

STRENGTHENING SECTOR CAPACITY

ADVANCING ANTI-RACISM AND
RECONCILIATION IN ALBERTA'S SETTLEMENT
SECTOR (2025-2026)

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

AAISA acknowledges that we are gathered on Treaty 6 territory – the traditional lands of diverse Indigenous Peoples, including the Nêhiyaw, Dene, Anishinaabe, Nakota Isga, and Niitsitapi peoples. We also acknowledge this as the Métis' homeland and the home of one of the largest communities of Inuit south of the 60th parallel.

We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who have lived in and cared for these lands since time immemorial. We are grateful for the Indigenous Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are with us today and those who have gone before us.

As we learn how to better support newcomers arriving to new lands, we must also recognize that our work in the immigration and settlement sector cannot be separated from the land on which we live and serve. The opportunities and systems that allow us to welcome newcomers exist within the context of colonization, broken treaties, and ongoing disruption of the ways of life of Indigenous Peoples on this land.

We recognize that we must do better to undo the harms of colonialism and white supremacy, and in doing so help us better serve the newcomer lives we touch. As a starting point, we seek opportunities to support Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, while listening to, respecting and centering diverse Indigenous voices, and using our power to make space, in relationship, for Indigenous resurgence.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) supports sector coordination and capacity building across Alberta's settlement and resettlement system, with a focus on strengthening organizational readiness to respond to equity, anti-racism, and reconciliation commitments. In collaboration with Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), AAISA undertook a structured initiative to support IRCC-funded organizations in advancing Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion practices, Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) principles, and Truth and Reconciliation into newcomer-serving contexts.

To inform this work, AAISA conducted an environmental scan of existing anti-racism, GBA Plus, and Indigenous-focused frameworks, tools, and training resources relevant to the settlement and resettlement sector. The scan included a review of academic literature, sector reports, organizational toolkits, and government-developed guidance. The review was complemented by stakeholder mapping and engagement activities including key conversations with Indigenous organizations, outreach to non-sector actors with relevant expertise, and consultations with settlement agencies to identify current capacity, gaps in practice, and opportunities for relationship-building.

Insights from the scan and engagement process highlighted uneven baseline understanding of Indigenous histories and contemporary realities within newcomer serving organizations, limited practical guidance tailored to settlement contexts, and a strong need for relational, place-based approaches to Indigenous-newcomer engagement. Alongside internal activities, like Indigenous awareness subcommittee, these insights shaped the development of targeted capacity-building outputs, including:

- Environmental scan and stakeholder mapping to ground the sector in existing resources and capture the state of the sector.
- Professional Development training focused on anti-racism, GBA Plus, and Indigenous-settlement intersections.
- An Anti-Racism Toolkit to support organizations in developing their own anti-racism plans.
- A dedicated website page to centralize tools, resources, and guidance for the sector.
- Fireside chat events featuring Indigenous speakers and knowledge-holders.
- Walking Together engagement sessions, structured to prioritize relationship-building over transactional outcomes, recognizing that trust, mutual understanding, and local context are foundational to sustainable collaboration.

This report outlines the methods used to conduct environmental scan and engagement activities and describes the resulting resources and capacity-building forums delivered in collaboration with IRCC throughout 2025-2026. It situates this work within AAISA's broader, multi-year effort to strengthen culturally responsive practice, support meaningful Indigenous-newcomer relationship building, and enhance coordinated sector capacity across Alberta.

2.0 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SETTLEMENT SECTOR, EQUITY INITIATIVES AND TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

Settlement and resettlement services in Alberta operate within Indigenous territories that have long histories of colonial displacement, systemic exclusion, and ongoing efforts toward self-determination and reconciliation. Newcomers arrive within this context, often with limited exposure to Indigenous histories, contemporary realities, or the legal and social frameworks that shape Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. As a result, newcomer serving organizations are increasingly expected to navigate complex intersections between immigration, racialization, colonial legacies, and reconciliation commitments in their service delivery and organizational practice.

In recent years, federal and provincial policy frameworks have placed greater emphasis on Anti-Racism, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the application of GBA Plus, and the advancement of Truth and Reconciliation across publicly funded sectors. For the settlement and resettlement sector, this has translated into growing expectations to embed these principles into organizational policies, staff training, community engagement, and program design. While many organizations express commitment to these priorities, the sector continues to operate under conditions of constrained capacity, high service demand, and varying levels of institutional readiness.

