expected that many sub-programs will continue to be individually evaluated.

In the immediate term, and with the scope still under development, there will be the following:
The Cluster Evaluation of Primary Health Care

ISC Evaluation has identified two sub-programs, Clinical and Client Care and Community Oral Health Services, to be suitable for evaluating using the cluster methodology. Both sub-programs provide primary care to First Nations and Inuit communities so the evaluation is expected to take a holistic view on how these two programs work to provide essential primary care and dental care, both integral to improving overall health. These two sub-programs are both under the Primary Health Care Program of the Departmental Results Framework, so the clustering approach is consistent with the Branch's strategy of aligning evaluations with the DRF

The Cluster Evaluation of Home and Long-Term Care

ISC Evaluation will also be instituting the cluster methodology for the Assisted Living sub-program and the Home and Community Care sub-program given their similar mandates, target population and service offerings. A cluster approach will enable the evaluation to look at the continuum of care provided through both sub-programs that evolved separately in different federal departments and are now both within the ambit of ISC.

Crosscutting themes of enquiry in strategic/priority areas

The Government of Canada's commitment to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples underpins all of ISC Evaluation's work and activities as reflected in the ISC Evaluation's vision and key objectives. However, there are a number of other lenses which are added to evaluation frameworks that are also important to inform and influence current and future service delivery and the gradual transfer of services to Indigenous partners. These other cross-cutting themes include: Service Transfer; Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) Plus; Indigenous Children and Families; Impacts of COVID-19; and Climate Change.

Service Transfer: One of the primary goals of ISC is to support Indigenous Peoples in assuming control of the delivery of services. ISC Evaluation has an important role to play in terms of informing program change and re-design that supports the transfer of control. As such, ISC evaluations are including standard lines of enquiry in all program evaluations that assess progress towards service transfer; barriers and opportunities to service transfer; and perspectives on service transfer readiness.

GBA Plus: GBA Plus provides a rigorous method for developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating initiatives to provide equal outcomes, with an emphasis on inclusiveness and reaching those marginalized due to a combination of social norms and attitudes; institutional power structures; policies and practices that together can limit access to opportunities.

GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis – a framework for understanding how aspects of a person's identity combine to create different modes of discrimination and privilege. In doing GBA Plus, many factors should be considered. The needs and experiences of different groups of people are influenced by intersecting parts of their identity, the context they are in and their lived experiences. All federal government organizations are directed to apply GBA Plus as part of all decision-making processes.

ISC Evaluators are actively applying the GBA Plus approach in their work, weaving its processes into evaluations to understand how diverse groups of people may be affected differently by ISC policies and programs. To the extent possible, ISC evaluators are applying an intersectional, distinctions-based lens to the whole evaluation cycle, starting at the design phase, through data collection and analyses, and in the generation of findings and recommendations. For example, in the case of the Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Business Development program evaluation, a distinctions-based lens was applied to the designing of the evaluation Technical Advisory Committee to ensure that representation on the committee reflects the diverse knowledge and experience of partners involved in the program. Indigenous perspectives in research and evaluation typically involve an acknowledgment of intersectionality and differential impacts, and further communications between the Government of Canada and Indigenous partners and communities could illuminate new ways to work these perspectives into departmental GBA Plus processes.

Indigenous Children and Families: Most programming at ISC touch the well-being of Indigenous children and families either directly or indirectly. In the effort to emphasize and adopt more child- and family-centered evaluation approaches, lines of enquiry on the impacts of the programming on Indigenous children and families are systematically added to all ISC program evaluations.

Impacts of COVID-19: The consequences of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic had significant impacts on the delivery of ISC programming as travel restrictions were put in place and many Indigenous communities declared a state of emergency, allowing only limited access for essential functions and remaining closed to outside visitors for several months. In addition, regional and community partners faced enormous workload challenges due to the pandemic and the multiple effects across Canada. ISC Evaluation is looking at impacts in each evaluation as a discrete line of enquiry, to investigate lessons learned on programming activities.

Climate Change: It is well understood that Canada's changing climate exacerbates existing challenges and health stressors for Indigenous Peoples in Canada, including wildfires, flooding, permafrost thaw, changing wildlife patterns, and diminishing access to traditional food sources. ISC Evaluation seeks to better understand how Inuit, First Nations and Métis people are experiencing climate change by collecting preliminary and/or cursory information on climate change impacts in Indigenous communities as a cross-cutting theme in all of its evaluations.

Independent Third-Party Evaluation for ISC Reform and Child and Family Services Suite of Evaluations

In the context of the First Nations child and family services reform agenda, evaluation work has become increasingly more elaborate. In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal order of January 26, 2016, found Canada's First Nations Child and Family Services Program to be discriminatory in its funding, and was ordered to cease its discriminatory practices, reform the Program, cease applying a narrow definition of Jordan's Principle, and to take measures to immediately implement the full meaning and scope of Jordan's Principle.

This led to the 2021 Agreement in Principle on long-term reform signed between Canada and the Parties, along with Consent Order 2022 CHRT 8 that requires Canada to "work with the Parties to establish an Expert Advisory Committee within sixty (60) days of ... [the] order to develop and oversee the implementation of an evidence-informed work plan to prevent the recurrence of discrimination ... [and to] take reasonable measures to begin implementing the work plan."

