

Supporting Public Health within Canada's Indigenous Communities

Fostering public health policies and response in the territorial context: the role of NPHIs

IANPHI Annual Meeting

April 9, 2025



Land Acknowledgement

We are gathered here in the beautiful country of Mozambique, which is the traditional territory of the Bantu people.

I would like to acknowledge that I live and work in Ottawa, on the unceded, traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishnaabe People, also known as Adawe, on the traditional and unceded territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation, members of the Anishinabek Nation Self-Government Agreement. Ottawa is now home to many Urban First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples from across the lands known as Canada.

May this acknowledgment serve as a constant reminder of our responsibility to engage in meaningful and respectful partnerships with the Indigenous Peoples as we work together towards a more just, equitable, and healthy future for all.

Indigenous Peoples in Canada

In 2021, Indigenous Peoples represented 5% of the 36.9M Canadian population.
[Canada's Indigenous population - Statistics Canada](#)

First Nations

Almost 100 distinct Nations and more than 630 Bands or Reserves



Inuit

An Indigenous People living primarily in Inuit Nunangat (comprised of 4 northern regions)



Métis

A distinct political-cultural Indigenous People descending from fur trading communities primarily from across the Canadian prairie



Breakdown of the Indigenous identity population in Canada based on 2021 Census

	Population	Percentage based on total Indigenous Population
First Nations	1,048,405	58%
Métis	624,220	34.5%
Inuit	70,545	3.9%
Indigenous population not included elsewhere	35, 225	1.9%
Multiple Indigenous responses	28,855	1.6%
Total Indigenous Population	1,807,250 (+9.4% since 2016)	

Data from Statistic Canada
<https://www50.statcan.gc.ca/nl/daily-quotidien/220921/dq220921a-eng.htm?indid=32990-16indgeo=0>

