Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada

Affaires autochtones et
Développement du Nord Canada

Final Report

Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Project Number: 1570-7/09083

June 2011

**Evaluation, Performance Measurement
And Review Branch
Audit and Evaluation Sector**

Canada

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List of Acronyms

AANDC   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

AHAS   Aboriginal Housing in Action Society

CAT   Community Assessment Tool

EPMRB   Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch

EPMRC   Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee

HQ   Headquarters

HRSDC   Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

LFS   Labour Force Survey

OFI   Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

MOU   Memorandum of Understanding

NGO   Non-governmental organization

PIMS   Project Information Management System

RMAF/RBAF   Results-based Management and Accountability Framework /
               Risk-based Audit Framework

UAS   Urban Aboriginal Strategy

Executive Summary

This is the final report of the *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy* (hereafter, the UAS or the Strategy). The evaluation was conducted to inform decisions respecting the continuance of the UAS Contribution Authority (*Renewal and Enhancement of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy Contribution Program: Life Choices, Life Changes*) and to support a report to Cabinet in 2011-12 on progress achieved.

The Terms of Reference for this evaluation were approved by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee on November 17, 2009. It was led by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch with the support of external consultants, including: T.K. Gussman Associates, Inc., in partnership with DPRA Canada; Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting, Inc.; and Data Probe – Economic Consulting Inc.

In line with Treasury Board's 2009 Policy on Evaluation, the study examines the Strategy's relevance and performance (i.e., effectiveness, efficiency and economy), as well as the relevance and reliability of performance data and progress made in addressing the recommendations of past evaluations and audits. The evaluation findings are supported by multiple lines evidence, including:

- *Literature Review and Statistical Analysis:* Over 60 sources of international and national literature were reviewed to provide evidence on relevance and efficiency (i.e., state-of-the art or promising practices in Canada and elsewhere. The review included Aboriginal-specific literature, academic journal articles, and federal, provincial and territorial government website reports and documents. The review also included an examination of Canadian Census and other data sets, and the Environic Institute's 2010 *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study,* which surveyed just over 2,600 Aboriginal and 2,500 non-Aboriginal Canadians living in major urban centres across Canada.[1]

- *Document and File Review:* More than 75 documents and files were examined, including the UAS *Integrated Results Management Accountability Framework / Risk-Based Accountability Framework*, leveraging files, presentations, backgrounders, demographic reports, and other project files and documents. The document and file review also included previous audits and evaluations.

- *Key Informant Interviews:* Interviews were conducted in order to elicit knowledge and perspectives of key informants with respect to the evaluation issues. Thirty-three key informant interviews were conducted with individuals representing the Office of

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[1] Environics Institute (2010). Urban Aboriginal People Study: Main Report.

the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI) (n=7), other federal departments that partner with UAS (n=21)[2], and subject matter experts (n=5).

- *Case Studies:* Case studies and site visits were carried out in each of the 13 participating urban centres. The case studies include a review of relevant background documents (n=156), as well as interviews (n=115) with individuals representing OFI regional offices, UAS managers and steering committee members, Aboriginal organizations and project/program recipients, and federal, provincial and municipal governments. Table 2 provides a breakdown of the number of interviews conducted and documents that were reviewed for each case study. The case studies also included a review administrative and financial data. The intent of reviewing UAS program administrative data was to assess the type, frequency, accuracy and usefulness of data collected; identify data gaps; assess whether performance indicators and data collection methods were relevant; and to review baseline indicators and general data collection approaches.

The findings of this evaluation report support the conclusion that the UAS continues to be relevant. The UAS is designed to allow communities to set priorities and allocate resources to address the local needs of urban Aboriginal people. Given that the urban Aboriginal population is culturally diverse, currently growing and experiencing lower socio-economic outcomes compared with the general population, the need for support is expected to continue into the future. Further, the UAS is consistent with the federal government's objective of providing support to urban Aboriginal people. The Strategy is also aligned with Government of Canada priorities related to economic opportunities and education for Aboriginal Canadians, as well as Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development's Strategic Outcome: "socio-economic well-being of Métis, non-Status Indians and urban Aboriginal people."

The flexible, community-based design of UAS has enhanced the Strategy's ability to partner with stakeholders, identify and address complex issues through project-based funding. However, it has created challenges in managing more strategic issues such as national level partnership development, planning, alignment and coordination among government programs and initiatives.

Specific performance challenges identified in this evaluation include aligning the priorities of various stakeholders, raising the general public's awareness of urban Aboriginal issues, reporting on performance, particularly with respect to how the UAS has impacted communities in the three priority areas (improving life skills; promoting job training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families), and an inability to reconcile the Strategy's horizontal terms and conditions with departmental/agency accountabilities.

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[2] Including representatives from the Treasury Board Secretariat, Public Health Agency, Public Safety, Corrections Canada, Canada Mortgages and Housing Corporation, Human Resources and Skills Development, Western Economic Diversification, and Canadian Heritage.

Despite these challenges, the UAS has successfully brought together a diverse range of partners at the project level, including Aboriginal organizations, provincial and municipal governments, private companies, not-for-profit organizations and a number of federal government initiatives. It has increased awareness of urban Aboriginal issues with those directly involved in the UAS and helped to developing capacity in Aboriginal organizations and UAS steering committees. These accomplishments have served to help align government programming with specific urban Aboriginal committee needs.

At the same time, the evidence suggests that since the Strategy was launched, changes have occurred: growth in the urban population, signs of greater interest in urban Aboriginal issues, as well as efforts to better understand the relations between reserve and off reserve populations, among others. These changes signal an opportunity and a necessity to foster even greater flexibility in order to take advantage of potential synergies with emerging stakeholders.

While acknowledging the delicate balance between local needs and federal priorities, future endeavours should not be undertaken without significant attention being paid to improving the UAS' grasp of its niche and potential impacts, as well as improvements in efficiency and economy in line with the findings that:

- The UAS compliments existing initiatives by developing partnerships and integrating funding mechanisms. There is no evidence that UAS unnecessarily duplicates other initiatives.
- The governing allocations across sites are unclear and resulting in disparities. Moreover, while lessons are being learned respecting balances between capacity and responsibilities, there are no clear benchmarks established for what constitutes acceptable investments in administration, partnerships and capacity building as compared to project related expenses across sites or overtime.
- The UAS has made a number of improvements in the delivery of the Strategy; however, longstanding issues related to the quality of performance measurement have not been addressed.

Based on the conclusions of this evaluation, it is recommended that UAS:

1) Develop clear objectives to guide the Strategy's work, particularly, with respect to capacity building and the achievement of outcomes in outcomes in priority areas.

2) Revise the UAS performance measurement strategy in line with current departmental guidelines and requirements in order to:

   a) improve the monitoring and measurement of results, particularly at the community and sector (or priority) levels;

   b) strengthen the UAS' monitoring and assessment of efficiency and economy across all activity areas; and

   c) allow for the conduct of periodic reviews of the UAS' priority areas with Aboriginal stakeholders and other key partners to ensure they account key priorities at both the regional and federal departmental levels.

3) Consider diversifying the UAS' delivery models and partners so as to maximize the Strategy's reach and impacts.

4) Work closely with federal partners to facilitate efforts to streamline administrative and reporting requirements in horizontal initiatives.

Management Response and Action Plan

Project Title: Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy
Project #: 1570-7/0983

1. Management Response

- OFI welcomes the findings and recommendations of the Summative Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS). Since its inception the UAS has been, and continues to be, a strategy - not a typical federal transfer payment program. Designed as a multi-party partnership between the Government of Canada, provincial and municipal governments, and urban Aboriginal communities to identify community priorities in key urban areas, and develop strategies to address those priorities. This role has enabled the UAS to leverage the mix of programs, services and financial support available from governments and other organizations. UAS plays a unique role as facilitator of partnerships between governments and stakeholders.

  The evaluation highlights that "as a horizontal strategy for building a coordinated approach to service delivery between the provinces and the federal government, (the UAS) is a pragmatic way of addressing the current population demographics of the Aboriginal population, while acknowledging both the special relationship that Aboriginal people have with the federal government, and provincial jurisdiction off reserve".

- The findings and recommendations in the evaluation are consistent with our internal analysis of lessons learned, our strengths, challenges, and recommendations for efficiencies and effectiveness. OFI is pleased that the Evaluation recognizes that the UAS remains relevant and is successful in bringing together a diverse range of partners at the project level. A key finding of the evaluation is that "The flexible, community-based design of UAS has enhanced the Strategy's ability to address complex issues through project-based funding and on-the-ground partnerships".

- Due to the similarities between the evaluation recommendations and OFI's own internal analysis, activities are already underway which will address some of the Evaluation recommendations and it is anticipated it will be completed by the end of the fiscal year. The evaluation found the UAS to be "proactive in identifying areas that require improvement and employs an approach of continuous improvements. Thus, as it gains experience and a better understanding of challenges in the design and delivery model, it attempts to make the appropriate adjustments".

2. Action Plan

Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
1. Develop clear objectives to guide the Strategy's work, particularly with respect to capacity building and the achievement of outcomes in priority areas.	We concur. UAS has clear objectives with respect to the overall strategy and will work to develop measurable objectives and outcomes with respect to capacity building and the priority areas in parallel with the development of the performance measurement strategy.	National Director UAS OFI	Start Date: July 2, 2011 Completion: March 31, 2012
2. Revise the UAS performance measurement strategy in line with current departmental guidelines and requirements in order to: a. Improve the measurement of results, particularly at the community and sector (or priority) levels; b. Strengthen the UAS' monitoring and assessment of efficiency and economy across all activity areas; and to c. Allow for the conduct of periodic reviews of the UAS' priority areas with Aboriginal stakeholders and other key partners to ensure they account key priorities at both the regional and federal departmental levels.	We concur. UAS will revise the draft of performance measurement strategy in line with current departmental guidelines and requirements. The revised PMS will include clear measurement results, monitoring and reviews. As noted in the Evaluation "the execution of robust evaluations [of social funds] faces significant technical challenges. The methodologies for assessing the impacts of social funds are particularly complex" To address these challenges UAS will work with the EPMRB to develop a comprehensive approach for measurement of results.	National Director UAS OFI	Start Date: July 2, 2011 Completion: March 31, 2012
3. Consider diversifying the UAS' delivery models and partners so as to maximize the Strategy's reach and impacts.	We concur. UAS in collaboration with stakeholders will examine possible delivery models for future use with the Strategy	National Director UAS OFI	Start Date: July 2, 2011 Completion: March 31, 2012
4. Work closely with federal partners to facilitate efforts to streamline administrative and reporting requirements in horizontal initiatives.	We concur. UAS, through the Horizontal Terms and Conditions and joint funding agreements,	National Director UAS OFI	Start Date: June 15, 2011 Completion: March 31, 2012

Recommendations	Actions	Responsible Manager (Title / Sector)	Planned Start and Completion Dates
	streamlines administrative and reporting requirements. Increased efforts will be undertaken to eliminate barriers to more effective implementation of the Terms and Conditions. UAS, in collaboration with our signatory departments and the central agencies, will continue to strive to reduce administrative and reporting requirements.		

I recommend this Management Response and Action Plan for approval by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee

Original signed on June 15, 2011 by:

Judith Moe
A/Director, Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch

I approve the above Management Response and Action Plan

Original signed on June 15, 2011 by:

Elizabeth Tromp
Assistant Deputy Minister, Office of the Federal Interlocutor

The Management Response / Action Plan for the Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy were approved by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee on June 20, 2011.

1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluation Purpose and Scope

This is the final report of the *Impact Evaluation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy* (hereafter, the UAS or the Strategy). The evaluation was conducted to inform decisions respecting the continuance of the UAS Contribution Authority (*Renewal and Enhancement of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy Contribution Program: Life Choices, Life Changes*) and to support a report to Cabinet in 2011-12 on progress achieved.

The evaluation's Terms of Reference were approved by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development's (AANDC) Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Committee (EPMRC) on November 17, 2009. The study was led by the Evaluation, Performance Measurement and Review Branch (EPMRB) with the support of external consultants including: T.K. Gussman Associates, Inc., in partnership with DPRA Canada; Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting, Inc.; and Data Probe – Economic Consulting, Inc.

In line with Treasury Board's 2009 Policy on Evaluation, the study examines the Strategy's relevance and performance (i.e., effectiveness, efficiency and economy). The study also examines the relevance and reliability of performance data and progress made in addressing the recommendations of past evaluations and audits. Focussing on the period from April 1, 2007, to the fall of 2010, the evaluation examines UAS activities at the community and national levels as supported by the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians (OFI), as well as coordination with other participating organizations, including other government departments and levels of government, Aboriginal organizations, private sector and not-for-profit organizations. Preliminary findings were presented to EPMRC in late 2010.

1.2 Overview of Report

Section 2 of this report presents a brief profile of the UAS and Section 3 provides an overview of the evaluation methodology. Sections 4 to 6 present the evaluation findings and Section 7 contains the evaluation's conclusions and recommendations. Appendices include the evaluation's Terms of Reference and the UAS logic model.

2. Profile of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy

This section presents a brief overview of the UAS. It includes a background of the Strategy, a description of the objectives and expected outcomes, the resources that were allocated to the UAS, and an overview of the Strategy's management and stakeholders.

2.1   Background and Description

In 1997, the Government of Canada established the Urban Aboriginal Strategy as a means to strengthen its efforts towards reducing disparities between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in urban areas. Its initial objective was: "...to raise awareness about the needs of local communities, improve access to federal programs and services, and to improve horizontal linkages among federal departments and other sectors."[3]

In its 2003 Budget, the Government of Canada announced that it was allocating $25 million over three years to support UAS pilot projects in eight urban centres. Following the 2004 Speech from the Throne, federal funding was doubled to allow participating communities to continue their work and to incorporate additional communities. Responsibility for the OFI (along with the UAS), up to this point in the hands of the Privy Council Office, was transferred to AANDC, with local support provided by Western Economic Diversification Canada and Service Canada.

In 2007, the federal government committed $68.5 million for a further five years in support of the Strategy and the work of participating communities. This renewal was approved with the proviso that updated horizontal terms and conditions be developed that could be used by the following departments and agencies when participating in a UAS project: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Justice Canada, Public Safety Canada, Heritage Canada, Western Economic Diversification and Public Health Agency of Canada.

The UAS currently operates in the following 13 cities whose Aboriginal population represents more than 25 percent of Canada's total Aboriginal population and 45 percent of Canada's urban Aboriginal population:

▪ Vancouver	▪ Prince George	▪ Lethbridge
▪ Calgary	▪ Edmonton	▪ Prince Albert
▪ Regina	▪ Saskatoon	▪ Winnipeg
▪ Thompson	▪ Toronto	▪ Thunder Bay
▪ Ottawa		

The UAS also supports activities in two non-designated sites – Montreal and Halifax, as well as at the national level.

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[3] Spence, C. & Findlay, I. M., (2007), Evaluation of Saskatoon UAS: A research report prepared for the Northern Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Regional Node of the Social Economy Suite, Saskatoon, 44p; Alderson-Gill and Associates Consulting Inc., (2009), UAS Mid-term Review, 43p.