As such, Indigenous Services Canada's Evaluation Branch is supporting an Expert Advisory Committee to advise on the development and implementation of an independent third-party evaluation. This is the first time that such an internal review has been conducted at Indigenous Services Canada and is distinct from our ongoing program evaluation work. The evaluation will identify and provide recommendations to redress departmental processes, procedures and practices that contributed to the discrimination identified by the Tribunal to transform what has been described by the Tribunal as the "old mindset."

Ongoing engagement and Indigenous evaluation capacity

Engagement approaches can be expected to vary by evaluation project as some programs have well-established engagement protocols with national Indigenous organizations, regional Indigenous organizations, Indigenous technical/manager working groups, and communities while others do not. ISC Evaluation works with individual programs to determine best approaches for engagement while at the same time is exploring opportunities with Indigenous experts in the evaluation community and/or the private, academic and not-for-profit sectors. ISC Evaluation is also exploring the adoption of distinctions-based evaluation approaches, which would require tailoring evaluations to explore the unique operating environments for some Programs (e.g. urban versus rural differences) and discussions with national Indigenous organizations are ongoing.

In general, ISC Evaluation has a number of engagement practices that enable and advance Indigenous evaluation involvement:

- Establishing working groups or advisory committees that include internal and external subject matter experts and community members. The main purpose of these working groups is to ensure evaluations are undertaken in a culturally responsive and appropriate manner, and they produce meaningful results that are oriented on Indigenous worldviews and perspectives;
- Developing meaningful relationships with Indigenous professional organizations to leverage their sectoral expertise in specific evaluations;
- Travelling to Indigenous communities for engagement and data collection rooted in ceremony, respect, and reciprocity, as defined by each participating community;
- Hiring Indigenous-led evaluation consulting firms;

- Working with partners to achieve high Indigenous/community representation in data collection activities (focus groups, surveys, informant interviews) while taking into consideration Indigenous principles of data sovereignty;
- Seeking guidance from Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers throughout the evaluation journey, where possible; and
- Bringing Indigenous partners to co-present to Senior Management at critical stages of the evaluation.

As an example, for the Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples (UPIP) program evaluation, the evaluation team determined that a Technical Advisory Committee would be created to advise on the design of the evaluation and to provide feedback on the evaluation findings. Committee members included representatives from ISC Evaluation, UPIP Program staff, the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples, the National Association of Friendship Centres, the National Urban Indigenous Coalitions Council, the Native Women's Association of Canada, the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, and rotating knowledge keepers representing First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities who opened and closed the meetings, as well as provided their wisdom throughout.

The UPIP Technical Advisory Committee provided guidance on the evaluation terms of reference, methodology, partners to be engaged in the evaluation, preliminary evaluation findings, the final evaluation report, and the final community report. Guidance took the form of two formal group meetings and more than 40 individual consultations, including initial consultations with each Committee member before the development of the evaluation Terms of Reference in order to identify and discuss their specific needs and priorities for the evaluation. Committee members were invited to provide feedback through meetings and/or written correspondence and, if desired, could have their feedback remain anonymous. Notes of all consultations were circulated back to Committee members to provide an opportunity for members to edit and/or add to their feedback. Throughout the evaluation, the evaluation team additionally regularly consulted other Indigenous partners informally to ensure that evaluation activities and deliverables were culturally relevant.

In support of Indigenous evaluation capacity, ISC Evaluation supported the inaugural **Indigenous Evaluation Summit**, held by the Indigenous Evaluation Network. The Indigenous Evaluation Summit was held virtually over two days in February 2024 and fostered knowledge transfer, networking, and creative discourse related to Indigenous evaluation practices and methodologies. The Summit marked a significant milestone in advancing Indigenous evaluation practices, signaling a renewed commitment to enhancing Indigenous research methodologies and evaluation frameworks.

The Summit brought together 220 evaluators and program staff to share their experiences with Indigenous evaluation practices, with a particular focus on Indigenous youth, whose attendance was sponsored by the Summit. There were several networking sessions to build connections among those working with Indigenous evaluation approaches, and thematic discussions were facilitated by leading Indigenous evaluators, with topics including self-determination in Indigenous evaluation, Indigenous evaluation in non-Indigenous environments, youth inclusion, and Indigenous evaluation in the federal government. The Summit included various cultural components and featured Elders, drum groups, and singers from the four directions in its opening and closing ceremonies and blessings. Elders and Indigenous knowledge holders actively participated in the Summit and supported breakout sessions and discourse involving Indigenous cultural knowledge about evaluation. The Summit highlighted the contributions that evaluation can make to programs and community decision-making by sharing knowledge and planning for the future.

As ISC Evaluation continues to explore and test approaches to transforming its practice, it will begin consolidating lessons learned into the groundwork for its own service transfer strategy. This strategy will include the development of a suite of potential approaches, which can be selected for and tailored to individual programs, to gradually and purposively shift evaluation responsibilities to Indigenous governments and organizations. This suite of approaches will build on successful models that have been implemented in different contexts, including:

- The British Columbia Tripartite Framework Agreement on First Nations Health Governance.

The agreement requires a tripartite evaluation to be conducted every five years, allowing the parties to participate in and guide the evaluation as equals. Accordingly, the scope of ISC Evaluation's role in assessing the program under the *Financial Administration Act* and Policy on Results is limited to look exclusively at ISC's support role in the Tripartite Relationship.

- The Miawpukek Grant Agreement.