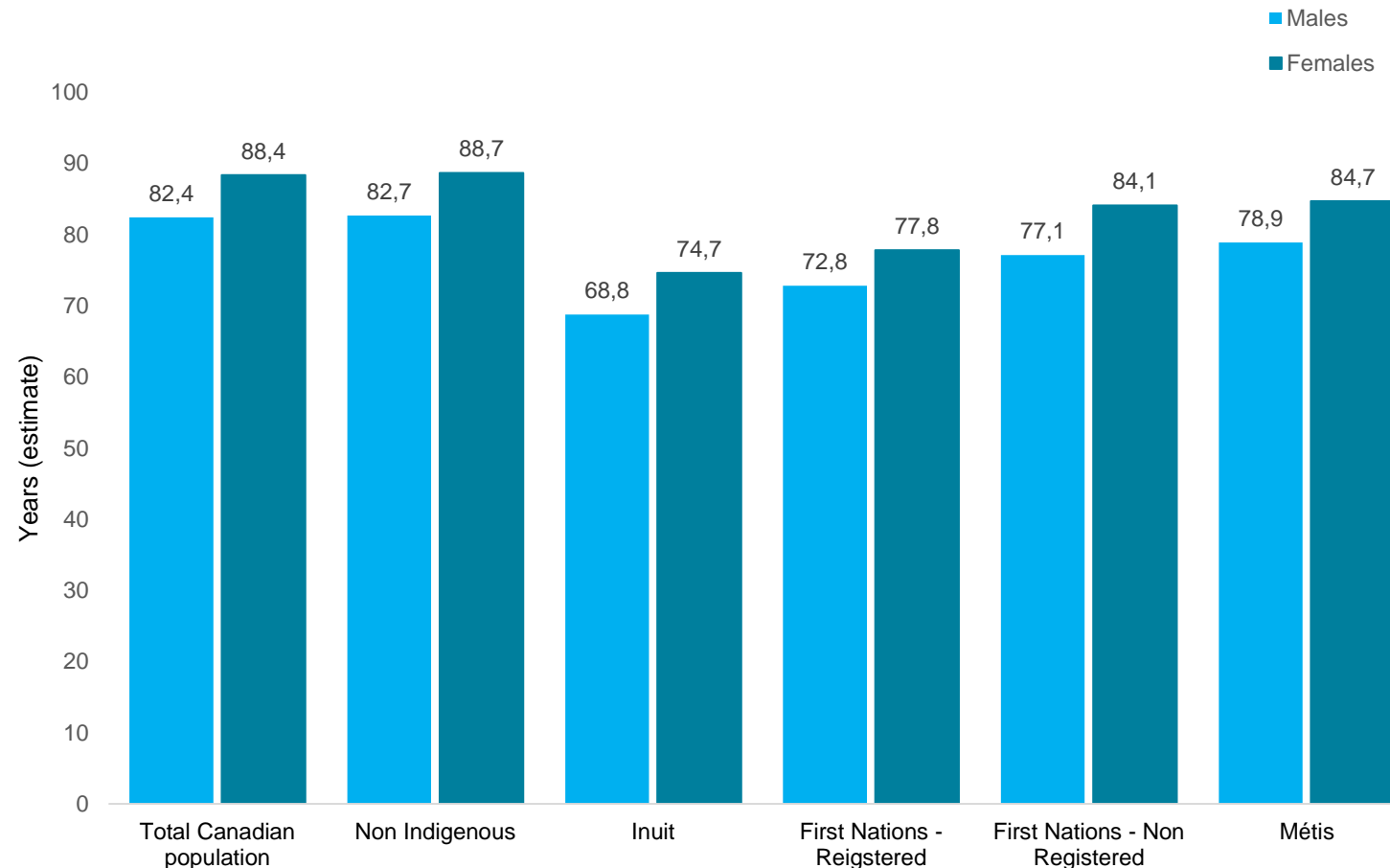


Source: Natural Resources Canada. Atlas of Canada (2022)

https://ftp.maps.canada.ca/pub/nrcan_rncan/Geographical-maps_Carte-geographique/SmallScaleReferenceMaps/english_canada/colour/Canada.pdf

Impacts of Racism and Colonialism on Life Expectancy

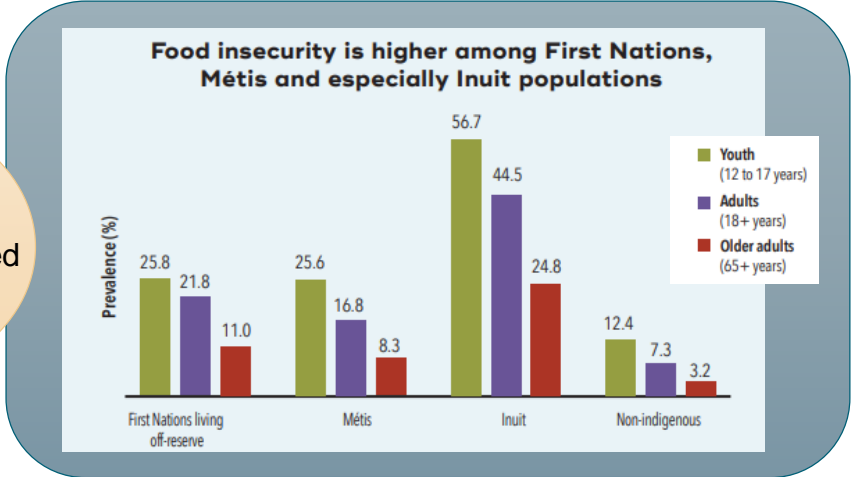
Life expectancy at birth, Canada, by Indigenous Identity, 2016-2019