Within the newcomer-serving context, anti-racism work often focuses on addressing discrimination experienced by newcomers while navigating broader systems shaped by colonial and racial hierarchies. At the same time, relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities have historically received less structured attention, despite shared experiences of marginalization and displacement within different historical and political contexts. Opportunities for relationship building are frequently limited to short-term initiatives, symbolic activities, or generalized cultural awareness training that does not fully reflect Indigenous perspectives or local community realities.

Sector stakeholders have noted that existing resources on anti-racism and reconciliation are often developed for broader public service contexts and may not translate easily into settlement and resettlement environments. Organizations vary in their familiarity with Indigenous-specific frameworks, their access to Indigenous partners, and their confidence in facilitating respectful engagement. These variations contribute to uneven practice across the sector and highlight the need for resources and engagement approaches that are grounded in both evidence and relationship building, rather than compliance driven implementation. The RAP Survey and Dashboard reinforce this need by making visible the diversity of organizational starting points and highlighting where tailored supports are most urgently required.

3.0 ANTI-RACISM AND TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

The implementation approach was designed to integrate Anti-Racism and Truth and Reconciliation work into a single, coherent stream of sector capacity building. Rather than treating these commitments as parallel or discrete initiatives, AAISA approached implementation as a connected process that combines awareness building, skill development, relationship formation, and realistic assessment of current sector readiness.

A core principle of this approach was the recognition that effective anti-racism and reconciliation work must be grounded in an honest understanding of where organizations and relationships currently stand. While there is strong sector interest in advancing equity and reconciliation commitments, levels of familiarity, confidence, and practical capacity vary widely across newcomer serving organizations. Similarly, relationships between Indigenous and newcomer communities exist at different stages of development across regions. The implementation approach therefore emphasized meeting both newcomer serving organizations and Indigenous partners where they are, rather than applying uniform expectations or assuming shared starting points.

The work intentionally balanced capacity building with reflection and listening. Training and resources were designed not only to increase knowledge and awareness, but also to surface gaps, tensions, and constraints that shape how organizations engage with anti-racism and reconciliation in practice. Engagement activities, including the Walking Together sessions, were structured to support relational learning and create space for dialogue grounded in local context. Buy-in from both the Newcomer Sector and Indigenous Community was approached as a relational process rather than a compliance objective. Implementation emphasized voluntary participation, shared learning, and regional relevance, with flexibility built in to accommodate different organizational sizes, mandates, and community contexts. This approach was intended to support meaningful engagement over time and to avoid placing unrealistic demands on organizations operating under significant capacity pressures.

Finally, the implementation approach was designed with a long-term view. While this report documents activities and outputs delivered in 2025–2026, the work is situated within a multi-year effort to deepen Indigenous newcomer relationships and strengthen sector practice. Future phases will focus on supporting place-based engagement through in-person Walking Together sessions and developing appropriate ways to understand change over time that are respectful of Indigenous perspectives and relational approaches. At this stage, the emphasis remains on building a credible foundation for sustained engagement rather than on measuring short-term outcomes.

4.0 ACTIVITIES

The activities undertaken in 2025-2026 were structured to translate the implementation approach into concrete action. Guided by the environmental scan, stakeholder engagement,

and sector realities outlined above, AAISA focused on delivering practical resources and engagement forums that support Anti-Racism, GBA Plus, and Truth and Reconciliation within Alberta's settlement and resettlement sector. Activities were designed to be mutually reinforcing, with each component informing and strengthening the others, and to result in tangible outputs that organizations can use in their ongoing work.

The sections below describe the key activities conducted during 2025–2026, including the environmental scan and resource review, stakeholder engagement and relationship building, and the development of sector facing tools and training. Each subsection outlines the purpose of the activity, how it was carried out, and how it contributed to the overall capacity building objectives of the contribution agreement.

4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN AND BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

Throughout 2025-2026, AAISA conducted a structured environmental scan, and best practices review to establish a baseline understanding of Anti Racism, Gender Based Analysis Plus, and Indigenous focused initiatives relevant to Alberta's newcomer serving settlement and resettlement sector. The objective was to systematically identify existing frameworks, tools, and initiatives, assess their applicability to settlement contexts, and map implementation gaps that would inform resource development under the contribution agreement.