2.2 Program Objectives and Expected Outcomes

As noted in the 2008 UAS Integrated Results-based Management and Accountability Framework/Risk-based Audit Framework (RMAF/RBAF), the main intent of the UAS is to promote self-reliance and increase life choices for Aboriginal people residing in urban centres. The Strategy directly supports the implementation of OFI's strategic outcome - "improving the socio-economic conditions of Métis, non-status Indians and urban Aboriginal people."[4] Its intended outcomes are as follows:

- A community strategic action plan is in place to advance UAS objectives and is being implemented;
- Sustained community capacity is achieved to plan, make decisions and act effectively on those decisions;
- Sustained partnerships and commitments to UAS objectives are developed and government policies at all levels reflect UAS priorities and approaches;
- Federal policies and programs related to urban Aboriginal issues are harmonized;
- The public has a more positive view of urban Aboriginal people and supports federal UAS policies; and
- Improvements in client socio-economic conditions are achieved, leading to increase self-sufficiency and less reliance on social programs.

In order to help achieve these outcomes, the renewed UAS strategically focuses project investments in three project priority areas:

- Improving life skills;
- Promoting job training, skills and entrepreneurship; and
- Supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

The UAS activities are focussed around three components: horizontal coordination, policy development and program management; community priority setting; and program delivery. Appendix A contains a logic model that illustrates how these components are intended to achieve the expected outcomes.

The UAS has an integrated RMAF/RBAF to monitor the achievement of expected outcomes (including indicators, targets, data sources/methods, responsibility for collection and frequency of measurement for each of the performance areas). However, Treasury Board and AANDC Guidance on Performance Measurement have been updated subsequent to the release of the 2009 Policy on Evaluation and as such, the RMAF/RBAF is scheduled to be updated following this evaluation. The limitations of the performance data being captured under the RMAF/RBAF are discussed throughout this report.

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[4] The UAS is a program activity listed within INAC's Program Activity Architecture (PAA) under the Strategic Outcome – Office of the Federal Interlocutor.

2.3 Resources for the Strategy

The UAS was allocated $68.5 million over five years (2007-08 to 2011-12). A key element of the UAS is the continuation of a federal fund to leverage greater investment and respond to emerging situations. The specific allocation of those funds is as follows. [5]

- UAS Community Investment Fund - encourages and utilizes existing horizontal funding mechanisms and aims at obtaining increased provincial and municipal government engagement: $49.5 million (approximately $6.86 million annually). This fund was available in all 13 UAS designated cities.
- UAS Community Capacity Fund - supports community committee structures in each designated centre: approximately $1.895 million annually.
- Central Fund - allocated for national and community (i.e., local) priorities, a portion of which is made available on a competitive basis to all communities once they have committed their initial allocation: approximately $1.025 million annually.

Funding for the UAS is delivered through Comprehensive Funding Arrangements. Each OFI regional office has been allocated funding to assume the delivery of the UAS as its primary responsibility, assisting on other OFI business as appropriate. [6] Eligible UAS recipients are not-for-profit organizations, municipal governments, Aboriginal organizations and service providers and research institutions. For-profit enterprises can also apply for UAS funding as long as their activities address the needs of urban Aboriginal communities and only in cases where the funds received do not contribute to the profit of the enterprise. [7]

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[5] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.
[6] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.
[7] Terms and Conditions: Accessed from http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014355 on December 31, 2009.

The distribution of UAS funds/resources for the 2007 renewal of the Strategy is itemized in Table 1:

Table 1: **Distribution of UAS Funds/Resources, 2007-2012**

Funding Requirements - $68.5 million						
	Contribution Funding			Operating Funding		
Year	Community Investment Fund	Community Capacity Fund	Central Fund	OFI HQ	Regional Support	Total
2007-08	6,800,000	1,895,000	1,025,000	940,000	2,950,000	$13,610,000
2008-09	6,800,000	1,895,000	1,025,000	940,000	2,950,000	$13,610,000
2009-10	6,950,000	1,895,000	1,025,000	940,000	2,950,000	$13,760,000
2010-11	6,950,000	1,895,000	1,025,000	940,000	2,950,000	$13,760,000
2011-12	6,950,000	1,895,000	1,025,000	940,000	2,950,000	$13,760,000
Total	**34,450,000**	**9,475,000**	**5,125,000**	**4,700,000**	**14,750,000**	**$68,500,000**

[Source: OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.]

2.4 Program Management and Key Stakeholders

The Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development also serves as the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, and is the lead federal Minister for the Urban Aboriginal Strategy. As noted in the 2008 RMAF/RBAF, OFI is responsible for ongoing financial and operational monitoring, the audit of program recipient's fulfilment of the terms and conditions of contribution agreements and the reliability of the outcome data.[8]

The management and delivery of UAS projects is carried out using one of two community-based approaches.

- In the Community Entity Model, a single contribution agreement is reached with a legally incorporated organization selected to manage and administer project funding on behalf of the community. The Community Entity is responsible for determining and demonstrating how it can contribute to national priorities, reviewing UAS project proposals, and deciding if a project is eligible. Furthermore, the Community Entity is responsible for administering the UAS Community Investment Fund, taking its direction from the UAS Steering Committee and OFI regional office, identifying projects and opportunities intended to respond to national priorities, and project selection, contracting and monitoring.

- Under the Shared Delivery Model, a proposal is submitted by a potential program proponent to the local UAS Community Steering Committee for review and consideration. The Steering Committee includes members from the Aboriginal community and is responsible for recommending funding allocations to OFI, which then enters into separate contribution agreements with program proponents and

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[8] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.

manages and administers those agreements. The Community Steering Committees are the foundation of this model.

The main roles and responsibilities of committees include: identifying and prioritizing areas of need; developing and implementing community strategic plans; soliciting and reviewing project proposals; assessing proposals against defined priorities and plans; and recommending proposals for funding to OFI. The committees are intended to fulfill the objective of establishing strong and active partnerships between government and community.[9][10] While federal officials ultimately approve the projects, the practice across Canada has been to provide the Steering Committees with a significant degree of autonomy with respect to recommending projects and their associated funding amounts, providing program terms and conditions are met.[11]

2.5   Previous Evaluations, Reviews and Audits

The UAS has been subject to extensive review. To date, there has been a formative evaluation, two mid-term reviews and an audit of the Strategy's implementation. The main findings of each study are summarized below and elaborated in greater detail throughout this report in line with requirements of the Terms of Reference.

The 2005 Formative Evaluation[12]

The main focus of the 2005 formative evaluation was to assess whether the pilot projects, and the pilot project phase of the UAS as a whole, was proceeding as intended, and identify any problems with implementation that need to be addressed. To this end, the evaluation found that encouraging progress had been made in establishing working partnerships with members of Aboriginal communities in most of the participating cities, and in establishing collaborative working relationships across levels of government and within the federal family of departments and agencies. However, it also identified a lack of a commonly understood long-term vision for the UAS among participating governments and Aboriginal representatives, and a lack of practical guidance for implementing the strategic vision.

The evaluation also found there are historic barriers to the further development of collaboration with Aboriginal communities that need to be overcome (i.e., lack of trust that Aboriginal people feel both toward mainstream government, and also frustration with typical government approaches to delivering Aboriginal programs and services, that maintain control and decision-making authority in the hands of non-Aboriginal people, often with little transparency), and some bureaucratic barriers that inhibit creative development of the strategies that the UAS envisions.

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[9] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.

[10] INAC. 2010. Audit and Assurance Services Branch. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of UAS. Project #09/62. May 2010.

[11] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.

[12] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. (2005) Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilot Projects, Formative Evaluation.

The 2006 Mid-Term Review[13]

The 2006 Mid-term Review was initiated to provide UAS managers and regional coordinators with guidance for the remainder of the current pilot project funding period, and to contribute to the preparation of future plans for the initiative. The main focus was on the four UAS cites that began in 2005-06 (Prince George, Lethbridge, Prince Albert and Thompson).

The review found that UAS had made significant progress in addressing issues raised in the formative evaluation, and there remained strong support for the initiative at all levels of government and in Aboriginal communities. In particular, there had been progress in moving from a focus on broad project funding to a greater emphasis on strategic development and longer-term capacity building. However, more attention was required in several areas, including internal federal government coordination and collaboration, and the development of mechanisms, supported at senior management levels, for all governments to overcome bureaucratic barriers in order to better align policies and programs with community priorities and capacities.

The 2009 Mid-Term Review[14]

The 2009 Mid-term Review of the UAS focused primarily on design and delivery issues because it was still early in the funding cycle for the UAS. It found that the UAS had struck a productive and widely-supported balance between its inherent emphasis on community-based planning and activities on the one hand, and the critical importance of the community-government partnership on the other. It had also strengthened and improved the quality of the steering committees in its participating communities, and begun to target with more precision the initiatives that are needed in those communities to address urban Aboriginal issues. At the time of the review, the Strategy had clearly established itself as an active and important focal point for urban Aboriginal issues among federal, provincial and municipal government officials.

The review also found that coordination is limited in scope and largely confined to collaboration on specific projects and that the larger-scale, more strategic alignment of priorities and approaches between departments remained elusive. The UAS were focussed on project funding allocations, and more strategic, longer-term planning and the development of larger, more sustainable initiatives do not receive adequate attention.

The 2010 Audit of the Implementation of the UAS[15]

The audit found that UAS policy advice is supported through analysis and that the program delivery model is generally effective in ensuring that funds are spent for the

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[13] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. (2005-2006) Urban Aboriginal Strategy Mid-term Review.
[14] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. (2009) Urban Aboriginal Strategy Mid-term Review.
[15] INAC, Audit and Assurance Services Branch. (2010) Audit of Implementation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy.

intended purpose. The commitment and personal involvement of all levels of management is clear and the existence of strong direction on strategic aspects of the UAS is evident. While the implementation of the Strategy is not without its challenges, OFI proactively identifies areas for improvement and employs an approach of continuous improvement as it gains experience and a better understanding of both inherent challenges of the delivery model and community specific challenges. The most significant challenge identified during the audit is the need to afford communities with flexibility in how contribution funds are allocated with the need for OFI to ensure that the overall UAS priorities are achieved and that policy compliance is achieved.

The audit identified the need for well defined and defendable community priorities as a key control for ensuring that contribution funds are spent in an accountable manner, and that an appropriate balance between flexibility and control is achieved. Currently, some of the better established UAS communities have thoroughly documented priorities and plans, while some of the newly added communities have little documented support for their priorities and inadequate plans. In essence, the audit found that OFI needs to more clearly define its minimum expectations of community plans and priorities, and provides assurance that communities meet these prior to agreeing to provide maximum flexibility in the types of projects and expenditures funded.

In addition to these findings, it is worth noting that the audit found that while key reporting requirements have been established, the completeness of performance measurement data is in question as results are not yet being captured in relation to all reporting requirements. This includes post-project data that is to be captured in Project Information Measurement System (PIMS) as well as other program results that are to be captured manually. It also called into question the accuracy of the UAS' data on leveraging.

In response to the audit findings and recommendations, OFI, in turn, developed an Action Plan to address the audit's findings. The status of the individual actions, as of March 31, 2011, is identified in brackets below: [16]

- Undertake an analysis to develop a risk-based approach, to focus on levels of community support, and to mitigate any risks (completed).
- Design a template that outlines expectations for elements that need to be included in community plans, while providing these communities the flexibility to reflect their unique situations (completed).
- Clarify any ambiguities that may exist with respect to the nature of eligible projects, activities and expenditures (completed); expectations for leveraging and how it is to be measured, including with respect to new and developing communities (underway); and requirements for the approval of capital expenditures (underway).
- Formalize the process for establishing objectives, prioritizing activities, setting targets, and developing recipient/community service standards and expected outcomes through the development of a framework, including a template for the

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[16] See Audit of Implementation of Urban Aboriginal Strategy – Follow-up Report Status Update as of September 30, 2010 at http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1306777931474.

identification of strategic program objectives and horizontality and alignment. The framework will include both approval and monitoring requirements (complete).

- Formalize the criteria, policies and procedures employed in the process for project solicitation, proposal submission, and assessment of Central Fund projects (complete).

While progress is being made on OFI's Action Plan, the limitations noted by the recent audit also affected the evaluation's capacity to measure performance over time, producing barriers to the assessment of some outcomes, particularly in the three priority areas. Further, given the deficits noted by the audit, figures reported in this report, particularly as related to leveraging data, figures should be considered as indicative rather than conclusive.

3. Evaluation Methodology

The following sub-sections provide an overview of the evaluation, including the evaluation issues, the methods used to collect data, and considerations and limitations for the evaluation.

3.1   Evaluation Issues

The Terms of Reference for evaluation identified the issues to be examined in the study:

- Relevance in terms of whether UAS addressed existing needs and the priorities of AANDC and whether it is in line with the roles and responsibilities of the federal government.
- Effectiveness in terms of achieving the intended outcomes of:
    - Sustained community capacity to plan, make decisions and act effectively in those decisions;
    - Sustained partnerships and commitments to UAS objectives developed and government policies at all levels reflecting UAS priorities and approaches;
    - The public has a more positive view of urban Aboriginal people and supports federal UAS policies; and
    - Demonstrating improvements in the three priority areas: improving life skills; promoting job training, skills development and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.
- Efficiency and economy in terms of resource utilization and a comparison with best practices.

These issues were designed to respect Treasury Board evaluation requirements (i.e., the examination of relevance and performance). In addition, the evaluation was designed to address questions of interest to the Department, specifically, to provide an analysis of the quality and relevance of performance data[17] and to provide an overview of progress made in addressing the recommendations of past departmental evaluations and audits.

More detailed evaluation questions and indicators were developed as part of the evaluation's methodology report and workplan. However, as the study began, EPMRB determined that the specific questions (and corresponding indicators) were overly complex and specific and that the issues established in the evaluation's Terms of Reference were sufficient to conduct the study. As such, this report is framed around the initially approved evaluation issues.

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[17] The Terms of Reference identified 'accountability' as a fourth evaluation issue that focused on verifying if the financial and non-financial information systems and data are relevant and reliable. This issue was covered in depth by the Audit of the Implementation of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (2010) [http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1321566188462 and therefore was not included in this report. Section 3.3 provides a summary of the audit findings as they relate to this evaluation.

3.2   Data Collection Methods

In line with EPMRB's Aboriginal Engagement Policy, the perspectives of Aboriginal organizations and community leaders were sought through interviews, case studies and through the literature review. As per EPMRB's Quality Assurance Strategy, the evaluation includes multiple lines of evidence, described below, and triangulated where possible:

Literature Review and Statistical Analysis
The literature review was intended to inform the evaluation regarding the relevance of the Strategy and the existence of best practices in Canada and elsewhere. Over 60 sources of international and national literature were reviewed and included Aboriginal-specific literature, academic journal articles, and federal/provincial/territorial government website reports.

This line of evidence also included an examination of the *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study*[18] and an analysis of the study's datasets. UAS was a key sponsor of this study published in 2010 by the Environics Institute. The study consisted of three components, including in-depth in-person interviews with 2,614 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals in ten urban centres across the country. While the *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study* does not cover all of the 13 UAS sites,[19] it is important in the context of the UAS evaluation as it is the most recent national level study to focus on self-identified Aboriginal persons living in Canada's urban centres.

The evaluation also included an analysis of 2006 Census data and the 2009 public use microdata file of the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS provides estimates of employment and unemployment, which are among the most timely and important measures of performance of the Canadian economy. The LFS started including information on Aboriginal identity in 2007.

Document and File Review
More than 75 documents and files were examined, including the UAS RMAF/RBAF, leveraging files, presentations, backgrounders, demographic reports, and other project files and documents. The document and file review also includes previous audits and evaluations.

