



**Affaires indiennes
et du Nord Canada**

**Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada**



Measuring the Well-Being of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: The Registered Indian and Inuit Human Development Index and Community-Well-Being Index.





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Measuring Aboriginal Well-Being

Overview

1) Aboriginal Peoples in Canada

Populations and geography

2) Towards An Aboriginal –Specific HDI

3) Applications of the Well-Being Indices

Registered Indian and Inuit Human Development Index (HDI)

Community Well-Being (CWB) Index

4) Future applications and modifications



Aboriginal Peoples (identity-based)

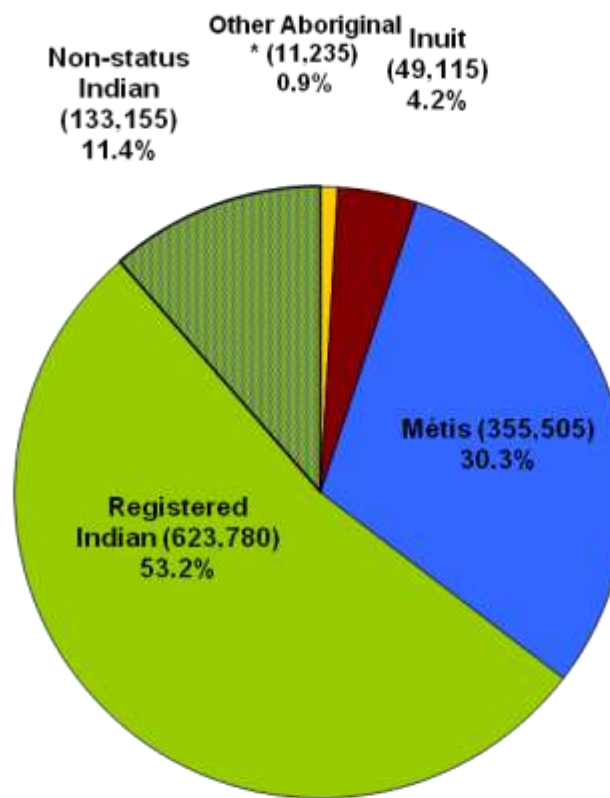
Aboriginal peoples made up 3.8% of Canada's population in 2006.

Broadly, Canadian Aboriginal populations can be classified into four groups:

- First Nations
- Inuit
- Métis

Additionally, the *Indian Act of Canada* defines who can be Registered ("Registered Indians" or "Status")

The size of the Aboriginal population was 1,172,790 in 2006.



Note:

* *Other Aboriginal* refers to respondents who reported more than one identity group, and those who reported being a Band member with no Aboriginal identity and no Registered Indian status.

Source:

Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population, INAC tabulations.



Aboriginal Peoples (identity-based)

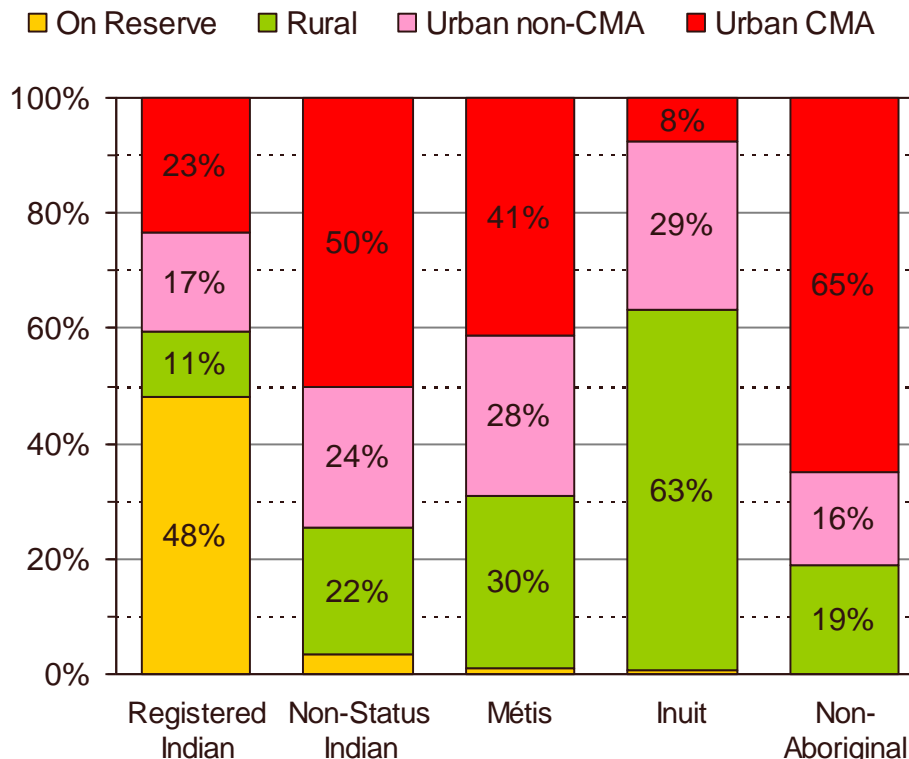
Distribution across Community Type, 2006

There is great variation in residential distribution between Aboriginal groups.

About half (48%) of Registered Indians live on-reserve.

The majority of Non-status (74%) and Métis (69%) live in urban areas.

Inuit live predominantly in northern rural communities (63%).



Notes:

Urban census metropolitan area (Urban CMA) is a large urban area and has a population of at least 100,000.