The agreement placed responsibility for leading the evaluation in the hands of Miawpukek First Nation. Beyond the collaborative development of the evaluation Terms of Reference with Miawpukek First Nation, ISC Evaluation's accountability under the *Financial Administration Act* and Policy on Results was limited to tracking the progress of the evaluation.

- The Evaluation of the Mental Health Program.

The Evaluation Working Group highlighted the need for an Indigenous-guided approach focused on community voices, while acknowledging that realizing such an approach within the *Financial Administration Act* and Policy on Results timelines would be a challenge. As such, the working group agreed that the initial evaluation would have a Governance-level focus limited to national and regional-level perspectives on key issues, but that it would issue an early recommendation regarding the need for an additional phase of work that should be Indigenous-led and community-focused. This two-phase approach is one of the avenues ISC is exploring to simultaneously fulfil federal evaluation obligations and its commitment.

Corporate advice and management practice

The ISC Evaluation Branch provides ongoing advice to support the development of Treasury Board Submissions and Memoranda to Cabinet. This ensures that evaluation evidence is represented and used appropriately and that plans for future evaluations are properly referenced. The Branch also provides high level commentary and advice on the Department's Performance Information Profiles. The Branch provides annual input into the Departmental Plan, the Departmental Results Report, as well as to the corporate risk and business planning processes. ISC Evaluation participates in the regular Neutral Assessment exercise and the annual TBS Capacity Survey Report, while ensuring the quality of published documents.

ISC Evaluation's Management Response and Action Plan (MRAP) process and tracking tools continue to evolve. The interactive database ISC Evaluation developed to store and structure detailed data for each MRAP continues to provide aggregate information on the status of MRAPs from a departmental, sector, or program level and for different aspects of the MRAP (such as recommendations, action items, and timelines). ISC Evaluation works closely with Programs to develop sound and robust measurable MRAPs which are updated on a quarterly basis and tabled at the ISC Performance Measurement and Evaluation Committee at least once each fiscal year. This database helps ISC Evaluation monitor progress made in addressing

evaluation report recommendations and to ensure commitments are met and program improvements are made. Further, the Department's Results Delivery Unit (Risk and Management Practices) has found this tool excellent for its own tracking and reporting needs (tracking MAF, Risk mitigation action plans, Management Practices activities, etc.) within the Unit.

The potential of the database goes beyond the tracking, monitoring and reporting of MRAPs. For example, from an analytical perspective, it can be mined by using "text" identification and coding methods to uncover hidden insights regarding common or systemic program performance issues and barriers from a cross-sectoral or horizontal perspective. The MRAP tracker and process has become a foundational tool for the Branch's practice management function, including the recently launched interdepartmental discussions on best practices for monitoring the implementation and completion of MRAPs. With other government evaluation functions indicating that it was a best practice across the federal evaluation community, this has led to the creation of an interdepartmental Evaluation MRAP working group that meets on an ad-hoc basis.

In terms of publishing evaluation reports, ISC Evaluation's Practice Management team has improved the approval and posting process significantly in recent years and has dedicated resources to ensure timely and high-quality publications. For example, a style guide has been developed for ISC Evaluation to inform evaluators early in the writing process of the requirements for documents intended for publication on the departmental website. Templates were developed for evaluation reports and other evaluation-related documents to create efficiencies prior to the approval stage of evaluation products.

Finally, the approval processes are quite efficient as the Evaluation function benefits from the Department's new, stand-alone PMEC meetings, enabling ISC Evaluation to seek timely approvals on a vast array of documents pertaining to the extensive, evaluation-based work undertaken by the Branch. The PMEC meetings are planned to be held every two months, or more frequently if needed.

3.0 The year in review

3.1 Progress achieved in 2023-2024

Fifteen (15) program and sub-program evaluations were completed:

1. Healthy Child Development
2. E-Health Infostructure (Health Cluster)
3. Health Planning, Quality Management, Health Services Integration Fund and Quality Improvements and Accreditation (Health Cluster)
4. Health Human Resources (Health Cluster)
5. Health Facilities (Health Cluster)
6. On-Reserve Housing (Infrastructure grouping)
7. Education Facilities (Infrastructure grouping)
8. Other Community Infrastructure (Infrastructure grouping)
9. Land Management Sub-Programs
10. Contaminated Sites On-Reserve (South of the 60th Parallel) Program
11. Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Business Development
12. Miawpukek First Nation Grant Agreement (First Nations-led)
13. Canadian Drugs & Substances Strategy (Horizontal – PHAC-led)
14. Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Program (Horizontal – ESDC-led)
15. National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking 2019-2024 (Horizontal – PSC-led)

Two (2) evaluation reports were published ([ISC Evaluation Reports, and Summary Reports](#)) and are available on the departmental website.