Key Informant Interviews
Interviews were conducted in order to gather knowledge and perspectives of key informants pertaining to all UAS evaluation issues: relevance, accountability, design and delivery (only information missing from the Mid-term Review of the Strategy discussed below), success/effectiveness, impacts, efficiency/economy and alternatives.

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[18] Environics Institute (2010). Urban Aboriginal People Study: Main Report.
[19] The study did not include four UAS sites: Prince George, Lethbridge, Prince Albert or Thompson. In Ottawa only Inuit were interviewed. The study also included two non-UAS sites: Montreal and Halifax.

Thirty-three key informant interviews were conducted with OFI officials (n=7), other federal departments that partner with UAS (n=21)[20], and subject matter experts (n=5).

As noted below, interviews with all major stakeholders, including those representing other levels of government and other organizations were also conducted as part of the evaluation's case studies.

Case Studies

Case studies and site visits were carried out in each of the 13 participating urban centres. The case studies included a review of relevant background documents (n=156), as well as interviews (n=115) with UAS steering committee members and staff (n=29), Aboriginal organizations and project/program recipients (n=57), and OFI regional staff and other federal / provincial / municipal government representatives (n=29). Table 2 provides a breakdown of the number of interviews conducted and documents that were reviewed for each case study:

Table 2: **Case Study Interviews and Documents Reviewed by Province**

Case Study Site	Total Interviews	Documents/ Websites Reviewed
British Columbia (Prince George, Vancouver)	18	17
Alberta (Calgary, Lethbridge, Edmonton)	33	56
Saskatchewan (Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatchewan)	30	22
Manitoba (Thompson, Winnipeg)	18	27
Ontario (Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Toronto)	26	34
Total	**115**	**156**

Note: Figures have been aggregated to the provincial level to safeguard the confidentiality of interviewees.

The case studies also included a review of administrative and financial data.[21] The intent of reviewing UAS program administrative data was to assess the type, frequency, accuracy and usefulness of data collected; identify data gaps; assess whether performance indicators and data collection methods were relevant; review baseline indicators and general data collection approaches and provide a description of funding allocation.

The UAS uses three key data systems to capture and report UAS achievements and performance trends: the PIMS, the Community Assessment Tool (CAT), and the First Nations and Inuit Transfer Payment System. These systems, including their strengths and

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[20] Including representatives from the Treasury Board Secretariat, Public Health Agency, Public Safety, Corrections Canada, Canada Mortgages and Housing Corporation, Human resources and Social Development, Western Economic Diversification, and Canadian Heritage.

[21] The data review included the following: PIMS data on individual projects for each case study site (including leveraging totals per project) for the fiscal years 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10; PIMS data on number of projects per theme area, service area, and target group, for the fiscal years 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10 (but not disaggregated by individual project); and CAT reports from 2009-2010 for 11 out of 13 cities (did not include Vancouver or Saskatoon) as well as roll-up reports (for Ontario and Alberta only).

weaknesses, have been well described in previous studies. Only key findings linked to this evaluation are highlighted in this report.

3.3 Considerations and Limitations

When the evaluation's preliminary findings were presented to the EPMRC in November 2010, the Committee asked that the evaluation include more performance information particularly related to the Strategy's impacts. Additional research was undertaken to address this request, however, significant gaps in performance objectives and performance data remain and should be taken into consideration when reviewing the evaluation's findings:

- The UAS Terms and Conditions include objectives and outcomes related to strategic planning and policy development. They do not, however, identify objectives related to the Strategy's three priority areas.
- UAS project reports, while rich in anecdotal detail, do not contain adequate information to assess the achievement of project level objectives. Gaps include a lack of specific performance measures that relate to the UAS expected outcomes and a focus on activities or outputs. As a result, the evaluation could not determine the extent to which individual projects contributed to the achievement of the overall expected outcomes. While the key informant interviews were useful to establishing such linkages, they too were anecdotal in nature, the specificity of many individual projects also acted against generalization across sites.
- The Census provides baseline data on the socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginal people and is identified as key source for tracking higher level outcomes in the UAS RMAF/RBAF. However, the timeframes of the evaluation and the census differ (i.e., this evaluation took place before a second Census was completed) and as a result, EPMRB was not able to examine changes in the population since the UAS was renewed. The evaluation explored the possibility of using other data sets as proxies but could find no suitable alternatives within the time frame of the study (e.g. publically available micro-data file from LFS does not include Aboriginal identity).[22]
- The 2010 Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study included eight of the 13 UAS sites and provides a fairly detailed picture the socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginal people in 2009. However, the sample and sampling methods employed by this survey differ from both the Census (and from the LFS) are not comparable and, thus, limit generalizations in data across the instruments.
- Lastly, attribution to the UAS was challenging in many cases, given the range of entities (government and non-governmental) targeting urban Aboriginal people.

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[22] Beginning in 2007, the Labour Force Survey included an Aboriginal identity variable; however, questions were raised about the statistical validity of an analysis that is limited to Aboriginal identity due to the sampling method.

4. Evaluation Findings - Relevance

This section examines the relevance of UAS by assessing its alignment with urban Aboriginal needs and priorities; Government of Canada priorities and AANDC's Strategic Outcomes; and the roles and responsibilities of the federal government.

4.1   Addresses Needs and Priorities

Key Finding #1: The urban Aboriginal population is culturally diverse, is growing and is experiencing lower socio-economic outcomes compared with the general population.

In 2006, Aboriginal people accounted for 1,172,785 individuals, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.[23] Fifty-three percent (or 623,470) of the total Aboriginal population lived in urban areas, half of whom lived in UAS designated sites. *Table 3* presents a breakdown of the urban Aboriginal population in each UAS site:

Table 3: **Urban Aboriginal Population by UAS Site (2006)**

UAS City	First Nation	Métis	Inuit	Multiple Responses
Vancouver, BC	23,515	15,070	210	525
Prince George, BC	4,505	4,000	10	105
Lethbridge, AB	2,475	1,360	40	15
Calgary, AB	10,880	14,770	250	210
Edmonton, AB	22,435	27,740	595	535
Prince Albert, SK	6,715	6,680	10	45
Saskatoon, SK	11,510	9,610	65	85
Regina, SK	9,495	7,185	20	200
Winnipeg, MB	25,900	40,980	350	375
Thompson, MB	3,300	1,510	35	40
Thunder Bay, ON	7,420	2,375	45	25
Toronto, ON	17,270	7,580	320	350
Ottawa, ON	6,570	4,495	600	160
Total	151,990	143,355	2,550	2,670

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census.
Note: Multiple Responses include individuals that report being members of more than one Aboriginal group.

In 2006, the First Nation people living in the UAS designated cities accounted for 22 percent of the total First Nation population. The Métis accounted for 37 percent of the total Métis population and urban Inuit represented five percent of Canada's total Inuit population (although a total of 17 percent of Canada's Inuit lived in urban centres outside Inuit Nunaat[24]).

With the UAS reaching just over half of the urban Aboriginal population, the overall urban Aboriginal population has been growing dramatically both as a proportion of the

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[23] Statistics Canada, 2006 Census Data

[24] Inuit Nunaat is the Inuit language expression for Inuit homeland, a region extending from Northern Labrador to the Northwest Territories.

overall urban population, and as a proportion of the greater Aboriginal population. In 1991, the total urban Aboriginal population in Canada was 320,000; by 2001, it had increased by to 479,360[25] and by 2006, it had increased further to 623,470.[26] According to Statistics Canada figures, in 1996, 47 percent of Aboriginal people lived in urban centres; by 2001, the proportion had increased to 49 percent and by 2006, 54 percent of all Aboriginal people lived in urban locations.[27,28] Table 4 illustrates the increasing pattern of urbanization of the Aboriginal population in designated UAS cities between the 2001 and 2006 Census.

Table 4: **Urban Aboriginal Population (UAS Designated Cities), 2001, 2006**

UAS City	Urban Aboriginal Population of CMA (2001 Census)	Urban Aboriginal Population of CMA (2006 Census)	Increase in Urban Aboriginal Population (2001-2006)
Vancouver, BC	36,860	40,310	9%
Prince George, BC	7,980	8,850	11%
Lethbridge, AB	2,290	3,990	74%
Calgary, AB	21,915	26,575	21%
Edmonton, AB	40,930	52,100	27%
Prince Albert, SK	11,640	13,570	17%
Saskatoon, SK	20,275	21,535	6%
Regina, SK	15,685	17,015	8%
Winnipeg, MB	55,755	68,380	23%
Thompson, MB	4,515	4,930	9%
Thunder Bay, ON	8,200	10,055	23%
Toronto, ON	20,300	26,575	31%
Ottawa , ON	13,485	20,590	53%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census; 2006 Census.

In addition to demographic growth and migration, the urban Aboriginal population is expected to grow at roughly 10,000 individuals per year[29] as a result of changes in eligibility for status under the *Indian Act* stemming recent court cases, such as *McIvor v. The Registrar, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada*, which found that Section 6 of the *Indian Act* violates the Charter by discriminating between matrilineal and patrilineal descendants born prior to April 17, 1985, in the conferring of Indian status, and discriminates between descendants born prior to April 17, 1985, of Indian women who married non-Indian men, and the descendants of Indian men who married non-Indian women.[30]

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[25] Peters, E.J. (2004). Three Myths About Aboriginals in Cities. In *Breakfast on the Hill Seminar Series.* Sponsored by the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences on March 25, 2004. Retrieved March, 2010.
[26] http://www41.statcan.ca/2008/10000/ceb10000_002-eng.htm
[27] Walker, K. (2008, December 10). The Aboriginal Migration to the City. *CBC News*. Available [online]: http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2008/12/10/f-vp-walker.html
[28] Statistics Canada. (2009).2006 Census: Aboriginal Peoples in Canada in 2006: Inuit, Métis and First Nations, 2006 Census. Available [online]: http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-558/p3-eng.cfm
[29] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (March 2010). Estimates of Demographic Implications from Indian Registration Amendment, McIvor v. Canada,
[30] McIvor v. The Registrar, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2007 BCSB 827.

The Aboriginal population in Canada is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population with 48 percent of Aboriginal people in 2006 under the age of 25. This trend was also noted in the urban Aboriginal populations located in UAS sites in which 20.2 to 37.5 percent of the individuals were under the age of 15 years.[31] This demographic make-up has important implications with respect to needs for childcare, schooling, education and training.[32]

The difference in unemployment rates[33] between urban Aboriginal people and the general population is pronounced (four times higher than that of the general population, while that of Métis people is almost double). Furthermore, First Nations people are less likely to work full time, when they work, than the general population (by 10 percentage points).[34] This translates into a significant gap in the median annual income between the Aboriginal population and the general population. In the UAS cities, these gaps vary from $2,616 (in Toronto) to $11,466 (in Regina).[35]

The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study found that "...pursuing higher education is the leading life aspiration of urban Aboriginal peoples today. This is particularly the case for those who are younger and less affluent." Despite this being a clear priority, Aboriginal people experience low levels of educational attainment and skills training.[36] For example, First Nations people are three times more likely than the general population to not complete high school (Métis are 2.5 times more likely).[37]

More Aboriginal women than men reside in urban areas, while the reverse was true on First Nation reserves. Many women are single parents and move with their children.[38] Nearly one in four families is lone-parent families. Too often, these families are living in difficult conditions. While the percentage of urban Aboriginal children in low income families declined between 2001 and 2006, the percentage of such children was still more than twice that of non-Aboriginal children in low income families. This social make-up has important implications with respect to recognizing the continuing need for supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

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[31] Statistics Canada. 2006 Census Data.

[32] Gionet, L. (2008). Inuit in Canada: Selected Findings of the 2006 Census. Ottawa, Statistics Canada. Available [online]: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-008-x/2008002/article/10712-eng.pdf.

[33] The unemployment rate is defined by Statistic Canada as the percentage of the labour force (i.e., those working or looking for work) that is currently looking for work. Unemployment is clearly a negative indicator, suggesting individuals have difficulty finding employment (at least commensurate with their expectations). To some extent the unemployment rate may understate the extent of the problem, since some individuals may be discouraged from searching for employment and/or may leave the urban area.

[34] Source of Aboriginal Employment Rate was the 2010 Urban Aboriginal People Study and the data source for the general population was the Labour Force Survey.

[35] Statistics Canada. 2006 Census.

[36] Mendelson, M. (2006). Aboriginal People and Postsecondary Education in Canada. The Caledon Institute of Social Policy.

[37] Data Probe Consulting Inc (March 2011). Snap Shot of Aboriginal People Report. Figures adapted from Environics Institute (2010): Urban Aboriginal People Study: Main Report.

[38] Institute of Urban Studies, (2003), *First Nations/Métis/Inuit Mobility Study*, Winnipeg, 155p.

Canada's urban Aboriginal population is also very mobile.[39] One in five urban Aboriginal people were living in a different residence one year prior to the 2006 Census, either having moved within the same city or having moved from a different community, for instance, a First Nation community or another urban or rural area.[40] This high rate of mobility creates some challenges for accessing and providing services, particularly services like education, employment training and housing. It is also worth noting that there are a number of reserves in urban centers that are included in the urban Aboriginal Census population figures and that the extent to which First Nation people who live on reserves are accessing off-reserve programs like UAS or vice versa (i.e., the extent to which Aboriginal people living off reserve are accessing on-reserve programs) is unknown. For example, there are 18 reserves within the Vancouver Census Metropolitan Area that account for roughly 7,675 of the 40,310 Aboriginal people living in Vancouver.[41]

Other needs and priorities, not mentioned above, but identified during the evaluation's interviews and case studies included: drug and alcohol additions, mental health issues, fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, chronic diseases (e.g., cancer, diabetes), abuse, sexual exploitation, discrimination and marginalization, as well as the need for additional family supports, strengthened Aboriginal culture, self-governance/self-determination, programming aimed specifically at youth, and healing from the impacts of residential schools.

Key Finding #2: The UAS is designed to allow communities to set priorities and allocate resources based on local needs. The evidence suggests that urban Aboriginal people use services tailored to Aboriginal culture and needs.

The focus of strategy investments is on three relatively broad priority areas - improving life skills, promoting job training, skills and entrepreneurship, and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.[42] These areas were defined by the federal government, with the participation of various stakeholders (including other federal departments, provinces and municipalities, Aboriginal organizations, the UAS steering committees and funding recipients). These areas were intended to help focus project funding in order to maximize impacts while still allowing considerable flexibility for communities to identify their own investments. The 2009 Mid-term Review notes that the areas are considered inclusive enough to allow the vast majority of community projects to apply for funding without restricting the activities they want to pursue.

Moreover, it was noted that the national priorities did not, in a significant way, limit the efforts of communities; instead, communities developed their own priorities within the national priorities. For instance, in the 351 projects funded by UAS between 2007-08 and

[39] Norris, M. & Clatworth, S. (2003) Aboriginal Mobility and Migration within Urban Canada: Outcomes, Factors and Implications. Not Strangers in These Parts: urban Aboriginal Peoples (pp 51-78). Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative.

[40] Statistics Canada. 2006 Census.

[41] Ibid.

[42] Government of Canada. 2009. Urban Aboriginal Strategy. Presentation on Project Information Management System – Urban Aboriginal Strategy and Performance Measurement.