Urban non-census metropolitan areas (Urban non-CMA) are smaller urban areas with a population of less than 100,000.

Source:

Statistics Canada, 2006 Census of Population, INAC tabulations.



Towards an Aboriginal-Specific HDI

The last thing we want to read is someone telling us that the United Nations has deemed Canada the best country in the world in which to live. It's not the best country for my people to live in [...] we live in third world conditions. It's not just the issues of land and treaties that people are ignoring. It's practical issues like a job, a house, good health, a good education. These are things that are absent in our communities.

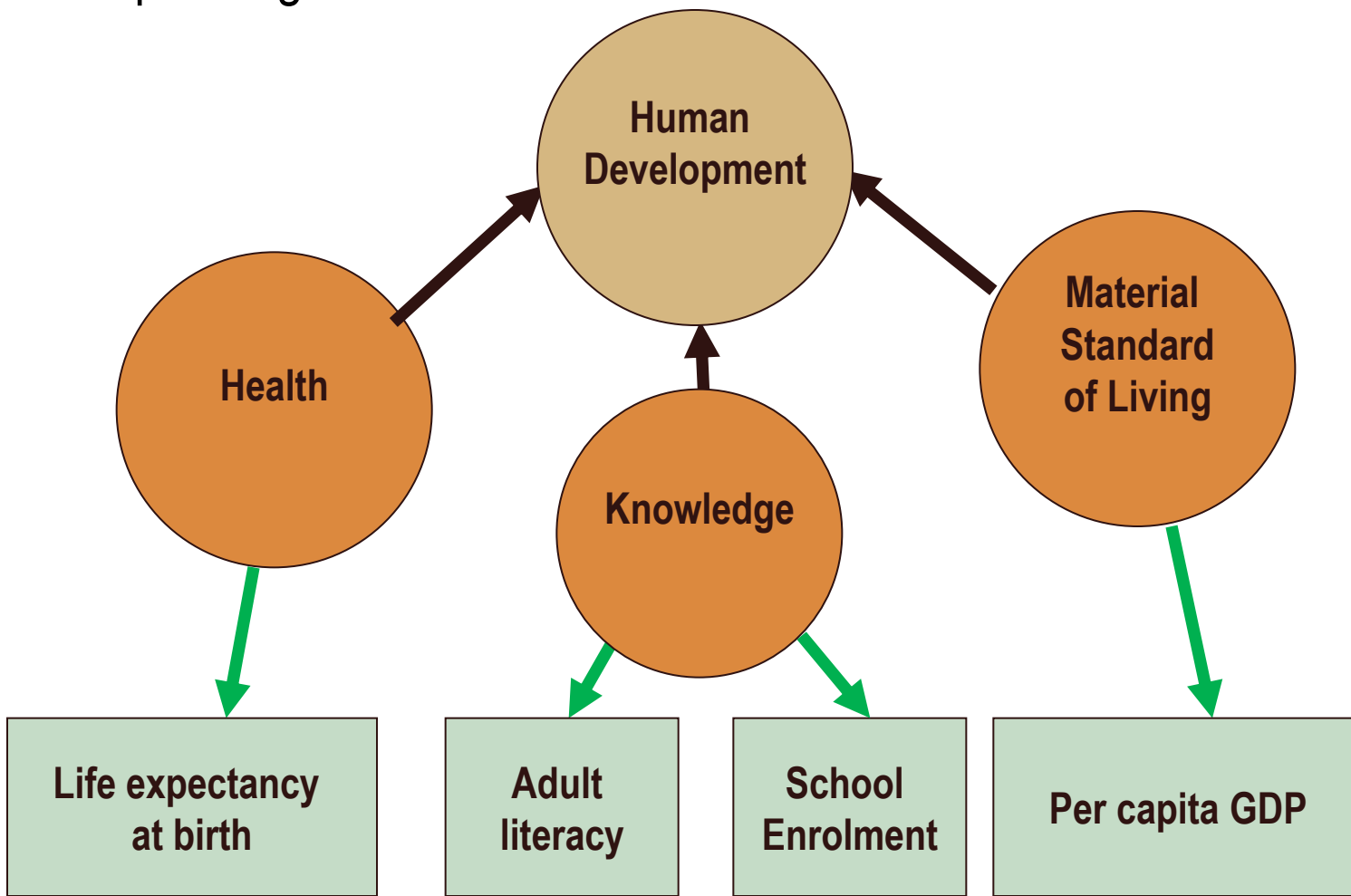
Chief Ovide Mercredi

National Chief, Assembly of First Nations



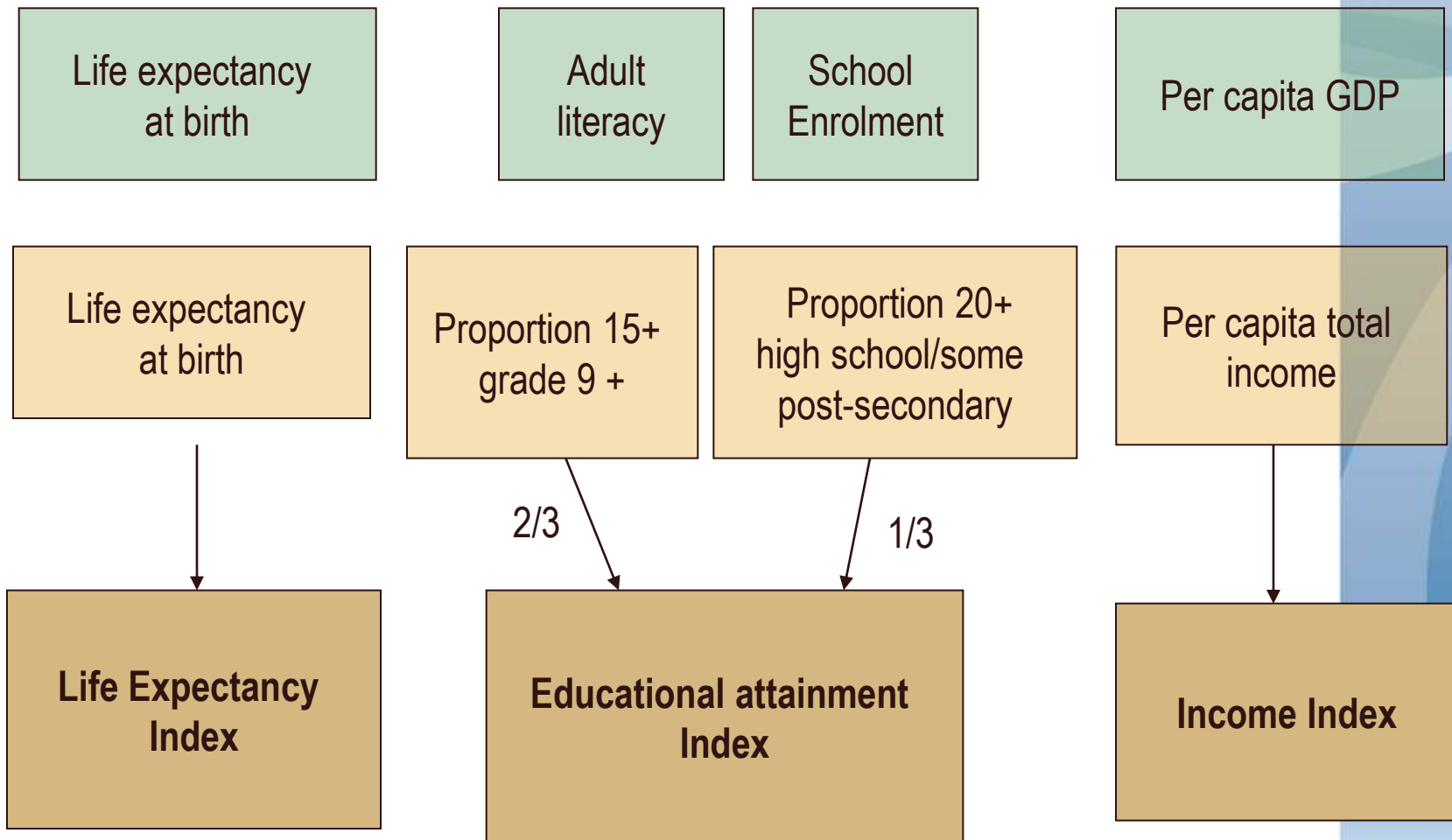
Human Development

Expanding Choices





Towards an Aboriginal-Specific HDI





Applications of the HDI

Project	Populations	Notes
1996 Cross-sectional HDI (Beavon and Cooke, 2003; <i>Aboriginal Well-Being</i>)	Registered Indians, “Reference” population	Province, On/Off-reserve, Gender
1981-2001 Time Series (Cooke, Beavon, and McHardy, 2005; <i>Aboriginal Well-Being</i>)	Registered Indians “Reference” population	Provincial, On/Off-reserve, Gender