1. Evaluation of Land Management Sub-Programs (April 2024)
2. Cluster Evaluation of Health Infrastructure Support for First Nations and Inuit (December 2023)

Fourteen (14) evaluation projects launched and/or in data collection phase:

1. Mental Wellness
2. Environment Public Health
3. British Columbia Tripartite Health Governance Agreement
4. Evaluation of Non-Insured Health Benefits (Supplementary Health Benefits)
5. Jordan's Principle
6. Inuit Child First Initiative
7. First Nations Child and Family Services (Reform) Synthesis Report
8. Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples
9. Emergency Management Assistance Program
10. Aboriginal Peoples Employment Program
11. Economic Development Capacity and Readiness
12. New Fiscal Relationship
13. Evaluation of the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan: Phase IV (Horizontal - ECCC led)
14. Evaluation of the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (Horizontal - ESDC led)

Practice Management Activities saw the Branch:

- Review 36 Treasury Board Submissions
- Review 30 Memoranda to Cabinet
- Review 9 Program Information Profiles (PIPs)
- Track and report on 10 active MRAPs, comprising 41 recommendations and 121 action items

4.0 The five-year plan

4.1 Scope of Work

One of the consequences of the creation of ISC was a broader scope of work and increased workload because of the additional programs for which the Department is now responsible. In 2017, the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) was transferred from Health Canada to ISC. With this transfer, fourteen programs were moved to ISC. Further, with the ISC and CIRNAC enabling legislation in July 2019, five programs were transferred from CIRNAC to ISC. In total, 19 programs were added and the resulting impact to the ISC Evaluation workload was significant, approximately doubling the number of programs to be evaluated.

Additional challenges include the inherited backlog of several evaluations from the previous shared evaluation function between ISC and CIRNAC and the many budget announcements and investments that expanded the scope of existing programs or introduced new funding streams. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the situation by delaying many evaluation activities.

These variables have resulted in ongoing challenges in completing the planned evaluations and have increased the number of evaluations in the backlog that are beyond the five-year review cycle. With the mandated and important emphasis on co-development and service transfer

noted above, and the expanding scope of evaluations, the backlog can be expected to persist for a couple of more years. This situation limits the flexibility ISC Evaluation to take on new (non-mandatory) evaluations that may be of interest to Senior Management given the current challenges to meet important co-development and innovation expectations while also meeting the due dates of the mandatory evaluations to be aligned with FAA requirements.

A key step to address the challenges of the increased scope of work as been an increase in the resources ISC Evaluation has acquired. In addition, the revised Departmental Results Framework has reduced the number of Programs within the Department, which, when applying a clustering approach to evaluations, can be expected to mitigate with workload and the backlog.

4.2 Program structures

Most departmental programs, representing a majority of spending, are delivered through partnerships with Indigenous communities and in very few cases federal-provincial or federal-territorial agreements. However, other funding structures have been established that are expected to become increasingly common as the Department moves to transfer services to Indigenous entities. For example, the British Columbia Tripartite Health Governance program involves a joint agreement between the Province of British Columbia, the First Nations Health Authority and ISC on health governance. Under this agreement, the parties agree to a tripartite evaluation, led by the First Nations Health Authority, with the final report being shared between the parties.

The update of the Departmental Results Framework (DRF) and Program Inventory in 2023-24 reduced the number of Programs and created an opportunity to recast some evaluations. There are opportunities to take a systems (clustering) approach to evaluations to examine impacts by the service areas described in the DRF. While changes to the DRF increased the number of authorities from 30 to 37, the number of Programs decreased from 33 to 18.

As a result of this new program structure, the number of evaluations exceeds the number of programs in the Program Inventory. This is because there can be a number of distinct sub-programs that are included under larger Program areas. There are some sub-programs that have their own funding authority which alone supports the rationale for a separate evaluation that can identify improvements that might otherwise be lost in a larger evaluation. There are a number of evaluations at the sub-program and sub-sub program levels that are well underway. The transition to the new program structure will take a couple of years and it is expected that in many cases sub-program evaluations will continue to be necessary due to risks, materiality, priorities and practicalities.

It continues to be the case that a one-to-one relationship between the authorities listed in the Main Estimates and the Program Inventory of ongoing programs of grants and contributions deemed a 'Program' by the Department exists in very few instances. A number of programs draw on multiple grants and contributions; and conversely, there are grants and contributions that contribute to multiple programs. This Plan has been developed using the Treasury Board's Interim Guide on Results, which was updated most recently in August 2018, where there is the recognition that a 'program' of grants and contributions can cut across two or more programs in the Program Inventory and the relationship is not always one-to-one. This structure has presented the Department with some challenges in ensuring evaluation coverage for all authorities because of the segregation of a single authority over multiple programs with different evaluation timelines.

4.3 Evaluation planning methodology

The planning methodology is a multi-step process that begins with a review of the previous year's planning approach to update the steps where necessary and to review all relevant guidance and planning documents, such as the current Departmental Plan and Treasury Board commitments.

Evaluation planning was conducted in alignment with the 2023-2024 Departmental Results Framework, which remains in effect for 2024-25, while balancing the evaluation projects that are ongoing or well into the planning process.

The Core Responsibility for ISC is: Indigenous Well-Being and Self-Determination.

Six service areas have been described:

1. Health
2. Children and Families
3. Education
4. Infrastructure and Environments
5. Economic Development
6. Governance

[Appendix A](#) presents the entire Program Inventory for ISC by service area.

The Plan is also expected to align with the Department's Risk-Based Audit Plan, which is prepared by the Audit and Assurance Services Branch (AASB). The AASB is part of the Audit and Evaluation Sector of CIRNAC and it serves both CIRNAC and ISC. As has been past practice, consideration is given to timing audits and evaluations in a way that does not overburden programs.

Each evaluation included in the Plan has been further assessed as to the type of evaluation required based on the review of *Financial Administration Act* or Treasury Board requirements and stakeholder consultations, as well as noting whether it is a horizontal or non-horizontal evaluation.