2008-09, only ten did not easily fit within the three national priorities (i.e., seven were communications projects and three focused on cultural exchange/cultural development).[43] As with previous assessments, the recent internal audit found that while national and local priorities seem to be well aligned, there is a strongly and widely-held view that priorities should be set and decisions about allocating available resources should be made by the Aboriginal communities, with input from governments.[44]

The *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study* results show that more than half of Aboriginal people use services that are tailored to Aboriginal.[45] *Table 5* presents the percent of urban Aboriginal people that reported that they access services often or occasionally, broken down by a variety of characteristics.

Table 5: **Use of Aboriginal Services/Organizations among Aboriginal People by Selected Characteristics (2009)**

Characteristics	Often or occasionally		Characteristics	Often or occasionally	
Identity			**Full/part time work**		
- First Nations	61%	+	- Full-time work	50%	-
- Métis	50%	-	- Part-time work	59%	
- Inuit	unknown		**Household income in 2008**		
Age			- Under $10,000	65%	+
- 20-24	53%		- $10,000 to $30,000	56%	
- 25-34	54%		- $30,000 to $60,000	53%	
- 35-44	53%		- $60,000 to $80,000	61%	
- 45-54	58%		- $80,000 to $100,000	32%	-
- 55-64	63%	+	- $100,000 and over	38%	-
Gender			**City**		
- Male	53%		- Vancouver	68%	+
- Female	58%		- Calgary	52%	
Education			- Edmonton	52%	
- No high school diploma	55%		- Regina	42%	-
- High school diploma	58%		- Saskatoon	57%	
- College diploma	55%		- Winnipeg	48%	-
- University degree	55%		- Toronto	68%	+
			- Thunder Bay	56%	

Note: Each percentage is compared to the overall percentage. The + (-) sign means that the percentage for a particular characteristic is statistically higher (lower) than the overall percentage with an at least 95% confidence. Source: based on data from the Environics Institute (2010): Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study

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[43] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2009. UAS Mid-term Review 2009. Final Report. October 2009.
[44] INAC. 2010. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of the UAS. May 2010.
[45] Environics Institute (2010): Urban Aboriginal People Study: Main Report.

4.2   Alignment with Government Priorities and Strategic Outcomes

Key Finding #3: The UAS is well aligned with AANDC's Strategic Outcome: 'socio-economic well-being of Métis, non-Status Indians and urban Aboriginal people.'

The mission of AANDC is to support First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Northerners in achieving their social and economic aspirations and in developing healthy, sustainable communities where members enjoy a quality of life comparable to that of other Canadians. The UAS is housed under the OFI's Strategic Outcome: "socio-economic well-being of Métis, non-Status Indians and urban Aboriginal people."[46] More specifically:

> *The Office of the Federal Interlocutor partners with other federal departments, local, provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal representative organizations, and community leaders to raise awareness about the circumstances of Métis, non-Status Indians and urban Aboriginal people, and to create opportunities for a greater number of Aboriginal people to participate in the Canadian economy and society. To this end, the Office [...] co-ordinates the Urban Aboriginal Strategy.[47]*

Key Finding #4: The UAS is aligned with Government of Canada priorities related to economic opportunities and education for Aboriginal Canadians as well as horizontal delivery approaches for government services.

The 2010 Speech from the Throne highlights a number of areas that are in keeping with the goals of the UAS. These include the importance of developing a skilled and educated workforce and the significance of community-based decision making and priority setting.[48] Further statements such as - "Our ambitions for our country will not be fulfilled until the day when our first peoples fully share the benefits of this country" (Prime Minister of Canada, November 2, 2007) and "Our Government will also take steps to ensure that Aboriginal Canadians fully share in economic opportunities, putting particular emphasis on improving education for First Nations in partnership with the provinces and First Nations communities" (2008 Speech from the Throne) further support the mandate of the UAS.[49]

The UAS also aligns with the recent government priority that highlights the fact that complex challenges facing Canadians cannot be dealt with through one ministry/department but rather, increased linkages and coordination are required between

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[46] INAC and Canadian Polar Commission. 2009. 2010-2011 Report on Plans and Priorities. Accessed from: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2010-2011/inst/ian/ian01-eng.asp

[47] INAC and Canadian Polar Commission. 2010-2011 Report on Plans and Priorities. Accessed from: http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2010-2011/inst/ian/ian01-eng.asp

[48] Government of Canada. 2010. Speech from the Throne. March 3, 2010. Ottawa, Ontario.

[49] OFI INAC. 2009. Federal Coordination of Urban Aboriginal Issues. PowerPoint presentation on October 8, 2009.

all departments and at all levels. The Strategy is designed as a horizontal initiative to encourage collaboration and alignment between federal, provincial, municipal and Aboriginal partners, to address locally defined needs.[50] Seven federal departments (including AANDC) are signatories to the UAS. The intent of the more broad and flexible horizontal terms and conditions of the UAS is that they provide a mechanism for federal departments to support projects that are consistent with their respective mandates, and demonstrate that they are contributing to overall objectives under the Government of Canada in a manner that maximizes federal investments.

In pursuing the alignment of federal investments for urban Aboriginal peoples, the Strategy is consistent with a longstanding policy of horizontality that is promoted across federal government departments as a means to enhance efficiencies and effectiveness.[51] A key rationale for prioritizing horizontality is exemplified in a 2003 report by the Centre for Collaborative Government titled, *From Ideas to Action: Towards Seamless Government, Policy, Politics and Governance:*

> *Programs that can meet a citizen's particular needs may reside in several departments. Silos continue to reign, within departments, across departments, and across levels of government, despite a decade of discussion about the importance of "horizontal government." So, moving governments towards this vision requires a willingness and ability to make some pretty profound changes.[52]*

The Government's continuing commitment to horizontality was recently embedded in Treasury Board's 2008 Policy on Transfer Payments. A key objective of the policy is: *Collaboration … within and among departments to harmonize transfer payment programs and standardize their administration, when appropriate.[53]* At the departmental level, AANDC is committed to delivering most of its programs through partnerships with Aboriginal communities and other government programs, including working with Urban Aboriginal people.[54]

4.3   Consistency with Federal Roles and Responsibilities

Key Finding #5: The UAS is consistent with the federal government's objective of providing support to urban Aboriginal people.

Because the federal government is constitutionally responsible for status Indians "ordinarily resident on reserve," urban Aboriginal peoples by default have historically

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[50] Spence, C. and Findlay, I.M. 2007. Evaluation of Saskatoon Urban Aboriginal Strategy. A Research Report. Linking, Learning, Leveraging: Social Enterprises, Knowledgeable Economies, and Sustainable Communities. Community - University Institute for Social Research, University of Saskatchewan.

[51] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. October, 2009. UAS Mid-term Review 2009 Final Report.

[52] OFI INAC. 2009. Innovation and Experiences with Public Sector and Community Collaboration: the UAS Experience. May 2009. PowerPoint presentation.

[53] Treasury Board Secretariat, 2008, Policy on Transfer Payments, Section 5.2, http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=13525&section=text

[54] INAC and Canadian Polar Commission. 2011-12 Report on Plans and Priorities. Accessed from http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rpp/2011-2012/inst/ian/ianpr-eng.asp?format=print.

been the jurisdiction of the provinces, although the federal government has provided limited programs based on policy rather than treaty right.[55] The debate around the federal government's responsibilities related to urban Aboriginal people goes back at least as far as the 1980s when a House of Commons Special Committee on Indian Self-Government noted, with great concern, that despite the fact that the federal government has jurisdiction over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians" by virtue of Section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867*, "federal laws and policies have consistently been designed to deny this constitutional responsibility insofar as Indians living off reserve are concerned."[56] The Special Committee concluded that "Indians" living off reserve should have rights to special federal programs and that the "continuing responsibilities" of the federal government in this respect must be recognized.

The federal government, as a matter of policy, created OFI to enact the relationship between the federal government, Métis, non-status, and urban Aboriginal people, the large majority of whom live in urban areas. The UAS, as a horizontal strategy for building a coordinated approach to service delivery between the provinces and the federal government, is a pragmatic way of addressing the current population demographics of the Aboriginal population, while acknowledging both the special relationship that Aboriginal people have with the federal government, and provincial jurisdiction off reserve.

Some respondents commented on the fact that urban Aboriginal issues are a shared jurisdictional responsibility; no one jurisdiction or level of government is solely accountable. However, one comment arose to the effect that although the federal government is not constitutionally responsible for the welfare of urban Aboriginal people, it is particularly well situated to take on the leadership role, being in the best position to coordinate activities and investment for urban issues.

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[55] The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology, Report of the Subcommittee on Cities. December 2009. *In From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness*.
[56] House of Commons, Special Committee on Indian Self Government, 1983, p. 67 (Penner Report)

5. Evaluation Findings – Effectiveness (Performance)

This section examines the alignment of the UAS design with the achievement of objectives as well as the achievement of intended outcomes related to partnerships, Aboriginal organizational capacity and levels of awareness of the UAS. It also examines community-level impacts in the three UAS priority areas: improving life skills; promoting job training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

5.1   Alignment of Design with the UAS Objectives

Key Finding #6: The flexible, community-based design of UAS has enhanced the Strategy's ability to address complex issues through project-based funding and on the ground partnerships. However, it has created challenges in managing the more strategic issues such as strategic / national level partnership development, planning, as well as alignment and coordination among government programs and initiatives.

The 2008 RMAF/RBAF notes that the Strategy's community-based approach was adopted in recognition of the fact that urban Aboriginal issues are complex and cannot be effectively addressed by any one entity; that local solutions to local issues would be most effective.[57] As such, the UAS was designed to encourage collaboration and partnerships among key stakeholders.

Prior to 2006-07, OFI directed the UAS from its Headquarters office, with on-the-ground service delivery provided through regional offices of Western Economic Diversification Canada and Service Canada. As of April 2007, when OFI assumed full responsibility for all components of the Strategy, it established regional offices in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia.[58] The Strategy is currently managed and delivered by staff in all five OFI regional offices in 13 cities. This regional presence is noted in the 2009 Mid-term Review as supportive of the achievement of UAS objectives.

As noted in the RMAF/RBAF, while AANDC has existing regional offices, it was considered important that OFI maintain its separate mandate from AANDC so as to protect the unique relationship that the Government of Canada (through AANDC) has with First Nations on reserve. As a consequence of this, OFI regional offices were developed as an alternative to direct AANDC delivery or to delegating regional responsibility to any other federal entity or third party deliverer.[59] OFI Headquarters supports regional offices as well as UAS delivery efforts in cities that have not yet been designated UAS sites (currently this includes Montreal and Halifax).

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[57] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.
[58] INAC. 2010. Audit and Assurance Services Branch. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of UAS. Project #09/62. May 2010.
[59] OFI. (2008). RMAF/RBAF: Renewal of the UAS. June 2008.

However, as findings in the previous section suggest the lines between on- and off-reserve populations may not be as distinct as the 2007 planning documents suggest, indicating that close links or collaboration with on-reserve programs and policies should be encouraged.

The 2009 Mid-Term Review sought to answer the question – *Is the program design appropriate to achieve UAS objectives?* The responses to this question centred around two issues: steering committees/partnerships; and the strategic objectives of the UAS. As noted in the review, one key feature of the UAS design is the fact that community members are brought together to form a steering committee that is intended to guide the allocation of resources and the direction of UAS-related initiatives. The composition of the steering committees has changed over time. In some communities, steering committees were made up exclusively of Aboriginal membership; in others, the steering committees included federal, provincial and municipal representatives as active members, and in other communities, government representatives were non-voting members of steering committees. [60] Currently, all steering committees have participation from federal, provincial and municipal representatives (although their roles with the committee vary). This shift, as noted in the review, speaks to the fact that the partnership element is recognized as essential to achieving UAS objectives.

The review findings and information provided by case study participants highlights that irrespective of the steering committee composition, the Strategy strongly relies on the Aboriginal community for on-the-ground knowledge about what the community needs and how efforts should be prioritized. Many Aboriginal community members and a number of OFI and other government officials believe that the UAS should continue to be guided mainly by the community, with government partners acting primarily as facilitators and funders. On the other hand, most OFI managers reflected on the potential for governments to help identify promising initiatives and help to recommend priorities based on their knowledge of what is most likely to result in financial and other support from government. [61]

The second design-related issue speaks to an uneven of understanding about the intent of the UAS. As indicated in past evaluations, reviews, audits, and by the current evaluation's key informants and case study participants, many individuals view the UAS as a project funding vehicle as opposed to a strategy. During the 2009 review, when asked to comment on the strategic nature of the UAS, a number of participants spoke about project funding or project selection; few (aside from senior OFI officials) described the UAS in broader strategic terms. Moreover, the review and audit findings indicate that the strategic objectives of the UAS are unclear. This lack of clarity extends beyond the Aboriginal community to provincial and municipal representatives that participated in interviews for this evaluation, who described a lack of focus of the initiative. Responses appear to have concentrated upon the dichotomy between the more strategic elements of the initiative (partnership development, planning, alignment and coordination among

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[60] INAC. 2010. Audit and Assurance Services Branch. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of UAS. Project #09/62. May 2010.
[61] Ibid.

government programs and initiatives) and the project funding (which is by nature a temporary endeavour, with a predetermined start and end date with a defined set of activities[62]).

While the audit highlighted the importance of community planning for ensuring that contribution funds are being spent appropriately, it found inconsistencies in the comprehensiveness and quality of the plans and a lack of detail surrounding the definition and meaning of community priorities across all 13 sites. This derives, in part, from the fact that OFI had not stipulated the content and format of the plans nor has it established minimum standards for the plans. Operational plans developed by regional offices and the UAS staff at Headquarters were also found to be inadequate. The audit found that the planning and priority setting that does occur is not proportionate to the overall complexity of the Strategy nor is it sufficient to support the efficient, effective and coordinated implementation of the Strategy.[63]

The audit concluded that "the most significant challenge" is the struggle to balance the flexibility of having communities set their own priorities, with OFI's need for enough control to ensure their accountability to Parliament for the spending of contribution funds. It was noted that some communities (those newer to the UAS) have insufficient analysis to support their priorities, and inadequate plans for projects; this is in contrast to the better established UAS communities, where such things are well documented and supported. This finding concurs with that of previous evaluations that identified the need for a sufficiently long start-up period for UAS implementation. [64] This appreciation is also echoed by the Evaluation of the Community-based Planning Pilot Project in Saskatchewan, which was approved by AANDC's EPMRC in June 2011.

On a more positive note, the audit found that OFI is very proactive in identifying areas that require improvement and employs an approach of continuous improvements. Thus, as it gains experience and a better understanding of challenges in the design and delivery model, it attempts to make the appropriate adjustments. It also revealed that the design of the UAS supports the objective of horizontal program delivery and funding, within the federal government, and between the Government of Canada and other levels of government; and that furthermore, this emphasis on horizontality should enhance cost-effectiveness.[65]

5.2   Achievement of Intended Outcomes

This subsection examines the achievement of intended outcomes in three areas: Partnerships and Horizontal Linkages (including federal horizontality, other partnerships and leveraging resources); Aboriginal Organizational Capacity; and Levels of Awareness.

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[62] Project Management Institute (2008). A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide) - Fourth Edition.
[63] INAC. 2010. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of the UAS. May 2010.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.

5.2.1 *Partnerships and Horizontal Linkages*

Key Finding #7: The UAS has been successful in developing and/or supporting project level partnerships and horizontal linkage. However, a number of challenges remain that prevent partners from effectively working horizontally at a strategic policy level. These include challenges with aligning departmental priorities, reporting on performance, and an inability to reconcile the terms and conditions with departmental/agency accountabilities.