1981-2001 International (Cooke, Mitrou, Lawrence, Guimond, Beavon, 2007. <i>BMC International health and Human Rights; Aboriginal Well-Being</i>)	Canadian Aboriginal Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, New Zealand Maori, American Indian/Alaska Native	Median incomes, slightly different education measure
1981-2001 Inuit (Senécal and O’Sullivan, 2006); <i>Aboriginal Well-being</i>	Inuit	Geography-based estimates of life expectancy



Applications of the HDI

Project	Populations	Notes
1981-2001 Registered Indian Youth HDI (Guimond and Cooke, 2008) <i>The Well-Being of Registered Indian Youth: Concern for the Future? Horizons.</i>	Registered Indians, “Reference” population aged 15-29	Province, On/Off-reserve, Gender Age-specific mortality Average household income
1981-2001 Older Registered Indian HDI (Cooke and Guimond, forthcoming). <i>The Well-Being of Older Registered Indians. Canadian Journal on Aging.</i>	Registered Indians “Reference” population Aged 50+	Province, On/Off-reserve, Gender, Used life expectancy at exact age Average household income
1981-2001 GDI and GEM (Cooke and Guimond, 2006; <i>Aboriginal Well-Being.</i>	Registered Indians, Reference Population	HDI discounted for gender inequality (GDI) Occupation and governance participation by gender (GEM)