This review was designed as a landscape mapping exercise. It was not an evaluative study of program effectiveness, nor was it intended to rank or assess organizational performance.

The scan focused on publicly available and sector shared materials produced between 2015 and 2025. The population of materials reviewed included:

- Settlement and resettlement agency websites and published policy statements
- Municipal and regional reconciliation frameworks within Alberta
- Indigenous organization publications referencing newcomer engagement
- Federal and provincial government guidance related to Anti Racism and GBA Plus
- National sector resource hubs
- Academic literature addressing Indigenous newcomer relationships
- Community developed training guides and toolkits

The environmental scan followed a structured document review approach.

Identification Phase: Materials were identified through systematic web review, sector network referrals, and internal knowledge from AAISA staff engagement activities. Inclusion criteria required that materials demonstrate relevance to at least one of the following domains: Anti Racism, Gender Based Analysis Plus, Indigenous reconciliation, or Indigenous newcomer engagement.

Screening Phase: Materials were screened for direct applicability to settlement and resettlement environments. Resources designed exclusively for unrelated public sector contexts were excluded unless transferable components were evident.

Thematic Coding Phase: Reviewed materials were coded according to:

- Type of initiative (policy framework, training program, dialogue initiative, toolkit, working group)
- Level of implementation (program level, organizational level, sector level)
- Geographic focus
- Evidence of Indigenous partnership or leadership
- Presence of evaluation or monitoring mechanisms

This coding process allowed for comparative analysis across initiatives and identification of recurring implementation patterns.

The scan identified multiple categories of initiatives currently active across Alberta.

- First, several organizations and municipalities have developed reconciliation statements or corporate level commitments referencing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. These initiatives primarily operate at the policy commitment level and signal intent to integrate an Indigenous lens into governance and service delivery.
- Second, program level initiatives focused on direct relationship building were identified. These include facilitated dialogue circles, storytelling events, cultural learning sessions, and Indigenous awareness workshops. These initiatives are typically short term and event based.
- Third, sector coordination mechanisms exist in the form of working groups and committees that support knowledge exchange among newcomer serving agencies interested in reconciliation related work.
- Fourth, national and provincial resource hubs provide educational guides and examples of practice. However, these materials are frequently generalized and require contextual adaptation to Alberta's settlement environment.

Geographic distribution analysis showed greater concentration of visible initiatives in large urban centres such as Edmonton and Calgary. Documentation of rural and small centre initiatives was limited.

Across initiatives, most activities were program based rather than embedded across organizational systems. Indigenous led initiatives specifically designed for newcomer audiences were limited. Many initiatives rely on project-based funding cycles rather than sustained operational integration.

Thematic coding identified recurring implantation principles across reviewed materials:

- Co-Creation and Relational Design: Effective initiatives demonstrate Indigenous partnership at the design stage rather than post development consultation. Shared authority and clearly defined expectations are emphasized.
- Organizational Integration: High functioning models move beyond awareness sessions and incorporate policy revisions, staff competency frameworks, and service delivery adjustments.

- Intersectional Application: Materials consistently reference the importance of applying Gender Based Analysis Plus and intersectional lenses to account for differences in gender, race, migration status, disability, age, and geography.
- Trauma Informed and Protocol Respectful Facilitation: Successful engagement models emphasize cultural safety, appropriate facilitation methods, and adherence to local protocols.
- Rights Based Framing: Reconciliation initiatives that explicitly reference Indigenous rights frameworks demonstrate clearer alignment with national commitments and accountability structures.

The review identified four structural gaps:

1. Absence of Alberta specific best practice models tailored to newcomer serving organizations.
2. Limited practical implementation tools translating commitments into operational steps.
3. Inconsistent or underdeveloped evaluation frameworks tracking reconciliation or Anti-Racism progress over time.
4. Limited documentation and visibility of rural and small centre initiatives.

These gaps indicate a need for sector specific tools grounded in both evidence and regional context.

Findings from the environmental scan directly informed four implementation decisions.

First, listening sessions were structured to validate regional differences and clarify capacity variation identified through the scan. Rather than assuming uniform readiness across agencies, engagement was designed to confirm local realities and surface context specific barriers.

