

First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Monthly Update

September 2018

You can find our previous updates that include our initial findings [here](#).

IFSD is pleased to provide this fifth monthly update to its stakeholders on the progress of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) project.

During the month of September, IFSD has continued its work to develop a costing model.

Typologies (refresher)

- Characteristics of agencies are more useful indicators of trends than provincial boundaries.
- Total population of children served is a useful indicator of resource requirements for agencies that are not remote and that are accessible year-round by road, as expenditures generally trend upwards with larger populations.
- Remoteness (by distance to city center) influences expenditures with increased costs for travel, satellite offices, etc.
- Accessibility (year-round road access) is an important variable for a small proportion of agencies, and should be used to assess funding for agencies serving at least one community without year-round road access.

Costing

- A costing is an **estimate** of the financial resources required for an activity over time.
- A costing **does not produce a single number**, but rather a **range of estimates** based on a variety of outcome-based scenarios.
- When estimating a cost, we have to make some assumptions about independent variables (e.g. population growth, remoteness) that influence expenditures. Each variable will be a part of the final costing model.
- Thanks to yours and your agencies' efforts, we have a significant amount of data with which we can understand spending needs and trends in each of the expenditure categories.
- For our costing model, we will be sorting expenditures by *program activities* (protection, prevention, internal services). Each activity may have expenditures across different *standard objects*, such as capital, operating, professional services, etc. (see Table 1).

		Program activities		
		Protection	Prevention	Internal services
Standard objects	Capital			
	Operating			
	Professional services			
	Transfers			
	Etc.			

Table 1: Costing table overview.

- Once the financial data is sorted into these categories, each category of data is tested against an independent variable, e.g. population, remoteness to understand its behaviour.
- Based on a first pass of analysis (this is not final), agency budgets are influenced most significantly by:
 - Total population of children served;
 - Remoteness (average distance to city centre);
 - Accessibility (the number of communities served that do not have year-round road access)
- Funding models are not only about money, but about governance, performance and outcomes

- To produce cost estimates of alternative program structures, outcome-based scenarios (that focus on the holistic well-being of children and expect to reduce the number of children in care) will be developed, to estimate costs of desired future states.

Liability insurance

IFSD was asked to clarify agencies' accessibility to liability insurance. Alexander Holburn Beaudin + Lang LLP, was retained by IFSD to provide an opinion on liability insurance and implications for increased jurisdiction of agencies.

Principal findings include:

- Of the responding agencies surveyed, only those in New Brunswick were unable to access liability insurance.
- The average premium in Canada is around \$20,000 for \$5,000,000 coverage.
- Aon Reed Stenhouse appears to be the most common provider.
- Even though provinces may delegate child protection duties to FNCFS agencies, in the case of a breach, the province remains liable for non-delegable duties.
- If full responsibility for child welfare services are assumed by a First Nations government, there would be increased exposure to liability, as that government will assume the whole of the legal duty with respect to the delivery of child welfare services.

Participation

We are grateful to all agencies that have participated in the survey. We're pleased to report that the national participation rate has climbed to 75%. For an overview of provincial participation rates, see Chart 1.

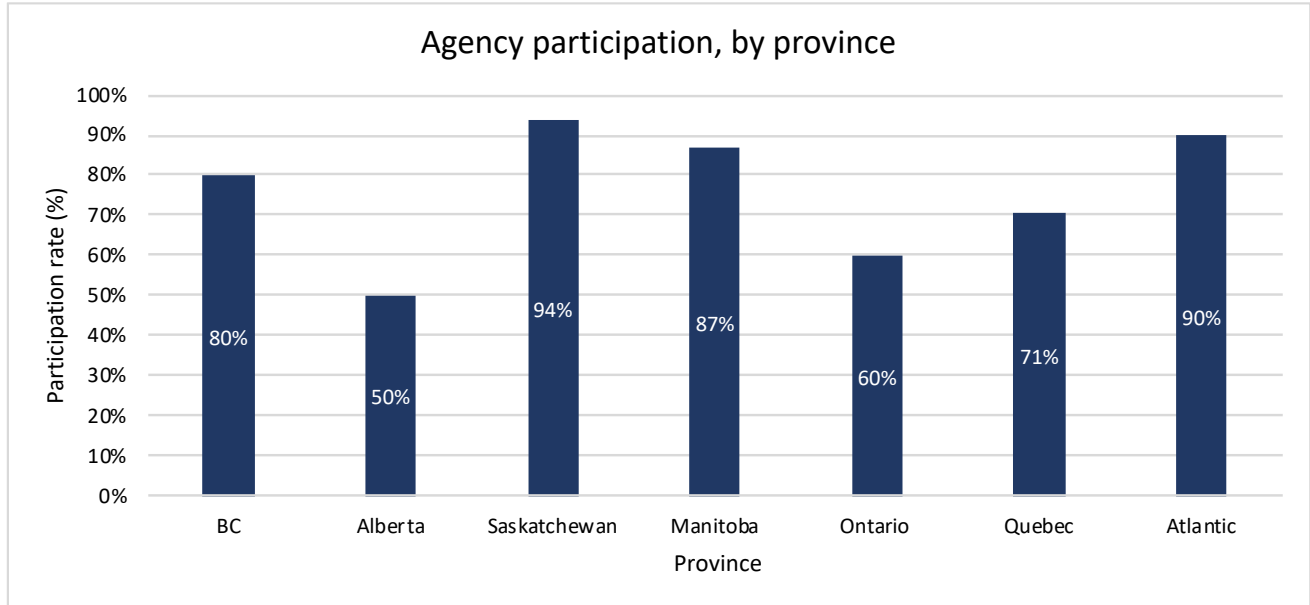


Chart 1: Overview of provincial participation rates.

If your agency has not yet taken part in the survey and would like to do so, please consult the online survey in [English](#) or in [French](#). You are encouraged to contact us (helaina.gaspard@ifsd.ca) before you begin.

Resource profiles

Are you willing to offer more insight into your agency's resource profile? We are looking for agencies who are willing to share their experiences in writing (in [English](#) or in [French](#)) or by phone to offer perspective on the following six questions:

- Has your agency had to refuse service to a child on-reserve due to a lack of resources? Y/N
- Has your agency had to refuse service to a child off-reserve due to a lack of resources? Y/N
- How would you characterize your agency's budget relative to its activities (select one of the following):
a) insufficient; b) somewhat insufficient; c) neither sufficient nor insufficient; d) somewhat sufficient; e) sufficient?

- Do you consider your protection budget to be sufficient relative to the population your agency serves? Y/N

(IFSD data suggests an average per capita cost of \$15,000 per child in the catchment area, among a large number of jurisdictions.)

- If your budget is insufficient, by how much?
a) 10% b) 20% c) 30% d) more than 30%

- Do you consider your prevention budget to be sufficient relative to the population your agency serves? Y/N

- If your budget is insufficient, by how much?
a) 10% b) 20% c) 30% d) more than 30%

- If you had a larger budget for your agency, how would you allocate resources (e.g. hire more staff, capital investments, offer more programming etc.)?

Next steps

In the next month, IFSD will define cost variables and their impacts on a cost estimation model. Using this model, IFSD will begin its cost analysis of the gap between the current and desired states (based on defined scenarios) for FNCFS agencies.

IFSD will continue to engage with agencies throughout the project and keep agencies up to date on progress with monthly updates. IFSD is pleased to respond to requests for further information or to provide individual briefings on the project and its progress.

We are always happy to hear from you. Thank you to everyone who has emailed and called us with feedback and suggestions. We could not do this work without your support and insight.

Contact information

For questions about the project or to participate, please contact:

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