According to Section 42.1 of the *Financial Administration Act*, government departments and agencies must review, at least once every five years, the relevance and effectiveness of each ongoing grants and contributions program. Credit for evaluation coverage is granted upon deputy head approval of an evaluation report. Evaluation planning is conducted with that requirement in mind, reviewing the last fiscal year in which a program was evaluated, and scheduling completion and approval of the program evaluation five years later. Note that programs that are not funded through voted grants and contributions are not subject to the *Financial Administration Act* requirements.

However, as per the Policy on Results (Section 2.5), programs with five-year average actual expenditures of less than \$5 million per year can be exempted from Section 42.1 and do not need to be evaluated every five years. Guidance from Treasury Board Secretariat states the five-year average is to be calculated on three years of actuals (Public Accounts) and two years of planned spending (Main Estimates). These calculations were conducted as part of the planning process to inform that evaluation schedule.

ISC Evaluation conducted individual consultations in May, 2024 with ISC senior management on the draft five-year schedule of evaluations to obtain their input on priorities for their

respective sectors and on the timing of evaluations. Their input was synthesized and considered as part of the finalization process for the five-year schedule. The following senior management offices were consulted:

- Senior ADM Regional Operations
- Associate ADM Regional Operations
- Senior ADM First Nations and Inuit Health Branch
- ADM First Nations and Inuit Health Branch Regional Operations
- Chief Finances, Results and Delivery Officer
- ADM Child and Family Services Reform
- ADM Lands and Economic Development
- ADM Education and Social Development Program and Partnership
- ADM Strategic Policy and Partnerships Sector
- ADM Communications
- ISC Chief Audit Executive
- ISC Chief Data Officer
- ISC Chief Information Officer
- ISC HR Director General

4.4 Planned spending

Based on the Main Estimates, total planned spending for 2024-25 is outlined in the table below according to the Department's Service Areas.

Table 1: ISC total planned departmental spending (2024-2025) by Service Area

Service Area	2024-2025 planned spending
Health	\$6,263,042,491
Children and Families	\$5,435,494,537
Education	\$3,456,920,883
Infrastructure and Environments	\$4,819,017,997
Economic Development	\$224,063,215
Governance	\$558,709,365
Internal services	\$281,642,565
Total	\$21,038,891,053

Source: 2024-25 Main Estimates. Figures include the following expenditures: salary; operations and maintenance; capital; statutory and grants and contributions funding; and the costs of employee benefit plans.

4.5 Coverage

The planning process has identified 54 discrete evaluation program or sub-program projects for the department over the next 5 years. ISC Evaluation is clustering evaluations to take a systems approach to impact, which has resulted in 46 evaluation projects:

31

31 program and sub-program level evaluations are planned to meet mandatory evaluation requirements, including fulfilling evaluation commitments specified in TB Submissions and addressing requirements of the FAA.

9

9 horizontal evaluations are on the schedule that will address initiatives across multiple departments and organizations. ISC is a partner department in these horizontal evaluation projects.

4

4 cluster evaluations capturing 11 programs or sub-programs

2

2 discretionary evaluations are scheduled that have been identified as departmental priorities to support internal decision-making.

These evaluation projects will cover 99% of planned departmental spending from 2024-25 to 2028-29. Departmental planned spending includes salary, operations and maintenance, capital, statutory payments and the costs of employee benefit plans, as well as grants and contributions funding. The remaining <1% represents the Statutory, Legislative and Policy Support to First Nations Governance sub-program that is not being evaluated, as well as most Internal Services (\$281,642,565).

Table 2: Planned Coverage of Planned Spending:

Fiscal year	Departmental spending	Percentage coverage	Number of evaluation projects
2024-25	\$4,134,478,057	20%	12
2025-26	\$11,720,809,557	56%	17
2026-27	\$41,494,060	0%	4
2027-28	\$475,071,633	2%	2
2028-29	\$4,369,941,311	21%	11
Total	\$20,741,794,618	99%	46

Source: 2024-2025 Main Estimates

ISC also covers 100% of its voted grants and contributions amounts.

Table 3: Planned coverage of grants and contributions:

Fiscal year	Voted grants and contributions (Gs & Cs) amount	Percentage coverage voted Gs & Cs	Number of evaluation projects
2024-25	\$2,671,293,978	15%	12
2025-26	\$10,973,047,351	60%	17
2026-27	\$13,869,841	0%	4
2027-28	\$441,076,263	2%	2
2028-29	\$4,225,555,696	23%	11
Planned Evaluation Sub-Total	\$18,324,843,129	100%	46
Exempt & No Planned Evaluation Sub-Total	\$180,207	0.0%	
Total	\$18,325,023,336	100%	

Source: 2024-2025 Main Estimates

4.6 Resources

The Evaluation Branch has the following planned expenditures for 2024-2025 to deliver on the commitments made in the Plan.

Table 4: Evaluation Branch – planned expenditures

Expenditure type	2024-2025 (Budget)
Salaries	\$4,996,277
Operations and maintenance	\$3,464,162
Grants and Contributions	\$0
Full-time equivalents (FTEs)	47

Source: Strategic Policy and Partnerships Sector, Business Management Unit

4.7 Challenges

As noted, ISC Evaluation has an important role to play as a catalyst for meaningful change and to work collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples and organizations. This opportunity does not come without challenges and has created a very fluid operating environment for the Department in general and the evaluation function in particular. While ISC Evaluation takes all possible steps to mitigate these challenges, the mitigation strategies themselves add time to the process.