Second, the Anti Racism Toolkit was developed as a guided planning framework responding to the identified gap in practical, operational tools. The scan demonstrated that while commitment statements were common, implementation pathways were inconsistent. The toolkit was therefore positioned as a structured bridge between intent and action.

Third, the scan identified fragmented and program-based efforts with limited cross organizational coordination. In response, AAISA advanced planning for a Community of Practice model to support shared learning, reduce duplication, and promote collective problem solving across regions.

Fourth, analysis of relationship-based initiatives indicated that trust building was strongest in models grounded in sustained, place-based interaction. This finding informed the decision to transition from primarily virtual engagement to in person Walking Together sessions. The Community of Practice model and the Walking Together sessions are therefore interconnected mechanisms. The former supports structured peer learning across the sector. The latter supports relational depth between Indigenous and newcomer communities at the regional level.

The environmental scan functioned as the evidence base guiding Year 1 capacity building activities and shaping the transition toward more sustained, place-based engagement in subsequent phases.

4.2 APPLICATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FINDINGS

Findings from the environmental scan informed the overall design of Year 1 implementation activities. The scan functioned as the foundational evidence base from which subsequent activities were structured. There were four key findings:

1. There is an uneven baseline understanding of Indigenous histories, reconciliation frameworks, and the application of these principles within settlement practice. This finding informed the development of a foundational Professional Development course to establish a common knowledge base across organizations.
2. While many agencies had expressed commitments to Anti Racism and reconciliation, practical implementation tools were limited. This gap directly informed the development of the Anti-Racism Toolkit as a structured planning resource.
3. Existing efforts were frequently program based and fragmented, with limited mechanisms for sustained cross organizational learning. This finding informed planning for a Community of Practice model to support coordinated knowledge exchange.
4. Evidence from relationship-based initiatives highlighted the importance of place based, sustained engagement in building trust between Indigenous and newcomer communities. This observation shaped the decision to move beyond primarily virtual engagement toward in person Walking Together sessions in subsequent phases.

The environmental scan therefore served as the first activity under the contribution agreement and established the methodological foundation for all subsequent capacity building initiatives described in the following sections.

4.3 ENGAGEMENT DESIGN

Based on findings and recommendations from the best practices review and environmental scan, the following activities were executed to address gaps in anti-racism and reconciliation efforts in the sector.

