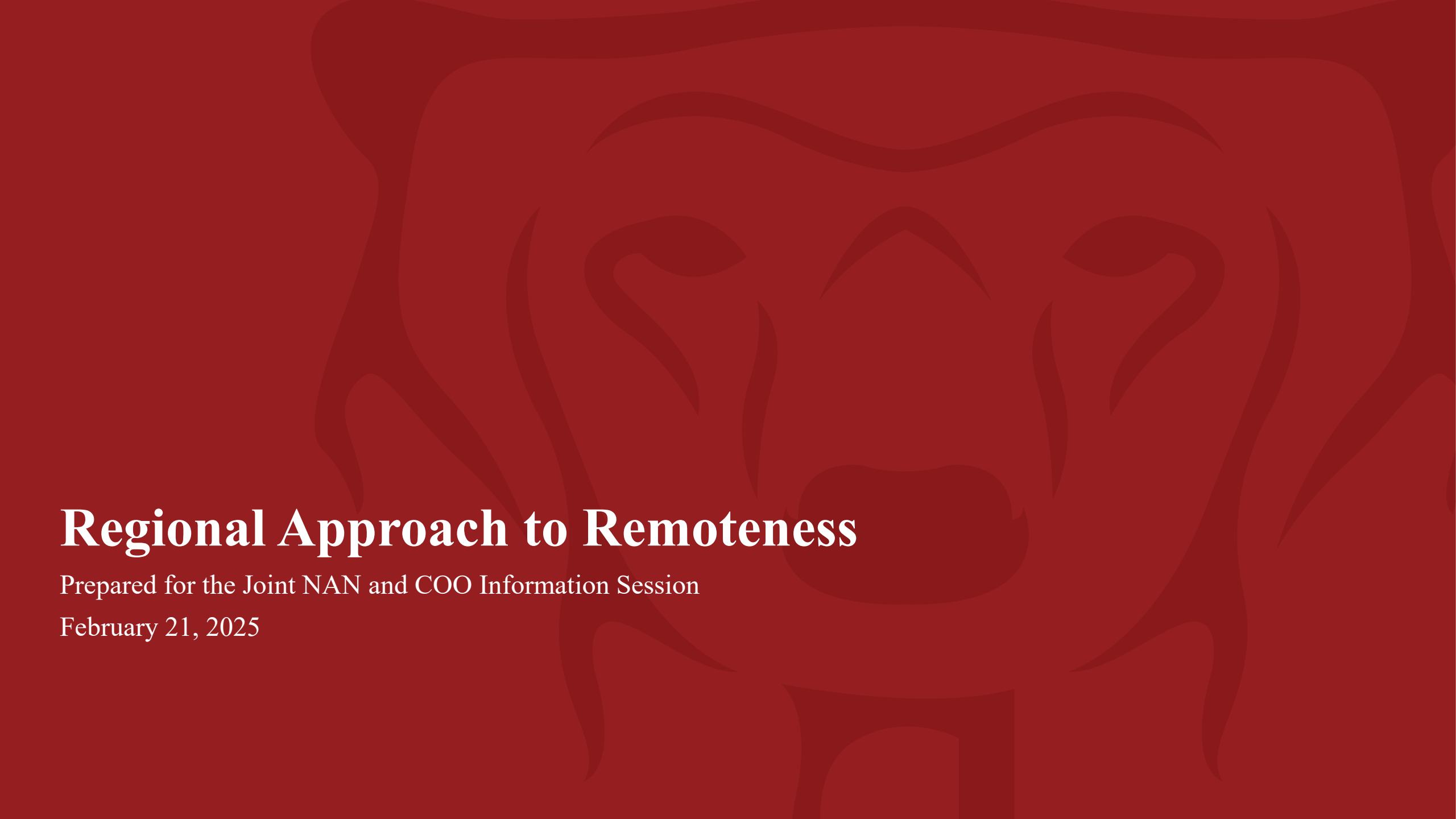




Regional Approach to Remoteness

Prepared for the Joint NAN and COO Information Session

February 21, 2025



The Ontario Final Agreement (OFA)

- ❖ The OFA is **not a brand-new agreement**.
- ❖ The entirety of the OFA **has not been re-negotiated**.
- ❖ The agreement was **modified with provisions to regionalize it**.
- ❖ Due to the need to regionalize the agreement from a National to an Ontario-specific Agreement, there are shifts to the way the remoteness governance pieces are laid out in the OFA.