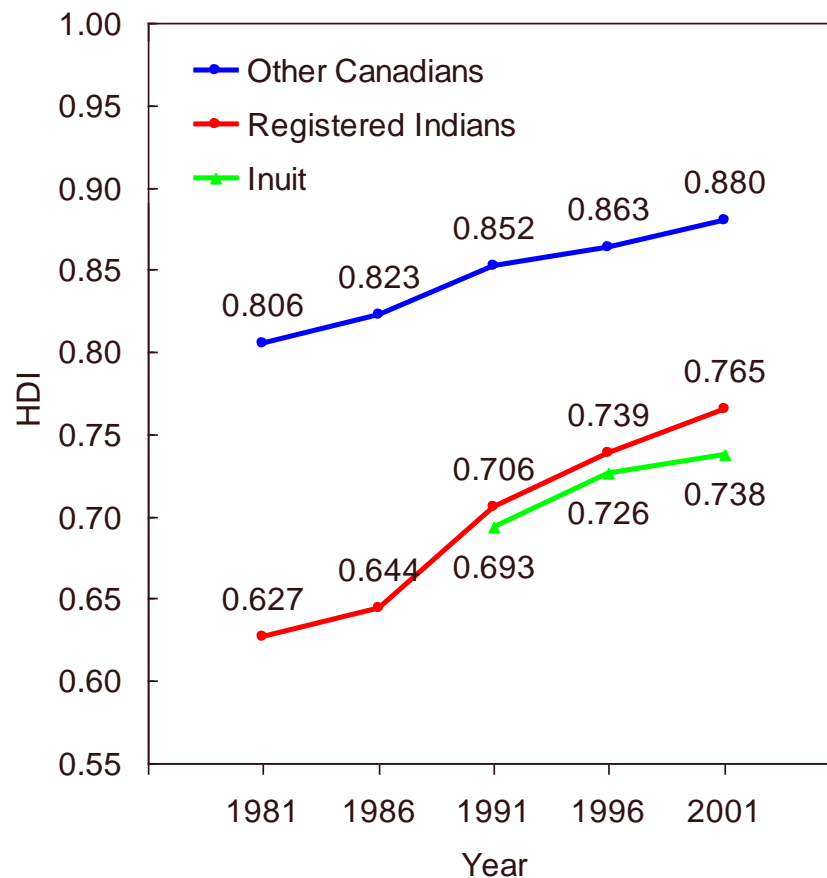
Measuring Population Well-Being

Human Development Index (HDI), 1981-2001

The HDI for Registered Indians and Inuit is significantly lower than that observed for other Canadians.

The HDI gap between Aboriginal groups and other Canadians has been narrowing.

However, improvements over the 1996-2001 period have not resulted in a significant 'gap reduction'.



Source:
Measuring the Well-Being of Aboriginal People: An Application of the United Nations' Human Development Index to Registered Indians in Canada, 1981-2001, INAC, October 2004.

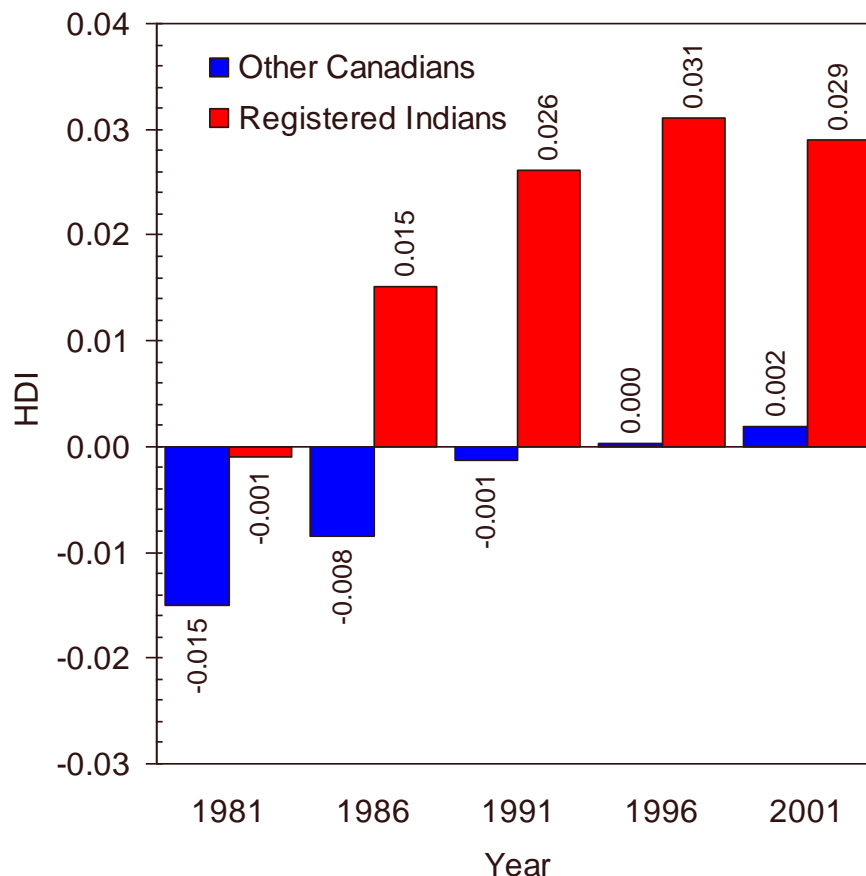


Population Well-Being

Human Development Index Gender Gap, 1981-2001

The HDI gender gap of Registered Indians was very wide by international standards.