Improving federal horizontality

In the Government of Canada, working horizontally has been an issue of ongoing importance since the mid-1990s. This is further reflected in the more than 60 horizontal initiatives currently underway across the federal government, one of which is UAS.[66] Overall, the literature reviewed suggests that having appropriate horizontal structures in place is not enough to guarantee that an initiative will be successful. To be successful, these structures require strong leadership (both within participating departments and in central agencies) clear and complimentary lines of accountability, sufficient tools and resources and a framework for ongoing dialogue between initiative partners.[67]

UAS works to promote greater coherence among federal departments by exploring models of enhanced horizontal collaboration, drawing together federal research, policy and programming. To this end, UAS is set up to work formally with six federal departments (Human Resources and Social Development, Justice Canada. Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada, Canadian Heritage, Western Diversification and the Public Health Agency of Canada) to support/fund community based projects. Federal collaboration on funding is meant to reduce program duplication and the tendency of programs to be provider-centric rather than effective, coordinated responses to the needs of communities. Three principles support the horizontal and collaborative nature of UAS:

- The UAS mandate spans the mandates of a number of other departments through its focus on women, children and families; education; housing; and employment - life skills and capacity building;
- Joint funding of projects through horizontal financing mechanisms with other federal departments, alongside provincial and municipal governments, private sector and Aboriginal organization; and
- Involving multiple stakeholders.

In 2009, the Mid-term Review noted that the UAS encourages federal horizontality and alignment with provincial and municipal actions to address urban Aboriginal issues in a number of different ways:[68]

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[66] Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, (2011) *Horizontal Initiatives Database – by Fiscal Year.* Retrieved from http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/hidb-bdih/fy-af-eng.aspx?YrAn=2011.
[67] Bakvis, Herman and Luc Juillet, (2004), *The Horizontal Challenge: Line Departments, Central Agencies and Leadership.* Canada School of Public Service.
[68] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc., (2009), Op. Cit. p.6

- Through involvement in UAS steering committees, funding tables, working groups and planning sessions;
- Focusing efforts of senior OFI officials in Ottawa and the regions on establishing connections and promoting joint action with government partners;
- Providing a site in the major urban centers for Aboriginal community planning, knowledge and expertise that government departments can use to help their own efforts; and
- Availability of UAS terms and conditions for contributing funding that are flexible enough to facilitate joint funding of projects by several departments.

Interviews conducted for this evaluation revealed that departments and agencies view working horizontally to be essential and a benefit for all stakeholders. Horizontality was seen as an opportunity to leverage resources to better deliver services for clients, a venue for better research, and a way to fill gaps and respond to issues that departments cannot address on their own. Officials also commented that the increasing level of interest and high level support from deputy ministers and senior level leadership for horizontality. Similarly, a recommendation from the Senate Committee addressing urban Aboriginal poverty issues states that the UAS horizontality model should be followed for successful federal coordination.[69] However, interviewees also described numerous challenges that prevent them from effectively working horizontally. These challenges are mainly centred on:

- Balancing goals and priorities among federal partners and the challenge of balancing the goals of Aboriginal organizations with the goals of other departments and the goals of the UAS.
- Lack of resources to support the capacity to work horizontally.
- Need for effective accountability, evaluation and performance measurement mechanisms.
- Communication and leadership: information disconnect between what is happening nationally versus regionally; difficulties in agreeing on funding projects; lack of knowledge on how to reconcile the terms and conditions with departmental reporting requirements; the OFI not actively seeking out departments to participate; corporate services acting as a roadblock; and departments struggling to maintain partnerships.
- Low capacity, limited knowledge, skills and staff turn-over in Aboriginal organizations and an inherent lack of trust from Aboriginal communities of the OFI.

With respect to departments and agencies aligning their priorities, one respondent noted that it "isn't easy to find a good fit between UAS goals and departmental goals in a shared community." Respondents highlighted the need for improved communication and information sharing between partners and between Headquarters and regions in order to minimize misunderstandings

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[69] The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. 2009. In From the Margins: A Call to Action on Poverty, Housing and Homelessness. Report to the Subcommittee on Cities. December 2009. Recommendation 66.

Respondents also expressed concern that although the horizontal terms and conditions and joint contribution agreements exist, they are not as strategic as they could be, and that additional support and direction for increased horizontality from all levels may provide the 'push' required to fully implement collaboration. Some OFI officials remarked that involving other federal departments in taking a more strategic / horizontal approach has been difficult due in part to a strong focus on *programmatic* (both from regional offices and from other departments) rather than *strategic* level thinking, when federal partners mentioned that the common terms and conditions were weak and misunderstood.

This is substantiated by the fact that only eight out of 495 projects (roughly 1.6 percent of the total projects) between 2007-08 and 2009-10 have used the horizontal terms and conditions. This limited use of the horizontal terms and conditions represents a lost opportunity to reduce federal administration and recipient reporting burdens and harmonizing federal support for urban Aboriginal initiatives.

Strengthening partnerships

OFI respondents and federal officials indicated that UAS has been successful in developing and/or supporting partnerships and horizontal linkages. However, their experiences indicated a need to develop more formalized relationships (e.g., with the provinces and municipalities). OFI respondents also saw challenges in bringing all necessary stakeholders together, including different Aboriginal groups represented in each city. There were also challenges associated with varying government processes (e.g., vertical accountability).[70]

Findings from the document review and from a review of past UAS assessments demonstrated that there have been improvements over time in the nature of the collaborative relationships among the three levels of government, Aboriginal organizations and communities. However, there are differing levels of success (from strong, well-established and well-functioning relationships to weaker, less-engaged and less-practical partnerships) with regard to horizontal linkages and partnerships both within and across UAS sites (e.g., strong municipal partnerships but weak federal relationships).[71]

Provincial representatives noted a few barriers to their capacity to participate fully in UAS:

- UAS focuses on two or three major urban centers in provinces, whereas the provincial government has to plan for the province as a whole – including rural populations.
- Individuals representing a single provincial department have limited influence over more wide-reaching government policy and over policies and programs of other departments relevant to Aboriginal communities.
- Since the majority of programs and services for urban Aboriginal people are a provincial responsibility, the provincial government has to be mindful that in jointly

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[70] OFI respondents and federal official interviews.
[71] Sources: administrative and financial data review, key informant and case study interviews.

planning strategies, they are not making commitments that they are unable to keep because of the costs involved.

- It can be very difficult to break through conventional ways of designing and delivering government programs.

With respect to federal involvement in UAS, the 2009-10 CAT data indicated significant variability between cities with respect to local federal officials engaging in discussions on urban Aboriginal issues, identifying opportunities for collaboration, establishing relationships, increasing knowledge of UAS, and acting as champions of UAS plans and priorities among their respective departments and with other federal departments. Successful relationships were also reported between some players (e.g., between government officials) but not others (e.g., with Aboriginal organizations and communities). For example:

- The City of Thompson Aboriginal Accord is an example of a successful partnership between the city and several Aboriginal political leaders that was facilitated by UAS and contributed to a finalized agreement. It serves as a framework for the city's relationship with Aboriginal organizations, including the Keewatin Tribal Council, the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, the Manitoba Métis Federation and the City of Thompson Urban Aboriginal Strategy.[72]
- Winnipeg demonstrated relatively successful development and support of partnerships and horizontal linkages in part as a result of the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement (of which UAS was intimately involved), and subsequent Memorandum of Collaboration that UAS spearheaded.
- In Thunder Bay, the use of the Collaborative Model Approach, which brings together a diversity of people in order to identify gaps and barriers and to develop ways to address those challenges, has resulted in the successful development and support of Aboriginal partnerships and linkages with government organizations in assembling people to address urban Aboriginal issues.
- Evidence from two smaller sites suggest that partnerships with government entities has been harder to achieve, either emphasizing the bringing together of community groups (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike) or specifically noting that the absence of *local* federal representatives made it difficult to develop partnerships.

Leveraging as a measure of increasing involvement and partnerships

Federal programs typically seek to leverage investments from other levels of government to share costs and to garner broader commitment to program objectives. *Table 6* describes the extent of financial and in-kind leveraging in each of the three years, broken down by sources.

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[72] The City of Thompson Aboriginal Accord (2009).

Table 6: **Leveraging for UAS Projects by Source (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

Stakeholder	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Total	% of Total
UAS	$8,080,051	$9,391,828	$11,738,904	$29,210,783	40%
Federal	$1,170,558	$3,323,335	$4,028,173	$8,522,066	12%
Provincial	$2,115,872	$5,942,819	$7,018,651	$15,077,342	20%
Municipal	$119,180	$1,154,849	$2,967,380	$4,241,409	6%
Aboriginal	$1,027,130	$2,266,959	$1,712,856	$5,006,945	7%
Private	$168,250	$997,530	$0	$1,165,780	2%
Other	$1,560,746	$3,405,260	$5,502,551	$10,468,557	14%
Total	$14,241,787	$26,482,580	$32,968,515	$73,692,882	100%
% Leveraged from Non-UAS Sources	43%	65%	64%	60%	

Source: Based on PIMS Data provided by OFI, includes financial and in-kind support. Note that due to deficiencies in data, the above figures should be considered indicative.

To date, UAS has successfully leveraged $44,482,099 in additional funding from other federal initiatives, provincial and municipal government, Aboriginal organizations, non-government organizations and private companies. This represents $1.52 for every dollar invested by UAS. This is a significant observation because, it not only shows that UAS is partnering with other organizations, but demonstrates that those partners are committed to UAS objectives. To further add to this, other players such as philanthropic organizations and private sector companies contributed roughly $1.2 million to UAS projects between 2007-08 and 2009-10 and other organizations (such as universities and non-profit organizations) contributed $10.5 million over the same time period. This is a significant and unexpected accomplishment, which demonstrates the capacity of the UAS to bring organizations to the table.

Despite these very positive findings, it is worth noting, as show in *Table 7*, that the leveraging ratio varies significantly between cities. Prince Albert leveraged the greatest percentage from non-UAS sources at 82 percent and Thunder Bay the lowest at 31 percent.

Table 7: **Leveraging for UAS Projects by City (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

UAS Sites	UAS	Other Federal Initiatives	Provincial / Municipal	Other Partners	% Leveraged from Non-UAS Sources
Calgary	3,101,483	1,031,250	694,530	2,315,203	57%
Edmonton	2,109,586	885,691	1,104,533	1,011,132	59%
Lethbridge	1,847,371	284,939	1,293,226	907,954	57%
Ottawa	1,004,733	1,750	237,800	236,085	32%
Prince Albert	1,383,731	269,433	4,228,718	1,693,205	82%
Prince George	1,399,411	1,202,292	472,047	219,645	58%
Regina	2,208,956	1,642,538	1,219,924	202,955	58%
Saskatoon	2,477,771	889,327	700,960	643,194	47%
Thompson	1,439,115	140,400	696,416	691,867	52%
Thunder Bay	1,705,932	27,500	699,846	49,588	31%
Toronto	1,433,711	65,658	805,214	533,569	49%
Vancouver	5,129,955	320,587	2,772,055	4,818,388	61%
Winnipeg	3,315,799	985,701	4,093,482	3,057,553	71%
Total 13 Sites	28,557,554	7,747,066	19,018,751	16,082,417	60%
HQ	653,229	775,000	300,000	728,007	73%
Total	29,210,783	8,522,066	19,318,751	16,810,424	60%

Source: Based on PIMS Data provided by OFI, includes financial and in-kind support.

The following is a list of additional observations with respect to the leveraging:

- No targets have been established beyond total leveraging; however, contributions have come from a wide range of government, private sector, non-governmental organization (NGO) and Aboriginal organization sources demonstrating the breadth of UAS partnerships.

- Provincial investments (financial and in-kind) show an increasing overall trend and municipal investments show an increasing trend in in-kind contributions but a decrease in the last year with regard to financial investment.

- The UAS funding increased from roughly $8 million to $11 million between 2007-08 and 2009-10. And yet, UAS funding as a percentage of total funding has decreased substantially from 2007-08 (57 percent) to 2009-10 (36 percent). This is a result of increased funding from the UAS partner groups over time, specifically, federal, provincial, municipal, Aboriginal and others (such as not-for-profit organizations and universities).

- Compared with other UAS sites, Vancouver received less support from other government departments. This, at least in part, is because roughly $6 million of the $13 million in expenditures was dedicated to the 2010 Aboriginal Pavilion / 2010 Aboriginal Artisan Village and Business Showcase for the 2010 winter Olympics. The federal government provided $2.2 million in funding for this project – all of which was funneled through UAS. The majority of funding - $3.8 million was provided by the Vancouver Organizing Committee for 2010 Winter Olympics.

5.2.2   Aboriginal Organizational Capacity

Key Finding #8: There have been improvements in the development of capacity in Aboriginal organizations (and UAS steering committees) over time. Organizations are now identifying capacity needs and barriers and beginning to see signs of improved capacity.

OFI officials reported differing levels of organizational capacity development with capacity varying not only between regions but within regions and within sites. Most descriptions of organizational capacity building (and associated activities) made by OFI respondents were specific to the steering committees and not to the strengthening of Aboriginal organizations located within the UAS sites. Between 2007-08 and 2009-10, UAS invested roughly $6.6 million in 92 capacity development projects. Examples of capacity building activities include: professional development/training courses (e.g., performance measurement and accountability training, facilitation training, board leadership training, and grant application writing); capacity training provided during attendance at annual regional conferences, as well as the national conference every two years; and infrastructure projects (information technology). In general, the UAS has not supported institutional development, although Manitoba office did provide some seed funding to support the establishment of an Inuit organization in Winnipeg.

Evaluation participants noted that these activities have resulted in positive capacity outcomes such as enhanced accountability, improved reporting, and better proposal submissions. They went on to note that while organizational capacity has improved, there is a continued need to build capacity, through coaching and mentoring, in the areas of stable governance and financial management capabilities.

While case study respondents generally agree that capacity has been developed in Aboriginal organizations as a result of the UAS (although, opinions regarding the extent of development may range from minimal to significant in one city), there are some who believe that it is too early to measure any successes in this area, and others who question the appropriateness of attributing capacity development directly and/or exclusively to the UAS. Some individuals felt that capacity building tended to occur as a by-product of other activities (e.g., through the UAS encouraging increased collaboration and engagement among stakeholders).

Those who indicated capacity development had occurred identified a range of professional development activities and opportunities that focused on: proposal writing, media relations training, report writing, cultural education, website maintenance and development, community consultations, organizational and leadership skills building, self-esteem and self-confidence building, priority and goal setting, strategic planning, and investing in sustainable projects.

Findings from the CAT data for 2009-2010 reveals that some UAS sites (n=5) have spent time identifying the capacity needs and priorities of Aboriginal organizations as well as

identifying the barriers to achieving those needs (ratings of 3 or 4) (refer to Figure 1). Very few sites (n=2), however, have actually begun to address those needs and barriers through the development of a plan that draws on the available community and OFI resources (rating of 3 or 4).