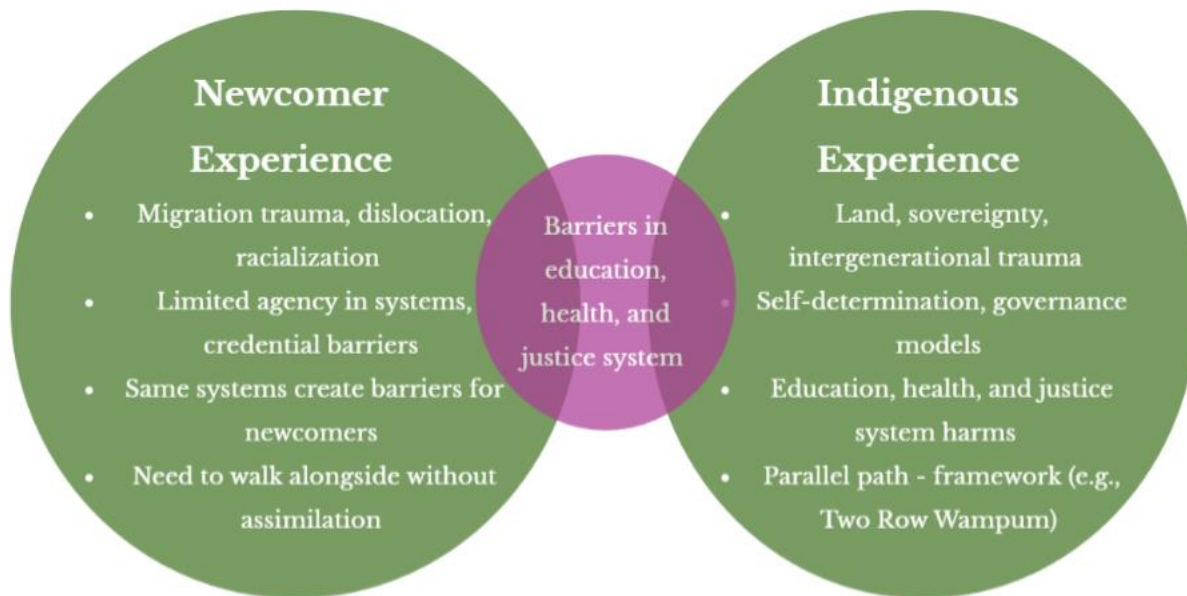
4.3.1 IDENTIFICATION AND SELECTION

Stakeholder mapping was undertaken concurrently with the environmental scan to identify Indigenous organizations, community leaders, and relevant non sector actors across Alberta. Identification criteria included regional presence in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and northern communities; demonstrated experience in Indigenous newcomer engagement; governance or leadership roles within Indigenous communities; established or emerging partnerships with settlement organizations; and subject matter expertise in Anti Racism or

reconciliation frameworks. Stakeholders were identified through a structured document review process, sector referrals, and AAISA’s existing professional networks to ensure both geographic representation and diversity of perspective.

Engagement was conducted through one-on-one virtual conversations, structured listening sessions, informal relationship building discussions, early pilot Walking Together sessions, and cross sector forums. Engagement was framed as listening and relational inquiry rather than consultation for validation of predetermined outputs. Discussions focused on the current state of Indigenous newcomer relationships, regional capacity differences across Alberta, appropriate protocol considerations, risks associated with extractive or one time engagement, and the conditions required to establish relational trust. Insights generated through this engagement process directly informed the design and sequencing of subsequent implementation activities.

Stakeholder conversations emphasized the importance of naming overlapping systemic barriers while preserving clarity regarding distinct historical and legal realities.



The above figure presents a comparative model illustrating systemic barriers experienced by Indigenous peoples, including land dispossession, sovereignty erosion, and intergenerational impacts of colonial policy, alongside barriers experienced by newcomers, including migration related stress, racialization, credential recognition challenges, and exclusion within education, employment, housing, and justice systems.

While both communities encounter structural gatekeeping across institutions, the sources and legal foundations of these inequities differ. Indigenous rights are constitutionally and

internationally recognized and grounded in inherent sovereignty. Newcomer experiences are shaped by immigration policy, settlement systems, and racialized integration processes.

This comparative framing informed implementation design by:

- Structuring dialogue to acknowledge shared systemic barriers without conflating rights frameworks.
- Ensuring training differentiates between reconciliation commitments and immigrant integration mandates.
- Designing evaluation tools that assess whether engagement respected Indigenous sovereignty and distinct identity.

4.3.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The environmental scan identified uneven baseline knowledge across organizations regarding Indigenous histories, reconciliation commitments, Anti Racism frameworks, and the application of Gender Based Analysis Plus within settlement contexts. Stakeholder engagement reinforced this finding. Early conversations and pilot dialogue sessions revealed that many participants lacked accessible, foundational understanding of Indigenous experiences and contemporary realities. As a result, initial engagement attempts often defaulted to an unbalanced dynamic in which Indigenous partners were implicitly positioned as educators and the settlement sector as passive recipients of knowledge. This dynamic limited the potential for reciprocal dialogue and constrained relationship building.

In response to this clearly identified need, AAISA developed and delivered Foundational Indigenous Awareness for Settlement Practice. The course was designed to establish a shared baseline of knowledge across organizations before deeper relational engagement. It connects historical and contemporary Indigenous experiences to present day service delivery realities, clarifies the relationship between Anti Racism and reconciliation commitments, and situates learning within newcomer serving contexts. The objective was to equip participants with sufficient foundational understanding to engage Indigenous partners respectfully and with greater self-awareness, reducing the likelihood that relational spaces would default to one directional teaching exchanges.

The training was delivered virtually during 2025-2026 and integrated into AAISA's existing professional development calendar to ensure accessibility and reduce duplication. Sessions were designed to be interactive and applied rather than lecture based and were open to IRCC funded settlement organizations across regions. By addressing the baseline knowledge gap identified through the environmental scan and early engagement sessions, the course established preconditions for more balanced, reciprocal, and sustainable Indigenous newcomer relationship building in subsequent activities.