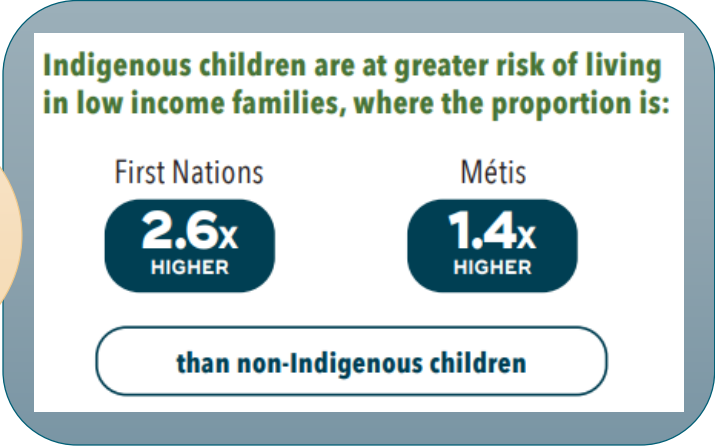
Truth Comes Before Reconciliation

Data on Health Equity specific to Indigenous Peoples in Canada

*The prevalence of household **food insecurity** compared to non-Indigenous adults (2018)

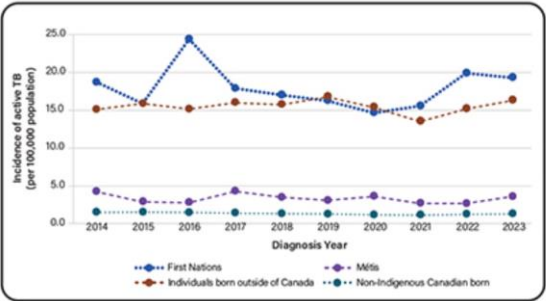
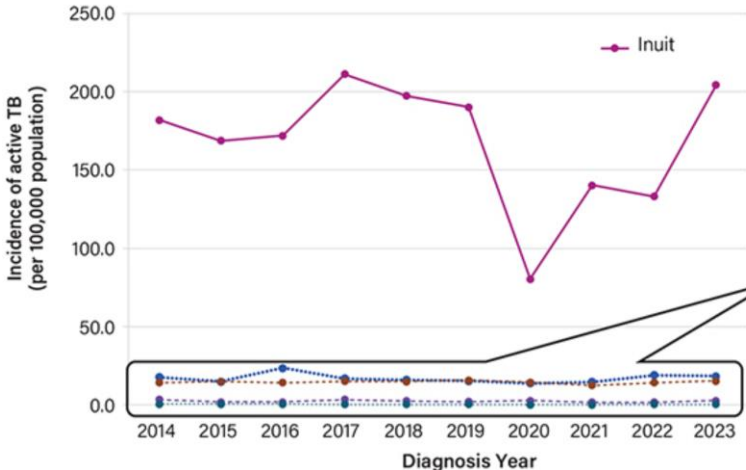


*The proportion of children **living in low income families** compared to non-Indigenous children (2018)