Figure 1: CAT Findings 2009-10 - Identified Capacity-Building Needs
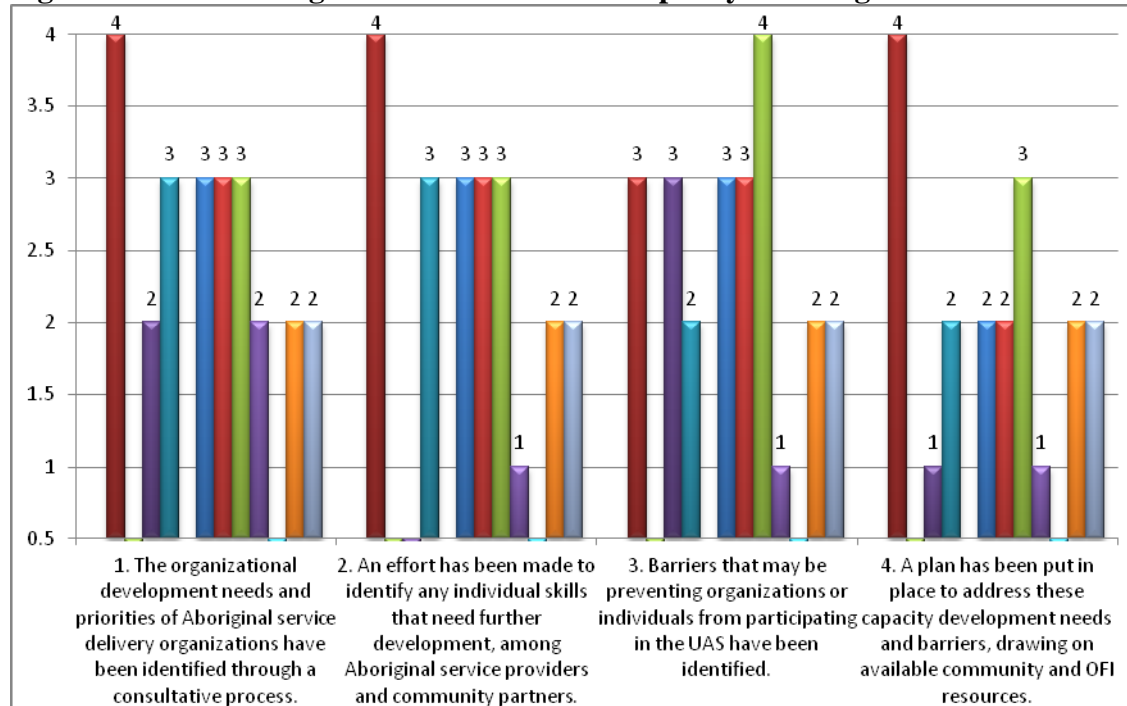
[No CAT data provided for Vancouver or Saskatoon.]
Source: 2009-10 Community Assessment Tool Reports for the cities of: Prince George, Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge, Prince Albert, Regina, Thompson, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Toronto, and Ottawa. Note that Figure 1 does not identify individual UAS sites for confidentiality reasons.

These findings demonstrate a progression in capacity development since 2005, when the formative evaluation concluded that the UAS had not, for the most part, offered resources for capacity building in individual organizations, in the areas of project and proposal development.[73]

By 2006, the Mid-term Review observed that that half of UAS communities had conducted workshops or provided resources specifically for capacity building. These focused on project and proposal development as well as building organizational skills such as planning, Board development and financial management.[74] However, despite these efforts, a trend analysis of CAT data in 2007-08 noted that stakeholders believed that the UAS steering committees were not working to identify organizational and skills-related capacity development needs.[75]

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[73] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2005. Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilot Projects Formative Evaluation: Final Report.
[74] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. n.d. UAS Mid-term Review 2005-2006: Final Draft.
[75] INAC. 2008a. Community Assessment Tool Trend Analysis 2007-2008.

By 2009, the Mid-term Review found that approximately 66 percent of organizations felt that the UAS has contributed to increasing community capacity to address urban Aboriginal issues and that the UAS has helped to increase the capacity of specific Aboriginal community service organizations through contributions to increases in staff, enhanced work space and equipment, individual training and skills development and organizational development. Between 2007 and 2009, a total of 82 projects had been funded nationally that had an organizational capacity building feature.[76]

5.2.3   Levels of Awareness

Key Finding #9: The evidence suggests increasing but still limited awareness of urban Aboriginal issues and there has been limited impact on the general population's level of awareness.

The 2005 formative evaluation found that communication was unsatisfactory in most of the participating sites, with community members, in general, knowing little about the UAS and community members expressing concern with their lack of input into project funding decisions.[77] The 2005-2006 Mid-term Review noted that communications with the broader Aboriginal communities in the participating sites is considered a critical component of the UAS. It reported that while many of the cities had conducted one community UAS forum in the last year to inform interested community members about the achievements of the UAS, some still have it on their "to do" list. All community leaders commented on the fact that because so much work has to go into establishing a steering committee, planning and implementing a new funding process, little time is left for awareness building and consultation. Those communities without a communication strategy and regular public consultation are the ones that report the greatest lack of UAS awareness. At the national level, it was reported that significant progress has been made in the area of communications through formats such as an enhanced UAS website, extranet site, UAS community conferences, UAS calendar, and the emergence of a UAS National Aboriginal Caucus.[78]

In response, UAS developed a Strategic Communications Plan (2007) for the UAS sites to inform urban Aboriginal people about the services and programs available to them through the Government of Canada; to raise public awareness about issues facing urban Aboriginal and the federal government's efforts to address these issues through renewing the UAS; and to strengthen partnerships at all levels of government, Aboriginal and other stakeholders so as improve collaboration and communication about Aboriginal issues. The Plan goes on to note that media coverage of urban Aboriginal issues is low to moderate with most announcements relating to project funding for social services and

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[76] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2009. UAS Mid-term Review 2009. Final Report. October 2009.

[77] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2005. Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilots Project, Formative Evaluation. Final Report.

[78] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. n.d. UAS Mid-term Review 2005-2006: Final Draft.

that while most Canadians agree that Aboriginal issues should be a priority, almost half were unable to identify any key Aboriginal issues. [79]

A trend analysis of CAT data carried out for the fiscal year 2007-08 found that steering committee members rated the effectiveness of (two-way) communication efforts between UAS officials and the Aboriginal community and the community-at-large as average (rating of only 2.4/5). The report indicated that communication is an area in need of significant improvement. While many cities report working on a communications plan, others have not had the time to think about it. In general, cities reported little or no public participation at UAS Steering Committee meetings, or meetings of sub-committees or working groups. [80]

The 2009 Mid-term Review found that community meetings have become more frequent, better organized and have experienced an increase in attendance (e.g., often more than 100 people attending, above and beyond those involved in the organizing the event). The survey of Aboriginal organizations, conducted as part of the Mid-term Review, indicates that 90 percent were aware of the UAS, 84 percent had been contacted to take part in community consultations about the UAS, and 15 percent had no involvement in UAS activities (due to factors such as not being asked to participate or being to busy with other work to take part). Two-thirds of survey participants also indicated that as a result of the UAS, more Aboriginal people are accessing community resources. [81]

In the current evaluation, all OFI respondents were in agreement that the Strategy has had an impact on increasing levels of awareness and support for urban Aboriginal issues through a range of local, provincial and national activities. The most commonly mentioned successful communication tools cited were the 2010 Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study, which had national media exposure when first released in 2010 and continues to receive exposure as it releases city-specific reports. Officials also noted that awareness was increased through websites, newsletters, local media releases/public awareness campaigns (getting 'good news stories out there'), funding of the 2010 Olympic Aboriginal pavilion, participation in local events, and through the building of relationships at all levels. On the other hand, others, including the subject matter experts interviewed, questioned the degree to which the UAS had increased general levels of awareness and support for urban Aboriginal issues and priorities. However, they also noted that awareness is limited because the Strategy only operates in 13 cities, and that in some cities, funding has mainly been applied to existing programs and services (thus, few newer identifiable initiatives).

Based on the evaluation case studies, only two cities reported strong positive impacts on the overall level of awareness and support for urban Aboriginal priorities as a result of the UAS (Lethbridge and Thunder Bay). Case study participants pointed to reasons such

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[79] OFI INAC. 2007. Strategic Communications Plan. Activation of Horizontal Terms and Conditions for the UAS. Appendix e.
[80] INAC. 2008a. Community Assessment Tool Trend Analysis 2007-2008.
[81] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2009. UAS Mid-term Review 2009. Final Report. October 2009.

as the following for their success: strong support from the Lethbridge Mayor; advocacy work on the part of the Aboriginal Council of Lethbridge; and the Thunder Bay Steering Committee leveraging volunteer support, participating in community activities, and providing support to other committees in Thunder Bay. A number of cities reported different levels of impacts, from minimal to considerable (e.g., Saskatoon, Ottawa, Edmonton), while others reported little evidence of success in this area (e.g., Toronto). Limited awareness regarding the needs and priorities of urban Aboriginal people was typically made in reference to the general public and it was thought to be the result of a lack of focus on this segment of the population (enhanced focus on Aboriginal population), limited resources, and lack of community-level communication plans. In general, activities identified as successfully increasing awareness included Steering Committee engagement sessions (with the Aboriginal community), public events to which the Steering Committee contributed (National Aboriginal Day, festivals), and City 'Accords' or official declarations of collaboration among government and Aboriginal organizations/political bodies. However, the evaluation did find evidence of project level impacts on awareness of Aboriginal issues within the general population. For example, the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study generated significant media attention across the country through major media outlets such as the CBC and the Globe and Mail.

5.2.4   Community Level Impacts

Key Finding #10: It is clear that the UAS has leveraged significant funding in the three priority areas, and that anecdotal evidence of successes can be identified. However, the impacts of these projects are difficult to assess due to the nature of the Strategy's approach, which has logically resulted in a diversity of projects within and across sites, a lack of performance objectives and targets, and uneven performance data.

The UAS is intended to result in improvements in client socio-economic conditions, leading to increased self-sufficiency and less reliance on social programs. To support this objective, UAS projects were strategically focussed on three priority areas: improving life skills; promoting job training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families.

Between 2007-08 and 2009-10, the UAS provided roughly $24 million in funding to 403 projects in the three priority areas. These investments served to leverage or attract $38 million in support from a broad range of stakeholders, including provincial and municipal governments, Aboriginal organizations and NGOs. *Table 8* provides a breakdown of funding and number of projects by priority area:

Table 8: **Number of Projects and Funding by UAS priority Area (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

Priority Area	# Projects	UAS Funding (Million)	Other Funding (Million)	Total Funding (Million)
Life Skills	167	$8.3	$9	$17.3
Job Skills	114	$9.2	$14	$23.2
Supporting women, children and families	122	$6.3	$15	$21.3
Total	403	$23.8	$38	$61.8

Source: Data retrieved from OFI.

While these accomplishments are significant, collaboration cannot be seen as a result in itself. As stated in the 2002 Clerk of the Privy Council Report – Delivering Federal Policies in the Regions: Partnerships in Action, "Horizontal collaboration is not a result, but the way we must achieve better results; it is about how we work." [82]

Clearly understanding the social-economic impacts of the UAS is essential to assessing its performance. However, measuring impacts at the sector and community levels proved unobtainable during this exercise. As noted in earlier in this report, the UAS' Terms and Conditions did not set out specific objectives for the three areas, nor do foundational documents identify specific targets or indicators for the priority areas that would measure progress. For example, two of the key performance indicators for the Job Skill priority are the number of people served through employment development services, and the number of trainees who are employed. In 2008-09, there were 248 participants, of which 22 moved on to specialized employment or further training, and 24 trainees became employed. This information is difficult to interpret because it isn't contextualized and doesn't allow for a deeper understanding of how the UAS projects may be contributing to increased employment or well-being over time (i.e., results are based on end-of-project reports only).

The Quarterly Reports for 2010-11 identify a few specific targets related to broader socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginal people, which were devised in recognition of the need for more objective measures of progress, but also acknowledge that the targets are to be revised as part of a current initiative to establish a stronger set of performance measures for UAS. The interim targets are:

- two percent increase by 2011 in the percentage of urban Aboriginal people in UAS-designated cities with high school attainment;

- two percent increase by 2011 in the percentage of urban Aboriginal people in UAS-designated cities employed; and

- two percent increase by 2011 in the average total income for urban Aboriginal people in UAS-designated cities.

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[82] OFI INAC. 2009. Federal Coordination on Urban Aboriginal Issues. Presentation on October 8, 2009

Unfortunately, the relationship between these broader socio-economic targets and the role of the UAS is unclear. Moreover, the timing of the evaluation also precluded examination of broad changes for or across UAS sites. For example, the 2006 Census establishes a clear baseline for the Strategy; however, the timing of this evaluation precluded the potential to draw upon data from the 2011 Census. Environic Institute's 2010 Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study provides more recent and detailed information of interest, but its sampling methods and variables are not consistent with the Census, making a statistical comparison between the two surveys impossible, as does differences in the approach used by Statistic Canada's LFS.

In practice, the funded projects proved broad in nature, a factor which allows for flexibility and local variations, but makes aggregation difficult both within and across sites. For example, officials report that under the Aboriginal Housing in Action Society Housing Project, the UAS provided funding to the Aboriginal Housing in Action Society (AHAS) in 2007-08 to conduct a feasibility study, construction planning for a housing project and future operational plans for the project. In the following year, the Alberta Municipal Affairs and Housing provided $4.3 million to AHAS to build a 29 unit affordable housing complex. This funding was conditionally based on the successful completion of the UAS funded activities.

Although this project information clearly shows how UAS funding led to the construction of affordable housing, it is much more challenging to aggregate with other projects to determine the overall impact of the Strategy. Existing performance measurement tools such as PIMs are insufficient to support this kind of analysis. In fact, a number of serious challenges were identified with respect to PIMS: limited attention to qualitative data, discrepancies in the data and data gaps, and challenges with producing reports on demand (e.g., to identify investments by priority areas, UAS staff had to manually compile data and numbers that should have been organized and reported from PIMS).

Moving forward, it will be important to draw upon lessons from other jurisdictions who have acknowledged challenges with measuring the broader socio-economic impacts of community-based funding initiatives. For example, lessons learned of relevance to UAS come from recent international experience with community based public investment funds, known as 'Social Investment Funds'.[83] By the late 2000s, such funds had been used by more than 45 countries as a means to support local initiatives and community decision making and ownership, while at the same time striving to provide incentives for investments in national priorities. A recent World Bank review found that such delivery approaches can improve impact and sustainability; however, "the execution of robust evaluations [of social funds] faces significant technical challenges. The methodologies for assessing the impacts of social funds are particularly complex; the multi-sector investment menus and the demand driven nature of social funds complicate

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[83] United Nations Human Settlement Program (UN-Habitat), (2009), *Social Investment Funds: A tool for Poverty Reduction and Affordable Housing*, The Human Settlement Financing Tools and Best Practices (UN-Habitat: Nairobi)

pre-identification of the type or location of the specific investments to be carried out and introduce additional challenges in addressing selection bias."[84]

Also important to look at in the future is the potential to use community plans - once more robust, or agreements such as the Winnipeg Memorandum of Understanding (MOU),[85] which OFI helped to foster as mechanisms for measuring improvements at the community level.

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[84] Rawlings, L., Sherburne-Benz, L., van Domelen, J. *Evaluating Social Funds*. (2004), *A Cross-Country Analysis of Community Investment*. (The World Bank, Washington, D.C.).

[85] Under the Canada, Manitoba, Winnipeg Memorandum of Collaboration, the parties are committed to working together on actions and mechanisms to improve the socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal people in Winnipeg and the capacity of Aboriginal organizations. Schedule A of the Agreement includes specific outcomes and indicators that could be used for future evaluation work. http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015462.