4.3.3 ANTI-RACISM TOOLKIT

The environmental scan identified a consistent implementation gap across organizations. While many agencies had public commitments to Anti Racism and reconciliation, structured operational planning tools were limited. Stakeholder engagement confirmed uncertainty

regarding how to translate commitments into measurable, accountable action aligned with IRCC standards.

AAISA developed *The Anti-Racism Blueprint: Action Planning Toolkit for Organizations* as a structured planning resource tailored to newcomer serving Service Provider Organizations. The toolkit provides a practical bridge between stated commitments and operational change. Within the broader implementation model, it complements foundational training and relational engagement activities by embedding Anti Racism principles into governance, policy, and service delivery structures.

The toolkit is organized into five core components:

1. **Reference Models** – Examples of sector and municipal action plans to support adaptation to local context.
2. **Organizational Self Assessment** – Tools such as OCASI’s assessment framework and structured planning templates to evaluate accountability and readiness.
3. **Framework Integration** – Guidance on applying Anti Racism, GBA Plus, and Indigenous frameworks and teachings, including systems level approaches.
4. **IRCC Aligned Checklist** – A practical checklist to ensure action plans reflect national standards and accountability measures.
5. **Training Pathways** – Links to systemic, conceptual, and intersectional learning opportunities to support implementation.

The toolkit includes reflection prompts, planning templates, governance guidance, and implementation tracking considerations. It is intentionally non-prescriptive and adaptable to organizational size, mandate, and regional context.

4.3.4 FIRESIDE CHATS AND THE TRANSITION TO WALKING TOGETHER

Beginning in June 2025, AAISA launched a series of virtual Fireside Chats as an initial Community of Practice engagement mechanism. One session was delivered per month through the 2025 to 2026 program year, with the option of continuation based on sector demand. These sessions were designed to increase sector wide awareness of Indigenous histories, lived experiences, reconciliation commitments, and Anti Racism considerations within newcomer serving contexts.

The Fireside Chats were structured as moderated virtual conversations featuring Indigenous speakers and knowledge holders engaging with participants from across Alberta. Approximately 140 representatives from newcomer serving organizations participated across sessions, reflecting strong sector interest and readiness to engage. The virtual format supported province wide accessibility, enabling participation from Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, northern communities, and smaller centres without travel barriers.

The Fireside Chat model was effective in establishing foundational awareness and creating a shared space for dialogue. However, evaluation feedback and facilitator observation identified structural limitations inherent in the virtual, speaker led format. The sessions tended to position Indigenous speakers as primary educators and the newcomer sector as recipients of knowledge. While valuable for awareness building, the dynamic remained

largely one directional and did not fully support reciprocal, trust-based relationship development.

Parallel engagement with Indigenous partners reinforced a critical insight: meaningful Indigenous newcomer relationship building cannot be sustained through virtual presentation-based models alone. Indigenous knowledge systems are relational, land based, and protocol grounded. Trust is built through presence, continuity, and shared space. Virtual engagement can introduce concepts, but it cannot substitute for in person relationship formation, particularly when engagement involves Indigenous communities whose cultural practices emphasize circle-based dialogue, ceremony, and embodied participation.

This learning, combined with stakeholder feedback, informed the development of Walking Together as a distinct, next phase activity. Beginning in March 2026, AAISA initiated the transition to in person Walking Together sessions delivered within specific geographic regions. Initial regions include Edmonton and Calgary, with expansion planned to Red Deer and selected smaller centres.

The geographic shift is intentional and methodologically significant. Alberta's settlement sector is not monolithic. Edmonton and Calgary operate within larger urban contexts with established Indigenous institutions and formalized partnership structures. Red Deer and smaller centres operate under different capacity of realities and relationship dynamics. Effective engagement must therefore be regionally grounded and responsive to local Indigenous leadership, protocols, and community context.

Walking Together sessions are structured as facilitated, place-based dialogue processes rather than presentation events. They emphasize voluntary participation, Indigenous protocol observance, and sustained engagement across multiple sessions. The model resists one-time event approaches and instead prioritizes continuity and relational accountability.

In this way, Fireside Chats functioned as a successful awareness and mobilization phase beginning in June 2025, while Walking Together, beginning in March 2026, represents a deliberate evolution toward regionally grounded, in person, and culturally aligned relationship building. The transition reflects adaptive implementation informed by evaluation, Indigenous partner guidance, and recognition that authentic reconciliation work requires embodied, place based engagement.