The Ontario Final Agreement (OFA)

- ❖ Overall, the OFA protects many of the important remoteness gains also found in the National Final Settlement Agreement (FSA), including:
 - ❖ New remoteness adjustment funding for First Nations that represents a first-of-its-kind First Nations-sighted, evidence-based methodology for estimating the increased costs associated with remoteness, which will be applied to adjust funding for First Nations (and to account for those increased costs).
 - ❖ The OFA will set a ground-breaking new bar for accounting for remoteness.



Context

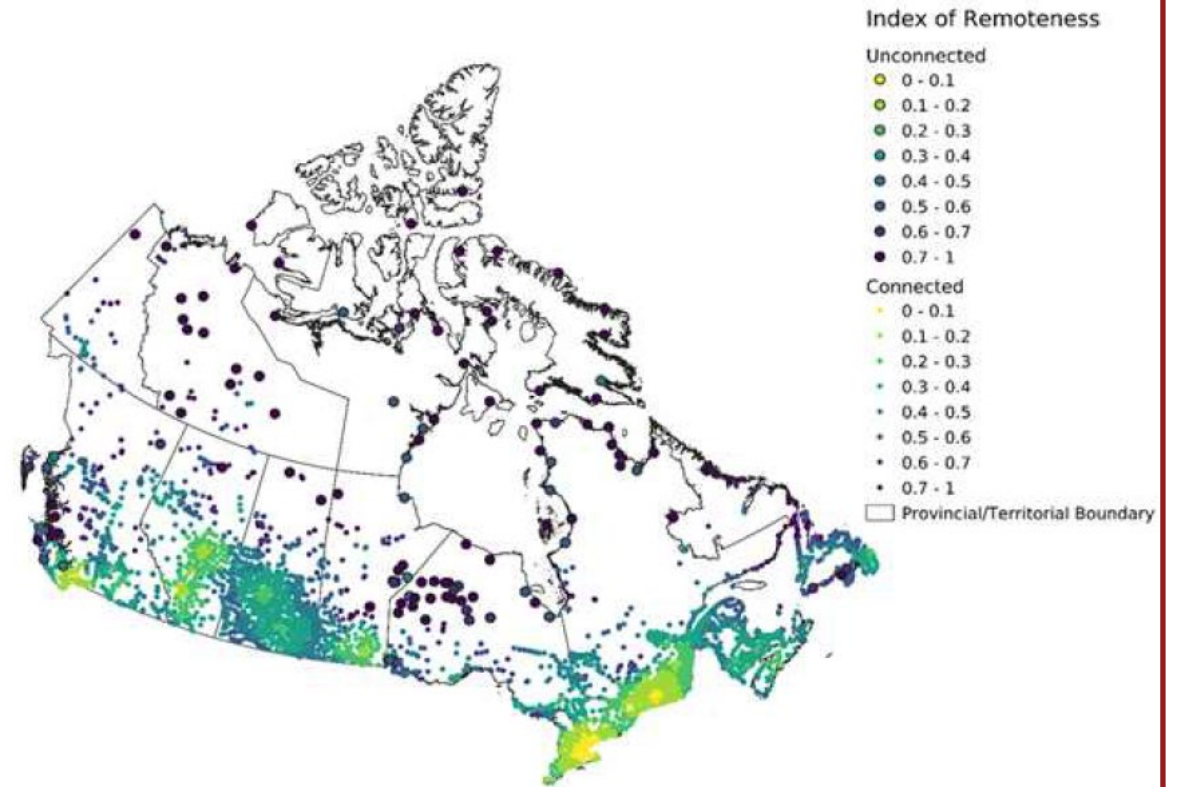
- ❖ “**Remoteness**” means a variable factor measured on a continuum and describes the lived circumstances of First Nations communities for whom issues of access (by road network, by ice road only, by air only, or otherwise), geography and context exacerbate challenges faced by all First Nations, including by increasing the costs associated with child and family services. Remoteness is generally associated with geographic distance from, and access to, service centres (often defined on the basis of population size and density), which affects the costs of shipping goods as well as costs related to personnel, including travel, and living costs.