6. Evaluation Findings – Efficiency and Economy

This section examines the efficiency and economy by assessing how UAS allocates resources (including the resource allocation process, actual versus planned expenditures and perspectives of stakeholders on the cost-effectiveness of resources use), the extent of duplication with other initiatives and best or promising practices.

6.1   Resource Allocation

Key Finding # 11: The governing allocations across sites are unclear and resulting in disparities. Moreover, while lessons are being learned respecting balances between capacity and responsibilities, there are no clear benchmarks established for what constitutes acceptable investments in administration, partnerships and capacity building as compared to project related expenses across sites or overtime.

Actual expenditures: A comparison with planned expenditures

As noted in Section 2, UAS received a total resource allocation of $68.5 million over a five year period (from 2007-08 to 2011-12). Forty-one million dollars was intended to be spent by the end of 2009-10 across UAS' three funds: the Community Investment Fund (50 percent), the Community Capacity Fund (14 percent) and the Central Fund (8 percent). The remaining resources were to be allocated to OFI Headquarters (7 percent) and regional offices (22 percent) (Refer to Table 1 in Section 2.3 for details on the distribution of planned expenditures for the UAS).

Table 9 presents actual expenditures – contrasted against planned expenditures - for each of the UAS' three funds between 2007-08 and 2009-10.

Table 9: **UAS Expenditures (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	Total	Total Planned (2007-08 to 2009-10)
Investment Fund	6,531,401	7,417,467	7,763,584	21,712,452	20,550,000
Capacity Fund	1,765,143	2,072,615	1,718,702	5,556,460	5,685,000
Central Fund	-	708,586	445,424	1,154,010	3,075,000
Other Contributions	-	-	2,222,835	2,222,835	-
OFI HQ	385,825	779,999	907,375	2,073,199	2,820,000
OFI Regions	1,995,287	2,448,923	2,582,005	7,026,215	8,850,000
Total	**10,677,656**	**13,427,590**	**15,639,925**	**39,745,171**	**40,980,000**

Source: UAS Program Files.
Note: UAS salary was recorded in the general OFI salary budget in 2007.

UAS financial records show overall expenditures to be roughly $10.7 million in 2007-08, $13.4 million in 2008-09 and $15.6 million in 2009-10. This represents 78 percent, 99 percent and 114 percent of the planned expenditures for each respective year. Lower than expected expenditures in 2007-08, at least in part, are attributed to fact that OFI Headquarters salary and operations expenditures were tracked in the general OFI budget (opposed to being specifically attributed to UAS). Yet, even without this discrepancy, expenditures were roughly $2 million lower than expected. In 2009-10, the actual expenditures exceeded planned expenditures by 15 percent due to exceptional circumstances around the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in which the Strategy became the vehicle through which AANDC provided $2.2 million in support to the Games.

Over the three-year period, actual amounts allocated to the Community Investment and Community Capacity funds were in line with expected amounts. The Central Fund, however, spent 62 percent less than expected.

The UAS reported that the amounts allocated to each fund were determined based on lessons learned through its initial years of experience. In 2004-05, the Strategy funded projects through the Community Investment Fund. The following year, investments were extended to support capacity-building in designated sites for partnering with government and other organizations, something that later reviews and evaluations found was an important step to meeting the objectives of the Strategy. The evaluation did not find further evidence of a rationale for the distribution of the budget across these funds.

Resource Allocation Between Urban Sites

The evaluation could not find a clear rationale as to why the 13 designated sites were initially designated UAS sites. However, the UAS planning documents do specify that an additional five cities could be considered if they demonstrate that: there is a significant Aboriginal population, willingness within the Aboriginal community to work together and with other partners in the community, including non-Aboriginal partners, and real and demonstrable commitments from provinces and municipalities. Planning documents are also clear that in order for the designated cities to access funding, they must have a commitment from provincial and municipal governments to cost share funding on a 50-50 basis and be able to demonstrate linkages between community priorities and national priorities.

The allocation of Community Investment and Community Capacity Funds to each designated UAS city was based on allocations made during the UAS Pilot Projects, taking into consideration the distribution of $68.5 million over the five-year mandate. Therefore, the expected allocations for each "big" city were $750,000 through the Community Investment Fund and $185,000 through the Community Capacity Fund. The Strategy planned to allocate to "small cities" $400,000 of Community Investment funding and $100,000 through the Community Capacity Fund. In theory, each "big" city would be allocated 9.9 percent of total funding, while each "small" city would be allocated 5.3 percent of the total.

Table 10 below presents the total expenditures (including both the Community Investment Fund and Community Capacity Fund) for each city between 2007-08 and 2009-10. The table's figures show that, on average, big cities were allocated nine percent of total funding and small cities were allocated approximately five percent, proportions in line with expected allocation. However, the evaluation encountered some of the proportions varied significantly from the intended allocation. For example, allocation of resources across larger cities ranged from a low of three percent in Ottawa to a high of 18 percent in Vancouver.

In 2006-07, Regina and Toronto were revitalizing the steering committee partnerships and engagement of community. Independent reviews undertaken in those cities, to inform the revitalization, indicated that part of the barrier to forming stable and effective steering committee foundations was the pressure to make recommendations on the investment of the allocations. In order to give Regina and Toronto the support the cities needed to complete the revitalizations, the allocations for project funding were reduced and the allocations for capacity development remained the same as the other "big" cities. Therefore, Regina and Toronto were each allocated $400,000 in Community Investment Fund and $185,000 in Community Capacity Fund. The experience of Regina and Toronto helped inform subsequent funding allocations to Ottawa, a new city designated during renewal in 2007-08. Instead of $400,000 in Community Investment Fund and $185,000 Community Capacity Fund, Ottawa was allocated $200,000 and $185,000, respectively.

Table 10: **Breakdown of Resources by UAS Sites (2007-08 to 2009-2010)**

UAS Sites	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	Total	% of Total UAS Funding
Big Cities					
Calgary	1,008,002	1,109,690	983,791	3,101,483	11%
Edmonton	559,050	665,557	884,979	2,109,586	7%
Ottawa	200,000	397,492	407,241	1,004,733	3%
Regina	608,879	738,607	861,470	2,208,956	8%
Saskatoon	961,861	766,252	749,658	2,477,771	8%
Thunder Bay	540,039	533,844	632,049	1,705,932	6%
Toronto	491,543	371,010	571,158	1,433,711	5%
Vancouver	915,000	890,377	3,324,578	5,129,955	18%
Winnipeg	729,326	1,480,836	1,105,637	3,315,799	11%
Small Cities					
Lethbridge	767,158	555,405	524,808	1,847,371	6%
Prince Albert	474,549	409,532	499,650	1,383,731	5%
Prince George	489,353	483,106	426,952	1,399,411	5%
Thompson	335,291	568,114	535,710	1,439,115	5%
Total 13 Sites	**8,080,051**	**8,969,822**	**11,507,681**	**28,557,554**	**98%**

Source: Based on PIMS data provided by OFI.
Note: There are slight discrepancies in total expenditures between Table 10 and Table 9.

Table 11 shows both Aboriginal and total population of UAS cities. One noteworthy finding is that three of the four "small" cities held a significantly higher proportion of Aboriginal people than any of the big cities, something perhaps for the UAS to consider in future funding allocations.

With one exception, a greater number of Aboriginal people live in "big" cities and as such, the UAS distribution suggests a basic per capita funding formula. However, upon further analysis, it is clear that the funding per capita varies significantly between the UAS cities. For example, Edmonton receives roughly $40 per capita and Lethbridge receives $463 per capita.

Table 11: **Aboriginal Population Distribution (2006) and UAS Funding (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

UAS City	Total City Population	Aboriginal Population	% of City Population that is Aboriginal	Planned UAS Funding per Capita (Abor. Pop.)	Actual UAS Funding per Capita (Abor. Pop.)
Big Cities					
Calgary	1,070,295	26,575	2.5	$106	$117
Edmonton	1,024,820	52,100	5	$54	$40
Ottawa	801,275	12,250	1.5	$94	$82
Regina	192,440	17,110	8.9	$103	$129
Saskatoon	230,850	21,535	9.3	$130	$115
Thunder Bay	121,055	10,055	8.3	$279	$170
Toronto	5,072,075	26,575	0.5	$66	$54
Vancouver	2,097,965	40,310	1.9	$70	$127
Winnipeg	686,035	68,380	10	$41	$48
Small cities					
Lethbridge	93,680	3,990	4.3	$376	$463
Prince Albert	39,800	13,565	34	$111	$102
Prince George	82,620	8,855	10.8	$169	$158
Thompson	13,540	4,930	36.4	$304	$292
TOTAL	**11,842,300**	**314,570**	**2.7**	N/A	N/A

Source: 2006 Census Data
Note that per capita funding does not include overhead costs associated with OFI salaries and operations.
Note that planned per capita expenditures are based on initial allocation of $935,000 to big cities and $585,000 to small cities, including the above noted modifications to Ottawa, Toronto and Regina.

Resource Allocation by Type of Expenditures

In order to analyze the distribution of funding between the various objectives of evaluation team requested a breakdown of which projects contributed to developing capacity and which projects contributed to the three priority areas. Currently, capable of providing this breakdown and as such, a UAS analyst manually tallied number of projects and project costs.

Table 12 presents the resulting data:

Table 12: **UAS Investments by Administrative and Priority Areas (2007-08 to 2009-10)**

Priority Area	# of UAS Projects	UAS Funding	% of UAS Funding	Other Funding	Total Funding	% Total Funding
Life Skills	167	8,257,264	21%	9,050,445	17,307,709	22%
Job Skills	114	9,190,747	23%	13,986,414	23,177,161	29%
Supporting Women, Children and Families	122	6,352,542	16%	14,991,299	21,343,841	27%
Partnership/Capacity	92	6,811,101	17%	1,221,570	8,032,671	10%
OFI HQ	0	2,073,199	5%	-	2,073,199	3%
OFI Regions	0	7,026,215	18%	-	7,026,215	9%
Total	**495**	**39,711,068**	**100%**	**39,249,728**	**78,960,796**	**100%**

Source: UAS Program Files (PIMS data provided by OFI).

As can be seen in the table above, UAS invested significantly in developing its regional delivery model, with roughly 18 percent of UAS funds being allocated to regional offices. To further add to this, an additional 17 percent of funds were allocated to developing partnerships (i.e., the UAS delivery network) and capacity (i.e., the capacity of recipients to deliver services.) Finally, five percent of funds were allocated to OFI Headquarters, whose main roles are to support regional offices administratively and help develop UAS sites in cities that are not yet designated. In total, these non-project related costs account for roughly 40 percent of UAS expenditures.

Although 40 percent 'overhead' may seem high, investments made by other funders reduce the overall costs. For example, other funders contributed an additional $1.2 million in partnership/capacity development and over $38 million in project funding for the three priority areas. This significantly alters the percentage of funding being dedicated to OFI operations and partnerships – 12 percent and 10 percent, respectively.

The literature review did not find evidence of standard benchmarks available to assess what the costs should look like, although evidence from an evaluation being presented to the EPMRC on Community Planning indicated costs at roughly $100K per community in British Columbia and $500K per community in Saskatchewan, with higher costs here attributed largely to a lack of local training capacity. Evidence from international literature notes, however, that community participation can risk being seen to amount only to "costs" because of the time and resources spent in consultations and additional training activities to enable communities to take more direct control of the identification and implementation of small-scale investments. Yet, the benefits have been recognized as significant. A recent World Bank led analysis of community investments (via Social Investment Funds), for example, found that increased citizen input and community participation in investments can improve impact and sustainability[86].

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[86] Rawlings, Laura B., Lynne Sherburne-Benz and Julie van Domelen, *Evaluating Social Funds,* (2004), *A Cross-Country Analysis of Community Investments,* (The World Bank, Washington, D.C.).

Resource Allocation Process at the Local Level

All communities designated under the UAS have established community-based steering committees to plan, make funding decisions, and coordinate the work of the UAS with other community activities related to urban Aboriginal issues. Each community committee is composed of a cross section of the Aboriginal community, to ensure committee decisions reflect broad community concerns and priorities. The structure of the committee includes both Aboriginal community representatives and representatives of the federal government and other levels of government, in keeping with the objective to establish strong and active partnerships between government and community. Federal officials approve the projects, but the practice across the country has been to provide the UAS steering committees a great deal of autonomy with respect to recommending projects and their funding levels, provided that the program terms and conditions are met.

As described in the 2010 Audit, there are varying degrees of capacity for the UAS steering committees and as such, decisions in some communities are guided by well established priorities that respond to real needs, while other steering committees have a more ad hoc approach to allocating funds. This makes it difficult to access the appropriateness of how resources are being allocated at the community level. Nonetheless, the following sub-section summarizes the perspectives of stakeholders on how cost-effective the Strategy has been.

Perspectives on Efficiency

With shorter and longer term impacts ill-defined and difficult to measure, it is difficult to assess the reasonability of costs incurred. Perspectives on efficiency varied between different stakeholders, largely due to the roles that they play in implementing the Strategy. Most case study participants, for example, commented that although there are not enough funds provided through the UAS, what funding is available is well spent. They reported that UAS projects produced a large return on investment because project recipients were capable of stretching available resources and accomplishing "the most they could' with the available funds." Furthermore, because the initiative is community driven and partnership-focussed, it serves to align resources of many initiatives (including the UAS funding) with specific community needs. All OFI key informants, however, (n=7) explicitly stated that the Strategy has been very successful at meeting its outcomes in relation to resources spent (i.e., in other words, the UAS is very cost-effective). Most (n=6) indicated that this was due mainly to successes in leveraging funds (refer to Section 5.2.1).

Other lines of evidence identified the following issues resource allocation were identified:

- The 2009 Mid-term Review notes that OFI staff spends a great deal of time and effort developing steering committees and supporting the planning and project-related activities. As a consequence, little attention has been dedicated to the more "strategic" elements - developing and strengthening relationships with other federal departments

and partners, helping to identify and develop opportunities for community initiatives in priority areas, and assisting with the development of more advanced community planning. While more senior OFI officials spend time on these activities, they are also responsible for other aspects of the management and operations of the UAS that require a significant time investment.[87]

- In the past, multi-year funding was identified as a means of increasing project sustainability and viability, enhancing organizational capacity, improving the opportunity for the achievement of outcomes as well as decreasing administrative bureaucracy and costs (e.g., reducing the number of proposal submissions). In 2010-2011, UAS was given the authority to do multi-year funding but as their authorities expire on March 31, 2012, they were not able to use it.

- It was mentioned during key informant and case study interviews as well as in past studies that the efficiency of UAS-funded projects is affected by the timeliness of funding decisions and funding flow through. Both the formative evaluation and the 2005-2006 Mid-term Review identified the slowness of project approval and the flow of funds as significant barriers to project success. While the 2009 Mid-term Review findings indicated substantial improvements in these two areas, the 2010 Audit reported that delays in project payments due to factors such as late recipient reporting, processing delays as a result of staff shortages and bottlenecks within the Administrative Unit, and a lack of oversight of the effectiveness and timeliness of financial processes within the Unit.[88] Case study participants in one city stated that if the UAS switched from a 'reimbursement' funding model to a 'pay up-front' funding model, more potential project recipients would participate in the call for proposal process, and thus, increase the reach of the project.