Evaluations are becoming increasingly complex and are taking longer to conduct. With the importance of co-development and collaboration, time is required to build the necessary relationships with Indigenous partners and departmental program officials. To be effective, partners must be included in the process from scoping, developing Terms of Reference, establishing appropriate methodologies and conducting field work. Consultations with Indigenous partners may result in new approaches that might be incorporated as the evaluation methodology develops and evolves. While the Department has 18 programs in its inventory, there are currently 46 evaluations on the Plan due to new authorities, sub-programs and horizontal evaluations, a figure which has been increasing since the creation of the Department in 2019.

The scope of each evaluation has been expanding and will likely continue to do so. In addition to the standard *Financial Administration Act* (FAA) and Policy on Results questions regarding relevance, effectiveness and efficiency, evaluations must now also include questions canvassing for program impacts on families and children, the application of GBA Plus, whether services provided are culturally appropriate and of high quality, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on service delivery and the affects of climate change. In addition, there are four mandatory questions focused on service transfer and readiness of partners to assume control. These additional areas of investigation add to the time taken to develop and refine questions, gather data, analyse results and synthesize findings.

There are internal challenges for the evaluation function. Timelines for evaluations are lengthening due to more transparent and rigorous procurement practices that have added months to the process of putting contracts into place. There continues to be challenges related to the lack of data, the inconsistency of existing data, and gaps in performance information. Negotiations with ISC Program officials involved in program evaluation can take time to develop to the necessary level of co-operation and understanding. Internal and external capacity issues, particularly skilled evaluators, further exacerbate timelines necessary for pursuing collaborative approaches.

The increasing complexity of evaluations, and current internal challenges, has resulted in the Department developing a backlog of evaluations that are overdue with respect to the five-year evaluation cycle articulated in the FAA. In parallel with this, the evaluation function developed and implemented a “backlog” strategy in 2022 to map out a path towards completing a number

of evaluations that are overdue. The strategy is to adopt a risk-based and balanced approach. For example, depending on priorities and risks, some evaluations will be put on an accelerated schedule, or a 'clustering' approach that groups evaluations together to provide a more system-wide analysis. Other evaluations may be more suited to integrated, co-developed and partnership-based approaches. It is recognized that co-developed evaluations will take longer in order to allow time to build trust and relationships and to integrate Indigenous worldviews and perspectives, ensuring engagement at all stages of the evaluation project. With the *Department of Indigenous Services Act* compelling the Department to focus on co-operation, partnership and readiness for service transfer, it is likely that the backlog will persist for the next couple of years. However, significant progress has been made to address the backlog, particularly in the past year, and the backlog is expected to stabilize within the next few years, based on current planning targets.

Human resources

The dedicated ISC Evaluation Directorate was established in July 2019 with an allocation of 16 full-time equivalents (FTEs) with, at the time, only half of these positions permanently staffed. Evaluation planning exercises have consistently noted the risks to delivering on the Plan because the FTE complement has not been sufficient given the complexity and volume of the work involved. Beyond the 46 planned evaluations, there are also significant requirements and pressures from a practice management perspective (such as tracking and monitoring of Management Response Action Plans, input into TBS Submissions and Memoranda to Cabinet, TBS planning, reporting, and publishing requirements, etc.). Furthermore, ISC Evaluation has a unique and strategic role relative to other evaluation functions across government given its objectives to support and assess 'Service Delivery Transfer' to Indigenous partners and to also advance Indigenous evaluation capacities and evaluation functions outside of government. More generally, the demand for evaluation skills across government presents an additional challenge related to recruitment and retention, most particularly lower and mid-level evaluators. To address the volume and increasing complexity of the work, the Directorate transitioned to a Branch in the Fall of 2024, and has been gradually able to increase its capacity and its FTE allocation up to 47 2024-2025, which can be expected to alleviate some workload pressures.

Continuous improvement of evaluation function. The Branch is taking steps to support the continuous improvement of the function and to address some of the capacity and workload challenges it faces in order to meet its three-part mandate. The focus is on how to establish a function that can act as an effective change catalyst and be a key player in driving the Department's agenda, particularly with respect to building the relationships necessary for co-development work, improving service delivery and supporting eventual service transfer. These steps are also expected to ensure departmental evaluators have opportunities to develop the knowledge and cultural competencies required for their role and also in alignment with the Policy on Results.

Performance information

The availability and quality of performance information remains the major challenge for evaluation activities. The Government of Canada introduced the Policy on Results in 2016 to instill a culture of performance measurement and evaluation, taking a results-focused approach that relies on gathering performance information. All government programs are required to develop Performance Information Profiles (PIPs) to serve as a guide to gather performance information. However, collecting data at the front-line delivery level remains a challenge for program managers given the resources required for setting up databases that can be used to gather data and then create reports. Much of the performance information resides with First Nations communities, with little information available at the regional level to inform evaluations. Accessing data can often depend on the level of community engagement that has occurred.

The Evaluation Team faced challenges collecting internal data, which was not always aggregated or standardized. This is in line with what has been flagged as an issue in ISC's Management Accountability Framework. In order to address this, ISC Evaluation is employing Indigenous evaluation frameworks and participatory methodologies that involve a broader vision of what data is (e.g., creative products, traditional knowledge, on-the-land learning, etc.) and how to collect, store, and disseminate data in a reciprocal way.