The Statistics Canada Index of Remoteness (IR)

- ❖ The Statistics Canada IR “gravity model” considers the travel costs from a First Nation to “population centres”, and the size of those centres.
- ❖ Population centre: a community with at least 1,000 population.
- ❖ Travel costs depend on distance and whether a community is connected to the “road network.”
- ❖ Results in a continuous measure of remoteness (from 0 to 1) for every community in Canada.

Figure 5
Spatial distribution of the 2021 Index of Remoteness, census subdivisions of Canada



Notes: (i) the above map excludes CSDs unconnected having no population or no infrastructure, (ii) each dot relates to the representative point for a CSD.

Source: Authors' computation.



Remoteness Adjustment Funding

- ❖ Where applicable, Remoteness will be applied to the following top-ups/funding streams:
 - ❖ Prevention;
 - ❖ Post-Majority Support Services (for fiscal year 2025-2026 after the Effective Date);
 - ❖ First Nation Representative Services (after April 1, 2026);
 - ❖ Household Supports; and
 - ❖ Information Technology, Results (supporting the implementation of the performance measurement framework), and Emergency Funding.



NAN-Canada RQ Table

- ❖ In the National FSA, Canada was to establish the National Assembly of Remote Communities (NARC) – Canada Remoteness Table to address issues of remoteness, including the increased costs associated with remoteness, at a national level.
- ❖ In the OFA, it was necessary for the NAN-Canada RQ Table to take on this role, ensuring Parties will be able to collaboratively engage in research tasks nationally and internationally to ensure evidence-based best practices are derived to address issues of remoteness in Ontario.



2016: Tribunal Supports a Remoteness Quotient

- ❖ [80] The Panel agrees with the NAN that **a remoteness quotient needs to be developed** as part of medium to long-term relief and that **data needs to be appropriately collected**.
First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada (representing the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs), 2016 CHRT 16
- ❖ The application of remoteness factors **ought to be considered from across Canada**.
- ❖ Overall, NAN was ordered to develop a **standardized approach to determine the funding for remote agencies** as it affects their overall ability to provide services and yield results in respect of the adverse impacts for many First Nations children and families.





2016 to 2025: RQ Work Continues to Evolve

- ❖ “Notwithstanding the Ontario application of this agreement, the Parties recognize that research and collaboration with remote communities as well as organizations—nationally and internationally—may be utilized by the Parties to ensure evidence-based best practices are derived to address issues of remoteness in Ontario.” - at para 95 of the OFA
- ❖ The RQ Technical Table continues to focus on improvements to the existing methodology so that Canada will provide **additional funding** (indexed) to account for the **increased costs of delivering child and family services in remote communities in Ontario.**



Ontario Remoteness Secretariat

- ❖ In the National FSA, the Remoteness Secretariat was to be a national body/centre of expertise examining the impacts of remoteness.
- ❖ In the OFA, there will be an Ontario Remoteness Secretariat that will serve the same role but for Ontario only.
- ❖ The Ontario Remoteness Secretariat will be established by the NAN-Canada RQ Table.
- ❖ The work of the Ontario Remoteness Secretariat and the NAN-Canada RQ Table are intended to represent an **advocacy voice** across sectors, including but not limited to health, education, and community safety, and to be a **center of expertise** on the impacts of remoteness experienced by First Nations and FNCFS Agencies. 10



National Assembly of Remote Communities (NARC)

- ❖ In the National Agreement, NARC was guaranteed funding for the 10-year term.
- ❖ Due to this being a Regional Agreement, NARC will not be funded under the OFA.
- ❖ This reflects the narrowed mandate of Canada to finalize a Regional (Ontario) deal.

Questions?

Contact Information:

ofainfo@nan.ca