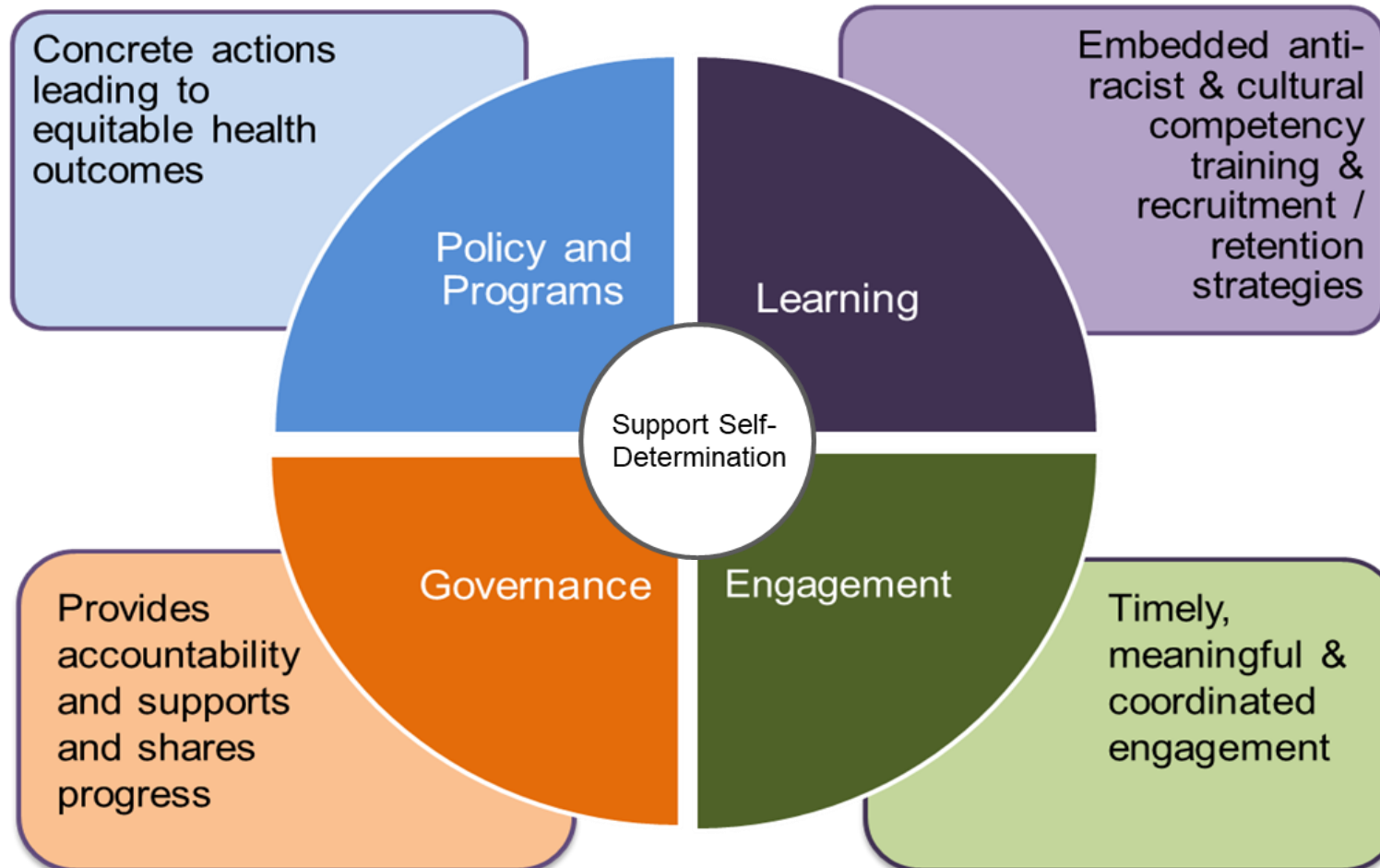
*Pan-Canadian Health Inequalities Reporting. Public Health Agency of Canada, Pan-Canadian Public Health Network, Statistics Canada, and the Canadian Institute of Health Information (2018).

*Incidence of **tuberculosis** in Canada (2014 - 2023)

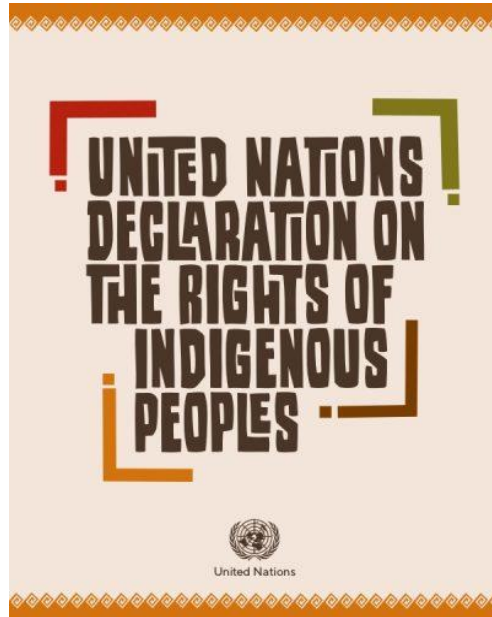


+PHAC Tuberculosis disease in Canada (2023).