4.8 Implementing the plan

Evaluations conducted by ISC Evaluation are used to inform decision-making and reporting (such as the Departmental Plan, the Departmental Results Report), to assess progress made by programs in achieving expected results and to incorporate lessons learned in order to improve program design and delivery. As noted, ISC Evaluation posts approved evaluation reports on its website in a timely manner, after sharing reports with Treasury Board. Given the lengthy timeframes experienced conducting evaluations, preliminary findings are often used to inform decision-making prior to official publication in the spirit of continuous improvement and timely course correction.

ISC Evaluation will work collaboratively with internal and external partners to tailor evaluation projects to meet the needs of decision-makers, with a growing emphasis on innovating and implementing with Indigenous partners novel methodologies and approaches. This work will set the foundation for meaningful and substantive improvements to service delivery and service transfer while at the same time advance culturally appropriate evaluation capacities and functions. This work remains within the flexibilities of the Treasury Board Secretariat Policy on Results.

ISC Evaluation is moving towards developing and implementing special protocols for engagement with Indigenous representative organizations so that First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples can contribute their knowledge and experience throughout the evaluation process. It is through good working relationships built on respect and co-operation that ISC Evaluation can develop culturally appropriate evaluation processes, practices and methodologies, balancing western evaluation approaches with Indigenous ones.

The Department is also working to build internal culturally-responsive evaluation capacity, as well as to support external capacity in collaboration with Indigenous partners with a focus on service delivery. This highlights the recognition that evaluations should address issues important to Indigenous communities, looking at immediate progress and long-term results, and ultimately supporting the Department's unique mandate on advancing self determination, improving the delivery of services and the gradual transfer of services to Indigenous partners

The transition to a Branch in Fall 2024 has resulted in increased Executive support and is expected to improve the capacity of ISC Evaluation to be more responsive and increasingly effective in the priority area of co-development. The reorganization was also designed in a manner consistent with the Departmental Results Framework. The Branch remains committed to delivering the evaluation projects that have been identified for 2024-25. It will continue to address capacity challenges through the ongoing recruitment, development, and retention of talented staff, with an emphasis on Indigenous recruitment, and will continue to implement its strategy to address the backlog of evaluation projects.

5.0 Five-year schedule of evaluations

Year planned	Evaluation title	Sector	Last evaluated	2024-2025 Total planned program spending	Launch date	Expected DM approval
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Mental Wellness Program	FNIHB	2016-2017	\$510,466,786	Dec-21	Dec-24 Q3
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Environmental Public Health Program	FNIHB	2016-2017	\$86,739,214	Dec-21	Dec-24 Q3
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Supplementary Health Benefits Program (Non-Insured health Benefits - NIHB)	FNIHB	2017-2018	\$1,773,030,354	May-22	Feb-25 Q4
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Inuit Child First Initiative	FNIHB	2018-2019	Contained in Jordan's Principle figure	Dec-23	Dec-24 Q4
2024-2025	Synthesis Report of Key Studies and Reviews of the FNCFS Program	CFSR	N/A	N/A	N/A	Nov-24 Q3
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Income Assistance Program	ESDPP	2018-2019	\$1,280,964,569	Mar-24	Mar-25 Q4
2024-2025	Evaluation of Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples	ESDPP	2016-2017	\$271,367,218	Nov-22	Oct-24 Q3
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Youth Employment and Skills Strategy (Horizontal – ESDC led)	ESDPP	2019-2020	TBD	Mar-21	Feb-25 Q4
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Federal Contaminated Sites Action Plan: Phase IV (Horizontal – ECCC led)	LED	2018-2019	TBD	Apr-23	Mar-25 Q4
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Emergency Management Assistance Program	RO	2016-2017	\$197,459,916	Dec-23	Mar-25 Q4
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Strategic Partnerships Initiative (SPI)	LED	2014-2015	\$14,450,000	Jun-24	Mar-25 Q4

Year planned	Evaluation title	Sector	Last evaluated	2024-2025 Total planned program spending	Launch date	Expected DM approval
2024-2025	Evaluation of the Aboriginal Peoples Employment Program (Internal)	Internal Services FNIHB	Never Evaluated	TBD	May-22	Jul-24 Q2
2025-2026	Evaluation of Nutrition North Canada Horizontal Initiative	FNIHB	2019-2020	TBD	Oct-23	Sep-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Communicable Disease Control and Management Program	FNIHB	2014-2015	\$172,488,109	Mar-24	Jan-26
2025-2026	Cluster Evaluation of the Home and Long-Term Care Program	ESDPP FNIHB	2019-2020	\$362,537,394	Sep-24	Sep-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the British Columbia Tripartite Health Governance Agreement (Indigenous Led)	FNIHB	2017-2018	\$671,967,162	Sep-24	May-25
2024-2025	Evaluation of Jordan's Principle	FNIHB	2018-2019	\$1,612,898,179	Dec-23	Jul-25
2025-2026	Cluster Evaluation of Primary Health Care	FNIHB	2018-2019	\$389,339,956	Jun-24	Mar-26
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Family Violence Prevention Program	ESDPP	2017-2018	\$180,722,609	Jun-24	Jul-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of First Nations Child and Family Services (CFS Reform)	CFSR	2014-2015	\$3,232,182,810	Sep-24	Nov-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Community Well-being and Jurisdiction Initiatives Program	CFSR	Never evaluated	\$0	Sep-24	Oct-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Implementation of the <i>Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families</i>	CFSR	N/A	\$471,089,722	Sep-24	Oct-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Program	ESDPP	2020-2021	\$2,941,455,037	Sep-24	Mar-26
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Post-Secondary Education Program	ESDPP	2020-2021	\$515,877,674	Sep-24	Mar-26