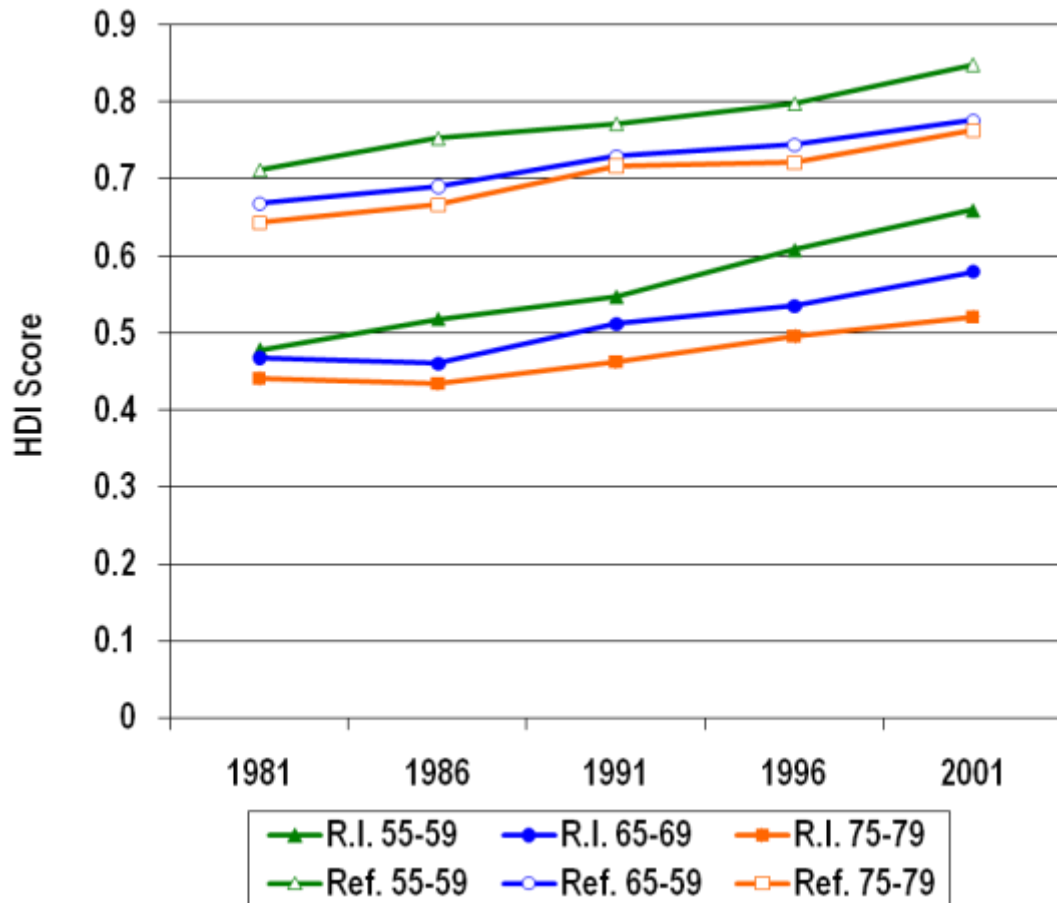
In 2001, at the national level, the HDI gender gap of Registered Indians was 15 times greater than the gap observed among other Canadians.



Source:
Measuring the Well-Being of Aboriginal People: An Application of the United Nations' Human Development Index to Registered Indians in Canada, 1981-2001, INAC, October 2004.



The Well-Being of older Registered Indians (1981-2001)