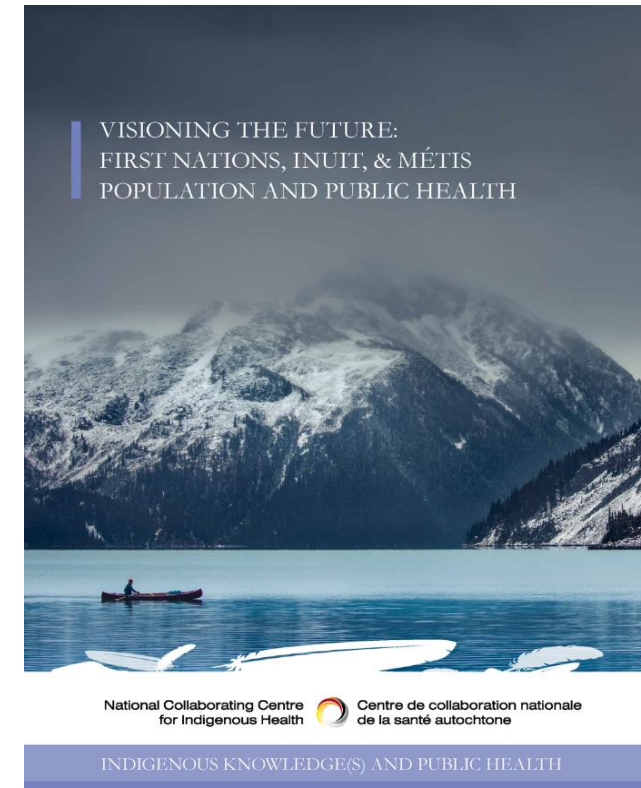
PHAC Reconciliation Approach



Indigenous Voices and Ways of Knowing



National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report



Supporting Self-Determination in Health

- Self-determination empowers and enables communities to build capacity and re-gain control over the wide-ranging forces that affect Indigenous Peoples' health and well-being at individual and collective levels.



Aboriginal Head Start in
Urban and Northern
Communities



Vaccine Guidance

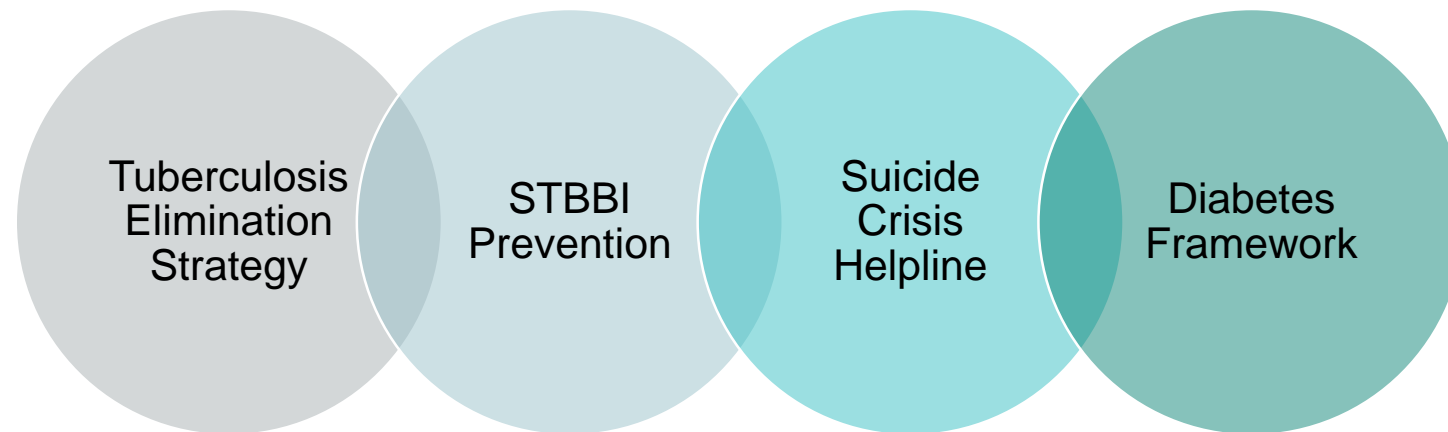


Tuberculosis Screening



Data Sovereignty

Earning Trust and Fostering Change Through Continuous Action



- Trust can be strengthened by prioritizing relationship development, fostering open communication, and ensuring that Indigenous voices are consistently heard and respected in decision-making processes.
- Change requires continuous, courageous leadership; taking action and making decisions that disrupt long, established norms.