6.2   Improvements in the Delivery of the UAS

Key Finding #12: The UAS has made a number of improvements in the delivery of the Strategy; however, longstanding issues related to the quality of performance measurement have not been addressed.

OFI has introduced a number measures to improve delivery of the Strategy, including the development of national priority areas, continuing emphasis on medium or longer term community plans, and the development of mechanisms to foster collaboration with federal partners at the provincial or regional levels where partners are less likely to reside in communities. The latter initiatives - along with the emergence of provincial Aboriginal strategies (e.g., in Ontario and Alberta, for example) and increasing interest of Aboriginal organizations in urban affairs - may hold a key to maximizing the reach of the UAS past the 13 designated sites.

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[87] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc. 2009. UAS Mid-term Review 2009. Final Report. October 2009.
[88] INAC. 2010. Internal Audit Report. Audit of Implementation of the UAS. May 2010.

The 2009 Mid-term Review also indicates that "the UAS has placed greater emphasis on developing reporting tools for management and for evaluation, and these have been greatly expanded and improved, particularly PIMS, which collects data on projects, funding, objectives, leveraging and the use of the Strategy's horizontal Terms and Conditions."[89]

However, the findings of this evaluation as well as those of the 2010 Audit suggest that that while key reporting requirements have been identified, data collection supporting reporting is questionable. Post-project data has not been secured; inconsistencies have been noted between funding sources noted project work plans and those recorded in PIMS[90]; and the CAT data is produced through self-reporting rather than through a more neutral collection technique. Moreover, little information was obtained during the evaluation process on how, or if, PIMS data on individual project successes and outcomes are utilized, either at the local level or OFI regional/national level.

6.3   Extent of Duplication or Complementarity

Key Finding # 13: The UAS compliments existing initiatives by developing partnerships and integrating funding mechanisms. There is no evidence that UAS unnecessarily duplicates other initiatives. However, several recent initiatives suggest the need for OFI to ensure the UAS remains well-positioned.

All lines of evidence suggest that, as found in the 2005 Formative Evaluation, there are no other programs, initiatives or strategies, which duplicate the UAS, although elements of the Strategy, including efforts to support community based approaches and the coordination of key stakeholders are common to other initiatives as well. [91] Moreover, respondents also reiterated that there are some responsibility and policy overlaps among federal, provincial and municipal governments in the urban Aboriginal fields such as training, employment, homelessness and justice.

Indeed, key informant interview and case study respondents noted that the UAS complements other programs/initiatives offered by federal departments such as Justice, Health Canada - First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, and the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) Homelessness Partnering Strategy. The UAS was also said to complement municipal urban Aboriginal strategies such as the City of Toronto Urban Aboriginal Framework. Specific examples of how UAS complements other initiatives are as follows:

- The National Association of Friendship Centres is a network of 117 friendship centres and seven provincial/territorial associations nationwide that provide culturally enhanced programs and services to urban Aboriginal people. Each Aboriginal Friendship Centre is run by a volunteer Board of Directors and sets its own goals and

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[89] Alderson-Gill and Associates Consulting Inc., 2009, Op. Cit.
[90] INAC, Audit and Assurance Services Branch, 2010, Op. Cit. p.9.
[91] Alderson-Gill & Associates Consulting Inc., (2005), *Urban Aboriginal Strategy Pilot Projects, Formative Evaluation, Final Report*, 54p.

objectives based on the needs of the community in which it is located. The National Association of Friendship Centres and the Provincial/Territorial Associations' receive, manage, distribute and monitor the funding with recipient organizations that provide services to urban Aboriginal peoples. Unlike the UAS, which has three priority areas for action, the services provided in friendship centres cover very diverse areas in all aspects of economic, cultural and social life. Furthermore, while the UAS focuses on empowering communities, the programs in friendship centres clearly contribute to strengthening the capacity of organizations who are recipients of the services provided. Lastly, unlike the UAS, there is no requirement to share costs for organizations that submit funding applications.

- The 2009 Evaluation of the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy suggests that the two strategies are complementary rather than a duplication of service: "Most urban Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy are involved in the implementation of the UAS, and a number of Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy pilot projects have been funded under the UAS."[92] For example, one project that focused on increasing construction skills identified lack of daycare or no life skills as barriers for participants. While HRSDC was unable to provide funding to address these barriers, the UAS was able to provide links to municipal and provincial daycare and addictions programs.

These findings are consistent with the fact that the UAS is not intended to function as a stand-alone initiative; rather integration with existing and emerging initiatives related to the urban Aboriginal community is intrinsic to the design of the UAS.[93] The UAS was described as complementing other initiatives/programs/strategy by increasing their effectiveness and their outcomes and that these achievements are the result of horizontality and maximizing investment.

However, the evaluation noted the emergence of several key issues, which pose risks to the currency and sustainability of the UAS' current approach, among them:
- The growth, diversity and settlement patterns of the urban Aboriginal population. For example, the evaluation evidence suggests that to date, the UAS has had the potential to reach only a relatively small percentage of urban Inuit through its designated site approach. While the UAS designated sites included 2,550 of 6,031 urban dwelling Inuit in 2006.[94] With the largest urban Inuit population not covered by UAS cities, being Montreal with 570 identified Inuit individuals).

- Federal officials interviewed indicated that there might be commonalities between the UAS and the Strategic Partnerships Initiative, which is part of the Federal Framework for Aboriginal Economic Development. The Strategic Partnerships Initiative supports market-driven opportunities that will increase the participation of Aboriginal people

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[92] Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (2009). Summative Evaluation of the Aboriginal Human Resources Development Strategy. p. 26.
[93] Alderson-Gill and Associates Consulting Inc, (2005), Op. Cit.
[94] Statistics Canada (2006). Census Data.

in the Canadian economy by promoting partnerships between federal and non-federal partners in priority sectors of the economy.[95]

- Urban Aboriginal strategies are beginning to be developed at the regional, provincial and national levels. For example, the Shuswap Tribal Council is developing their own Urban Aboriginal Strategy,[96] at least two provinces were noted by OFI to be developing their own urban Aboriginal strategies, and the Assembly of First Nations has developed an Urban Strategy to *"work with partners [...] to move forward on the development of a nationally-facilitated, regionally-coordinated, and locally-led First Nations Urban Strategy.*"[97] Furthering partnerships or support for these sorts of initiatives could provide an opportunity for UAS to move beyond its city-based delivery model and help address more strategic and policy issues.

6.4   Alternatives and Best Practices Looking Forward

A number of best and/or promising practices aimed at improving the current approach of the UAS were identified during the review of the literature and through conducting key informant (specifically OFI and federal respondents) and case study interviews. Many of the 'alternatives' identified were simply improvements to the current system. The most commonly mentioned practices included:

- Instituting multi-year funding was identified as a way to more effectively build capacity and improve program stability and sustainability while allowing the achievement of project outcomes over a longer, more appropriate period of time. Longer-term funding agreements would not have to be re-negotiated from year-to-year and as such, could serve to reduce administrative burden.

- Investigating the potential of measuring performance not only at a sector level, but in terms of the achievement of community plans and/or outcomes established in community level agreements such as the Winnipeg-Manitoba-Canada MOU.

- Developing an effective method for reporting and disseminating UAS success stories' that would provide much needed opportunities for knowledge uptake at the community and regional levels and for celebration/acknowledgement of achievements.

- Developing effective communication strategies at all levels to help increase awareness of the UAS and urban Aboriginal needs and priorities.

- Drawing upon the UAS experiences with smaller sites (where federal or other partners are not resident) to assess ways of expanding the reach of the Strategy.

- Reviewing the objectives and expectations for results in priority areas taking into account the potential for impacts given the mandates of other key departments (including, for example, skills training efforts of HRSDC).

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[95] AANDC Strategic Partnerships website. http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015370
[96] Shuswap Nation Tribal Council Website. http://www.shuswapnation.org/departments/skills-training.html
[97] Assembly of First Nations Website. http://www.afn.ca/index.php/en/policy-areas/nation-building-and-re-building-supporting-first-nation-governments

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1   Conclusions

The findings of this evaluation report support the conclusion that the UAS continues to be relevant, but must be prepared to adapt its practices and approach in order to remain so. The UAS is designed to allow communities to set priorities and allocate resources to address local needs in the urban Aboriginal population. Given that the urban Aboriginal population is culturally diverse, currently growing and experiencing lower socio-economic outcomes compared with the general population, the need for UAS is expected to continue into the future. The UAS is consistent with the federal government's responsibility to provide special programs to urban Aboriginal people and is aligned with Government of Canada priorities related to economic opportunities and education for Aboriginal Canadians as well as AANDC's Strategic Outcome: 'socio-economic well-being of Métis, non-Status Indians and urban Aboriginal people.

The flexible, community-based design of UAS has enhanced the Strategy's ability to address complex issues through project-based funding. However, it has created challenges in managing the more strategic issues such as strategic / national level partnership development, planning, alignment and coordination among government programs and initiatives.

Specific performance challenges identified in this evaluation include aligning the priorities of various stakeholders, raising the general public's awareness of urban Aboriginal issues, reporting on performance (particularly related to how the UAS has impacted communities in the three priority areas - improving life skills; promoting job training and entrepreneurship; and supporting Aboriginal women, children and families) and an inability to reconcile the terms and conditions with departmental/agency accountabilities.

Despite these challenges, the UAS has successfully brought together a diverse range of partners at the project level, including Aboriginal organizations, provincial and municipal governments, private companies, not-for-profit organizations and a number of federal government initiatives. It has increased awareness of urban Aboriginal issues with those directly involved in the UAS and helped to develop capacity in Aboriginal organizations and UAS steering committees. These accomplishments have served to help align government programming with specific urban Aboriginal needs.

At the same time, the evidence suggests that since the Strategy was launched, changes have occurred: growth in the urban population, signs of greater interest in urban Aboriginal issues as well as efforts to better understand the relations between reserve and off-reserve populations, among others. These changes signal an opportunity and a necessity to foster even greater flexibility in order to take advantage of potential synergies with emerging stakeholders.

While acknowledging the delicate balance between local needs and federal priorities, future endeavours should not be undertaken without significant attention being paid to improving the UAS' grasp of its niche and potential impacts, as well as improvements in efficiency and economy in line with the findings that:
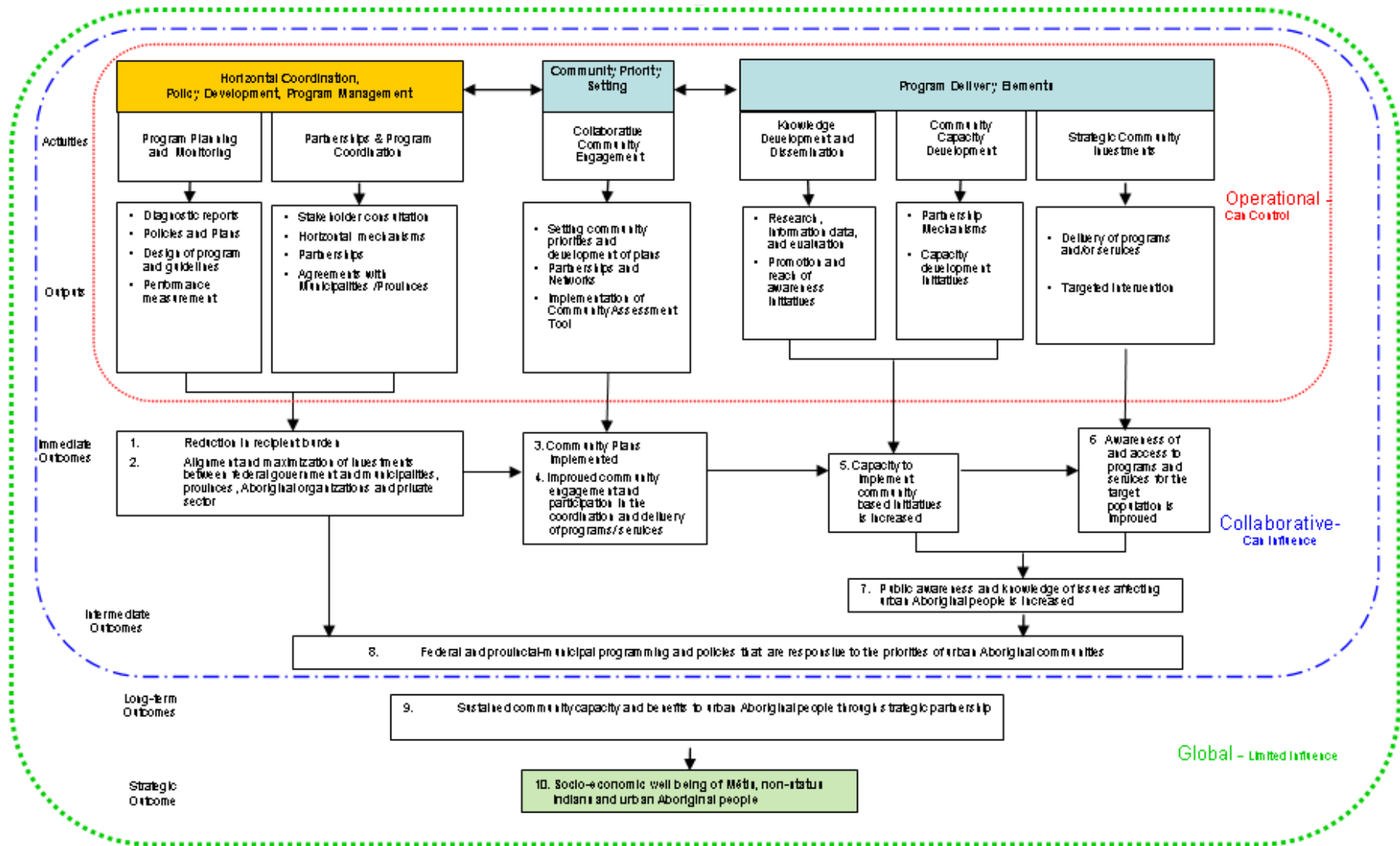
- The UAS complements existing initiatives by developing partnerships and integrating funding mechanisms. There is no evidence that UAS unnecessarily duplicates other initiatives.
- The governing allocations across sites are unclear and resulting in disparities. Moreover, while lessons are being learned respecting balances between capacity and responsibilities, there are no clear benchmarks established for what constitutes acceptable investments in administration, partnerships and capacity building as compared to project related expenses across sites or overtime.
- The UAS has made a number of improvements in the delivery of the Strategy; however, longstanding issues related to the quality of performance measurement have not been addressed.

7.2   Recommendations

It is recommended that UAS:

1. Develop clear objectives to guide the Strategy's work, particularly with respect to capacity building and the achievement of outcomes in priority areas.

2. Revise the UAS performance measurement strategy in line with current departmental guidelines and requirements in order to:

   a) improve the monitoring and measurement of results, particularly at the community and sector (or priority) levels;

   b) strengthen the UAS' monitoring and assessment of efficiency and economy across all activity areas; and

   c) allow for the conduct of periodic reviews of the UAS' priority areas with Aboriginal stakeholders and other key partners to ensure they account key priorities at both the regional and federal departmental levels.

3. Consider diversifying the UAS' delivery models and partners so as to maximize the Strategy's reach and impacts.

4. Work closely with federal partners to facilitate efforts to streamline administrative and reporting requirements in horizontal initiatives.

Appendix A – UAS Logic Model