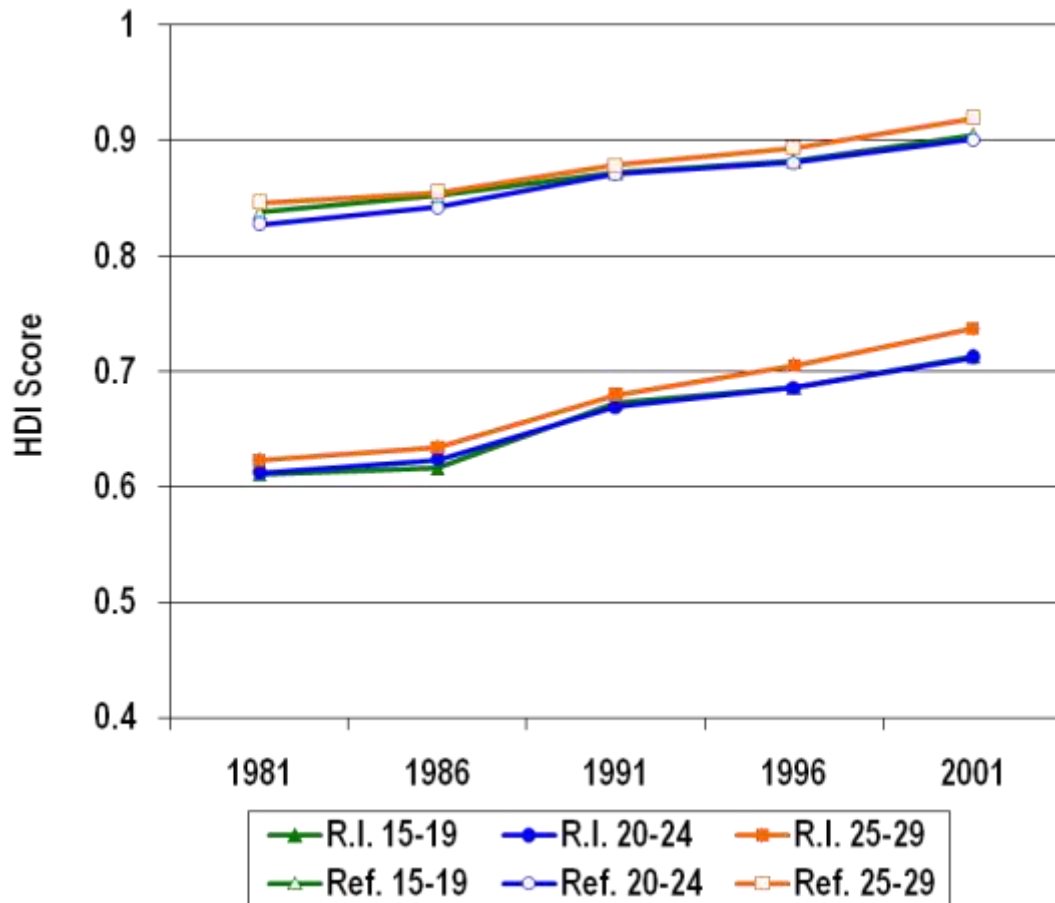


- General improvement in Older Registered Indians HDI scores 1981-2001
- Differences between Registered Indians and other Canadians aged 50-54, 55-59 narrowed.
- Differences among those aged 70 and older widened slightly 1981-2001.





Registered Indian Youth HDI (1981-2001)

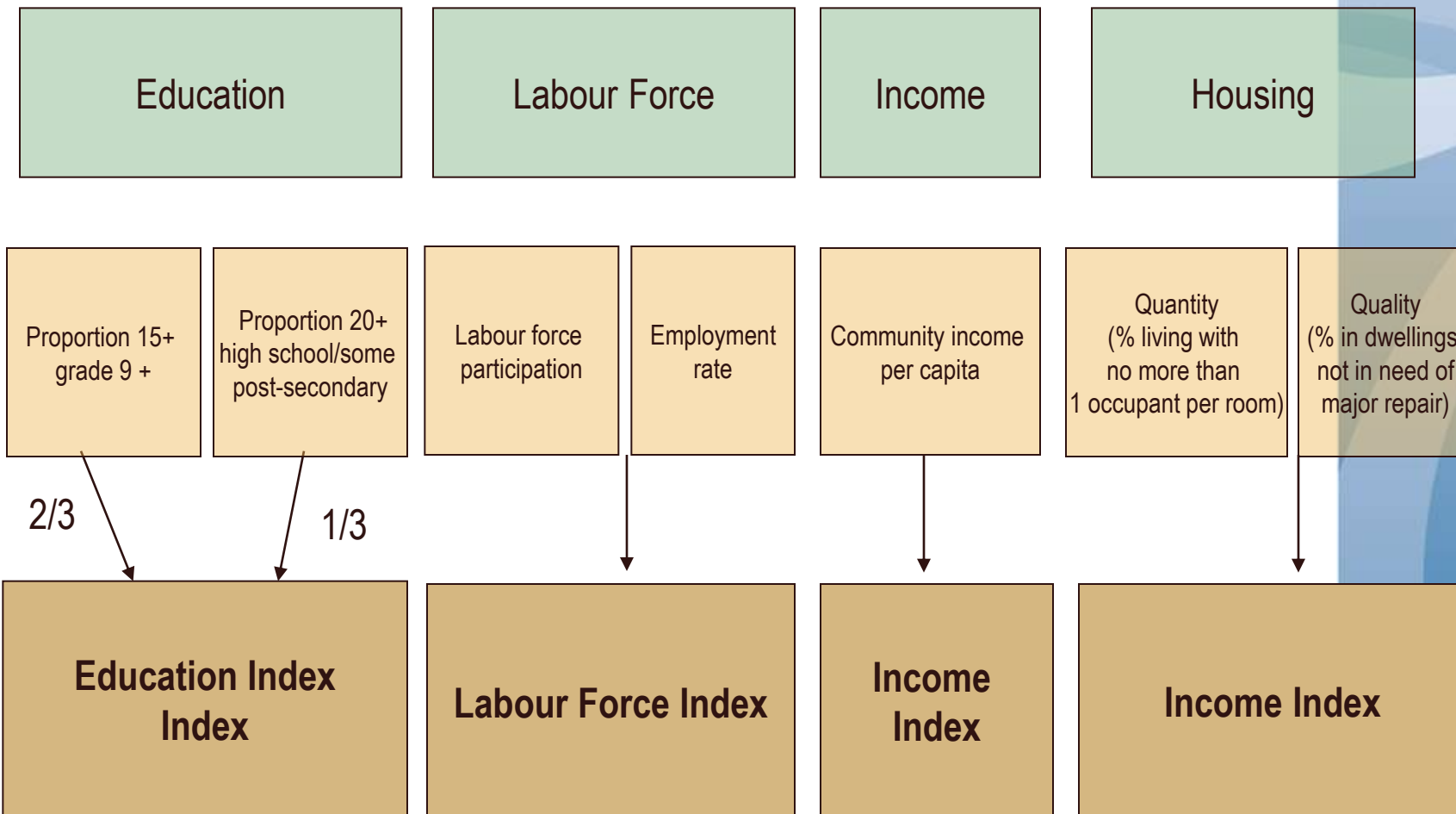


- Slowly decreasing HDI Gap
- Improvements in educational attainment, but a clear pattern of later educational attainment among Registered Indians
- Decreasing mortality among Registered Indian youth, but widening relative risk (15-19).
- Widening gaps in household income





Community Well-Being Index (CWB)