Year planned	Evaluation title	Sector	Last evaluated	2024-2025 Total planned program spending	Launch date	Expected DM approval
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Water and Wastewater Program	RO/ FNIHB	2020-2021	\$527,546,879	Jan-25	Mar-26
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Economic Development Capacity and Readiness Program	LED	2015-2016	\$166,316,435	May-22	Dec-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Indigenous Governance and Capacity Program	RO	2016-2017	\$402,550,756	Apr-24	Mar-26
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Grant to Support the New Fiscal Relationship for First Nations	SPP	2019-2020	\$62,160,288 (Grant funds have been distributed across Programs)	Dec-23	May-25
2025-2026	Evaluation of the Surveys on Indigenous Peoples (Internal)	SPP	2019-2020	\$6,676,547	Sep-24	May-25
2026-2027	Evaluation of the Impact Assessment and Regulatory Processes Horizontal Initiative (Horizontal – IACC led)	FNIHB LED	2022-2023	N/A	TBD	Mar-27
2026-2027	Adapting to Impacts of Climate Change (Horizontal – ECCC led)	FNIHB	N/A	N/A	Apr-26	Feb-27
2026-2027	Independent Third-Party Evaluation for ISC Reform	CFSR	N/A	\$0	Jan-25	Mar-27
2026-2027	Evaluation of Individual Affairs	RO	2021-2022	\$41,494,060	Nov-25	Mar-27
2027-2028	Cluster Evaluation of Public Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (Healthy Living and Healthy Child Development)	FNIHB	2022-2023	\$444,603,686	Sep-26	Mar-28
2027-2028	Evaluation of Transformational Approach to Indigenous Data	SPP	Never evaluated	\$30,467,947	Sep-26	Mar-28

Year planned	Evaluation title	Sector	Last evaluated	2024-2025 Total planned program spending	Launch date	Expected DM approval
2028-2029	Canadian Drugs & Substances Strategy (Horizontal – PHAC led)	FNIHB	2023-2024	TBD	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Evaluation of the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Program (Horizontal – ESDC led)	FNIHB	2023-2024	TBD	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Cluster Evaluation of Health Infrastructure Support for First Nations (e-Health Info-structure, Health Planning, Quality Management and Systems Integration and Health Human Resources)	FNIHB	2023-2024	\$241,929,390	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Evaluation of the National Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking 2019-2024 (Horizontal – PSC led)	ESDPP	N/A	\$0	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Urban, Rural and Northern (URN) Indigenous Housing Strategy (Horizontal – CMHC-led)	ESDPP	Never evaluated	TBD	2027-2028	Mar-29
2028-2029	Cluster Evaluation of Community Infrastructure	RO/ FNIHB	2023-2024	\$3,774,665,353	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Evaluation of Lands Management Sub-Programs	LED	2023-2024	\$266,866,395	TBD	Sep-28
2028-2029	Evaluation of the Contaminated Sites On-Reserve (South of the 60th Parallel) Program	LED	2023-2024	\$33,515,201	TBD	Mar-29
2028-2029	Evaluation of Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Business Development	LED	2023-2024	\$52,964,972	TBD	Mar-29

Year planned	Evaluation title	Sector	Last evaluated	2024-2025 Total planned program spending	Launch date	Expected DM approval
TBD	Advancing a Global Resolution for Compensation for First Nations Children and Families – Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle	CFSR	N/A	\$0	TBD	TBD
2028-2029+	Evaluation of the Miawpukek First Nation Grant Agreement (Indigenous Led)	RO	2022-2023	\$12,707,784	TBD	TBD

Appendix A – Departmental Results Framework and Program Inventory

Core Responsibility: Indigenous Well-Being and Self-Determination		
Service Area	Program	Subprogram / Initiative
Health	Public Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Wellness • Healthy Living • Healthy Child Development • Communicable Disease Control and Management • Environmental Public Health
	Home and Long-Term Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisted Living • Home and Community Care
	Primary Health Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical and Client Care • e-Health Infostructure • Community Oral Health Services
	Health Systems Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Planning, Quality Management and Systems Integration • Health Human Resources • British Columbia Tripartite Health Governance
	Supplementary Health Benefits (Non-Insured Health Benefits)	
	Jordan's Principle and the Inuit Child First Initiative	
Children and Families	Safety and Prevention Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Violence Prevention Program (Pathways Initiative)
	Child and Family Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations Child and Family Services • <i>An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families</i>
	Income Assistance	
	Urban Programming for Indigenous Peoples	
Education	Elementary and Secondary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Education Agreements
	Post-Secondary Education	
Infrastructure and Environments	Community Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Education Facilities • Health Facilities • Other Community Infrastructure and Activities • Water and Wastewater
	Communities and the Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land, Natural Resources and Environmental Management
	Emergency Management Assistance	
Economic Development	Community Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development Capacity and Readiness • Indian Oil and Gas
	Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Business Development	
Governance	Indigenous Governance and Capacity Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous Governance and Capacity • Individual Affairs • New Fiscal Relationship: Capacity Building and Engagement • Statutory, Legislative and Policy Support to First Nations Governance • Transformational Approach to Indigenous Data