5.0 NEXT STEPS

Building on the structured implementation activities undertaken in 2025 to 2026, AAISA will continue to advance an integrated Anti Racism and Truth and Reconciliation capacity building strategy over the remaining phases of the contribution agreement. The next phase will focus on deepening relational engagement, strengthening regional implementation, refining sector tools, and embedding evaluation mechanisms that can track change over time.

A primary priority from 2026 to 2028 will be the continued implementation of Walking Together sessions organized by geographic region. Beginning in March 2026, sessions are being delivered in Edmonton and Calgary, with planned expansion to Red Deer and additional centres based on readiness and partnership capacity. Regional differentiation remains central to the model. Alberta's settlement sector operates within distinct local contexts shaped by organizational scale, Indigenous community presence, partnership history, and service demand. Engagement design will therefore remain place based and responsive rather than standardized.

In person engagement will remain the core delivery model. Lessons from Year 1 confirmed that virtual formats support awareness but are insufficient for sustained relationship building. Indigenous cultural engagement is grounded in presence, protocol, shared space, and continuity. Multi session, circle-based dialogue structures will therefore continue, with evaluation protocols applied consistently to assess relational safety, reciprocity, and follow through over time.

Professional Development will continue to evolve alongside relational engagement activities. Foundational Indigenous Awareness for Settlement Practice will remain available and will be updated to reflect emerging questions from Walking Together sessions, regional feedback, and sector learning. Additional Anti Racism and intersectional content will be integrated into existing professional development structures to ensure accessibility and alignment with sector realities. Training will continue to function as a prerequisite support mechanism, reducing the likelihood of one directional knowledge dynamics in relational spaces.

The Anti Racism Toolkit will be maintained as a living planning resource. Revisions will incorporate sector feedback, alignment updates with national standards and IRCC guidance, and lessons drawn from Community of Practice discussions. The goal is to ensure that organizations can move from dialogue to structured policy and governance change. Where feasible, materials will continue to be available in English and French to support accessibility.

AAISA will also sustain engagement with Indigenous organizations, knowledge holders, and community leaders to ensure continuity across phases. Engagement will prioritize consent, protocol adherence, and shared authority in shaping future activities. The evaluation framework developed in Year 1 will continue to be refined to track relational progress, regional variation, and organizational change in ways that respect Indigenous perspectives while providing meaningful reporting to IRCC and sector stakeholders.



Taken together, these next steps situate the 2025 to 2026 activities as foundational rather than discrete. The work moves from awareness and tool development toward sustained, place based partnership and institutional integration across Alberta’s diverse settlement sector.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Through 2025-2026, AAISA implemented a sequenced and evidence informed approach to advancing Anti Racism and Truth and Reconciliation within Alberta's settlement and resettlement sector. Beginning with a structured environmental scan and stakeholder engagement process, Year 1 established a clear understanding of baseline knowledge gaps, regional variation, implementation barriers, and relational considerations.

These findings informed the development of foundational Professional Development, the Anti Racism Blueprint Toolkit, Community of Practice forums, and the evolution from virtual Fireside Chats to regionally grounded Walking Together sessions. Together, these activities reflect a deliberate progression from awareness building to operational planning and relational engagement.

A central lesson of Year 1 is that meaningful Indigenous newcomer collaboration requires both structural and relational components. Training supports baseline knowledge. Planning tools support institutional accountability. Place-based engagement supports trust and reciprocity. No single activity is sufficient in isolation. Capacity building must be integrated, regionally responsive, and sustained over time.

The transition to in person Walking Together sessions beginning in March 2026 reflects this learning. Alberta's settlement sector is not monolithic, and engagement must account for geographic differences across Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, and smaller centres. Relationship building, particularly within Indigenous cultural contexts, is grounded in presence, continuity, and respect for local protocol. The evaluation framework developed in Year 1 provides a structured approach to understanding relational progress while respecting Indigenous perspectives.

The activities completed in 2025 to 2026 therefore represent foundational work within a longer-term commitment to culturally responsive practice and coordinated sector capacity building. This report demonstrates that implementation has moved beyond policy statements toward structured action, relational accountability, and adaptive learning grounded in evidence and engagement.