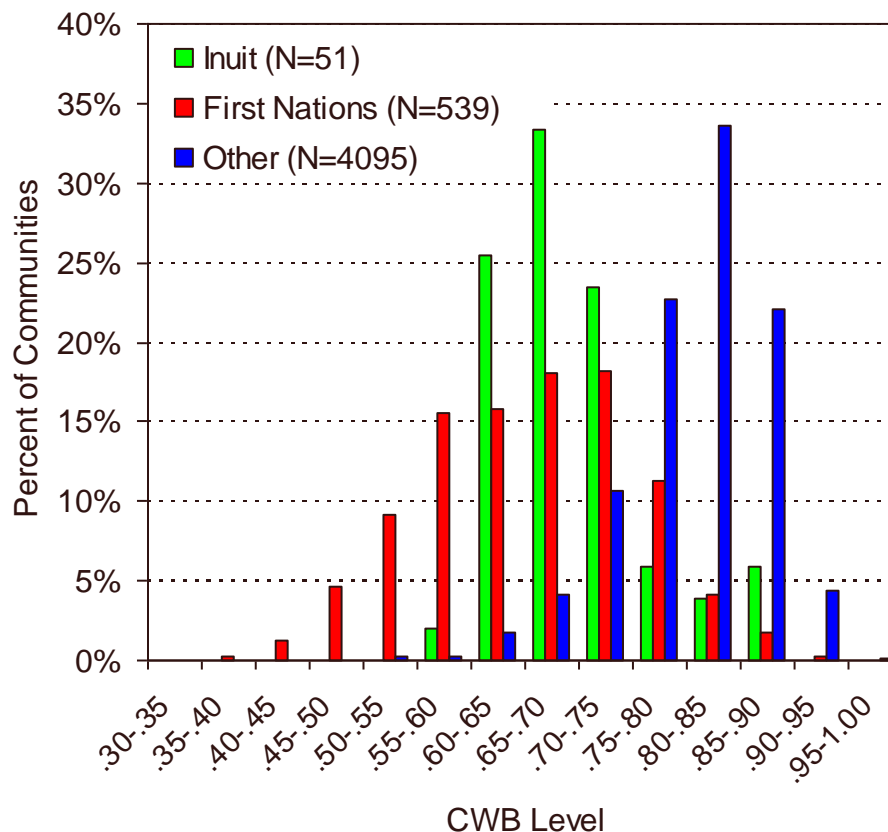
Population Well-Being

Community Well-Being Index (CWB), 2001

Among the 'bottom 100' Canadian communities, 92 are First Nations.

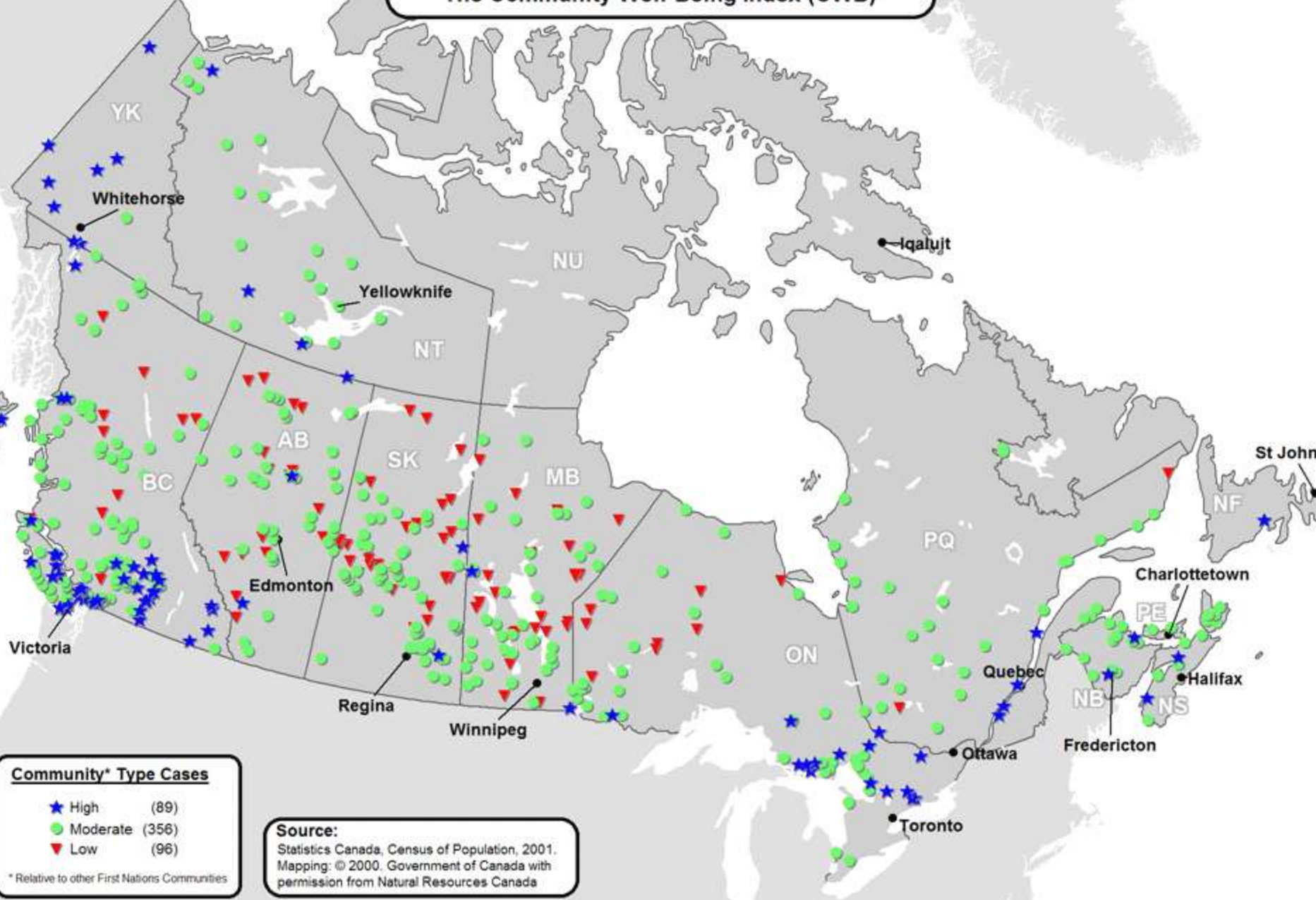
Inuit communities are typically distributed towards the middle of the CWB range.