Going Forward

“We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing.”

The Honourable Murray Sinclair
(1951-2024)

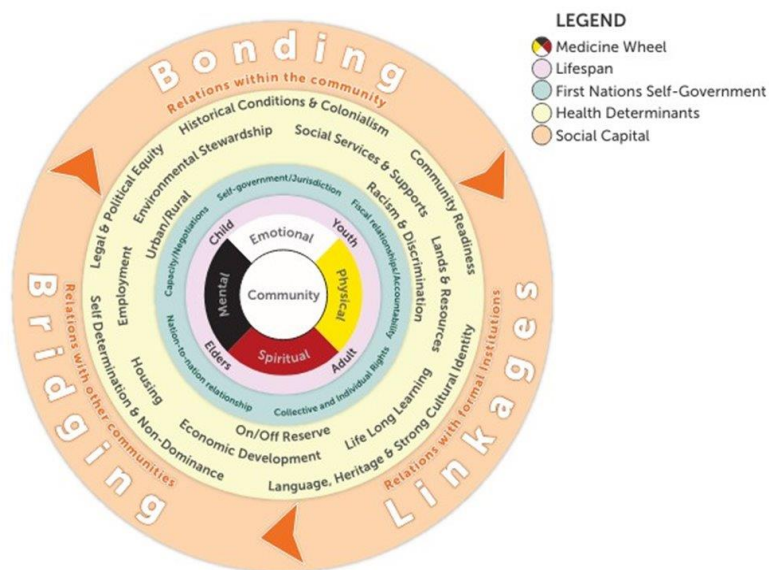


Source: The Governor General of Canada website. Appointed Companion of the Order of Canada, on September 24, 2021
<https://www.gg.ca/en/activities/2024/national-commemorative-ceremony-honourable-murray-sinclair>

Appendix

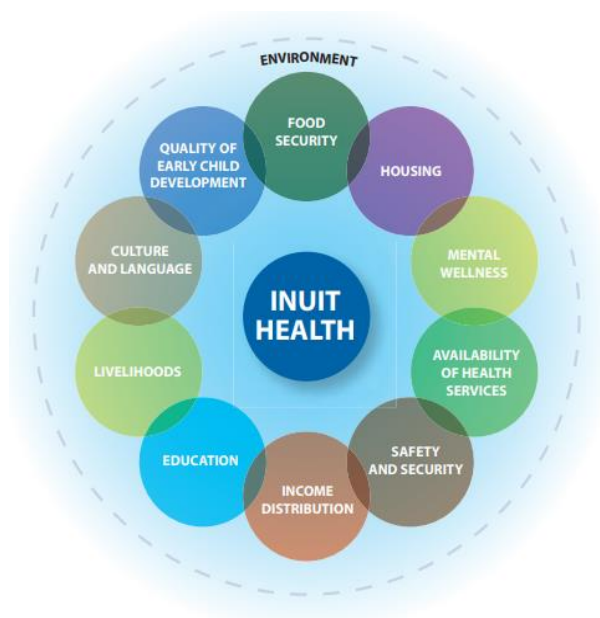
Indigenous models of determinants of health

Social Determinants of First Nations Health



Source: Assembly of First Nations (2013). [First Nations Wholistic Policy and Planning: A transitional discussion document on the social determinants of health](#)

Social Determinants of Inuit Health



Source: Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. (2014). [Social Determinants of Inuit Health in Canada.](#)

Métis Social Determinants of Health Approach

Métis Social Determinants of Health include:

- Income and social status
- Poverty
- Housing
- Race/racism
- Colonialism
- Employment and working conditions
- Education and literacy
- Childhood experiences
- Physical environments
- Environment and climate change
- Social supports and coping skills
- Healthy behaviours
- Access to health services
- Biology and genetic endowment
- Gender diversity
- Culture
- Relationship to animals, land and waters

Source: Métis Nation (2023). [Métis Nation: A Vision for Health](#)