Only one First Nation community ranks among the 'top 100' Canadian communities in 2001.



Sources:
First Nations Community Well-Being in Canada: The Community Well-Being Index (CWB), 2001, INAC, Octobre 2004.
The Well-Being of Inuit Communities in Canada, INAC, Septembre 2006.

First Nations Community Well-Being in Canada: The Community Well-Being Index (CWB)

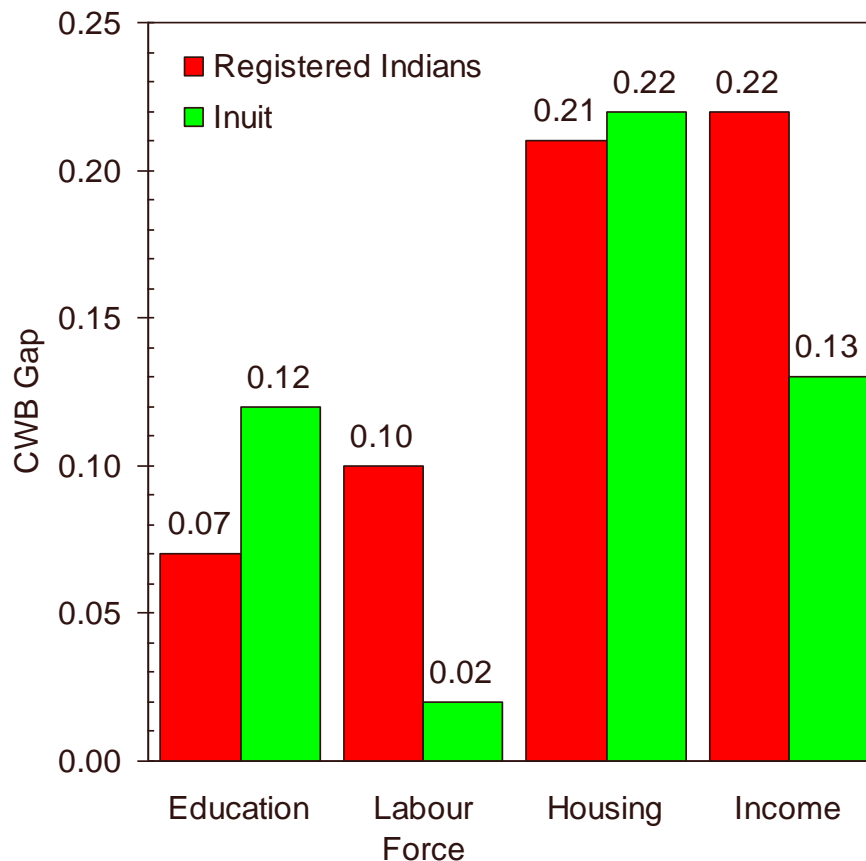




Population Well-Being

CWB Gap Relative to Other Canadians, 2001

According to this “gap” analysis, housing and income explain more than two-thirds of the remaining well-being disparity between First Nation, Inuit and other Canadian communities in 2001.



Sources:
First Nations Community Well-Being in Canada: The Community Well-Being Index (CWB), 2001, INAC, Octobre 2004.
The Well-Being of Inuit Communities in Canada, INAC, Septembre 2006.





Responses

- **Widely used and cited as summary measure in Canada**
 - Commons committees, UN
 - Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), *The Lancet*
 - Popular press (*Globe and Mail*, *Time*, etc.)

- **Criticisms**
 - Not indigenous-specific measures (e.g.: Ten Fingers, 2005)
 - Measures used do not capture Aboriginal experience
 - Excludes important dimensions (environment, land access, culture, governance, safety, etc.)
 - “Classically-trained positivists” (Salée, 2006)
 - Criticisms similar to those of the UNDP’s HDI



Future issues

■ Current research includes:

- Qualitative investigation to understand the relationship between governance, culture, infrastructure and CWB Scores
- Investigation of inequality *within* First Nations communities
- Relationships between language and other aspects of well-being
- Measuring well-being in urban Aboriginal communities.

■ Ongoing methodological challenges:

- Changes to Census educational attainment variables (2006)
- Lack of life expectancy data for Métis, Non-Status, limited data for Registered Indians
- Geography-based price adjustments
- Lack of sample surveys in Aboriginal communities
- Making useful comparisons while avoiding normative assumptions