stewardship of the natural environment. Many of these activities are in partnership with the Government of Canada.

## A SNAPSHOT OF THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

## The People: Cultural Diversity and a Rich Heritage

Northern Canada is first and foremost the homeland of Indigenous communities. Attachment to the land and dependence on local resources for physical and spiritual sustenance are deeply rooted characteristics of their cultural heritage. Each of the Inuit groups and First Nations identifies with a traditional territory, shaped by thousands of years of continuous occupation. Their communities are scattered over this immense region, located mainly on major rivers and along the coastline. Many are accessible only by air or seasonal sea and river transport.

In the Yukon, approximately 21 percent of the population of 31 000 are Indigenous; in the Northwest Territories, 50 percent of the 42 000 are Indigenous; while in Nunavut, 85 percent of the 25 000 are Indigenous. In Nunavik and northern Labrador, Inuit and First Nations make up a majority of the resident population. United by a common language, there are some 41 000 Inuit living in 53 communities across northern Canada. First Nations often make up the majority population in another 46 communities. The most startling demographic feature of the Indigenous population is its youth — as many as 50 percent are under the age of 15 years — setting the stage for some important challenges in the near future that will be shaped by the needs of this very young society.



Photo credit: Eric Loring

The Journey commences with p in cooperation with indigenous Government of Canada and no begun processes to lay the main build capacity in these communthe progress since Rio in relato the progress since Rio in relato the Government of Canada be are integral steps in manufing a economic, social, and cultural o communities in northern Canada

While many of the processes on ongoing, there is a growing reindigenous communities (hem initiate and implement. A lew provided for locating addition

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The series "Indigenous" is the common internation News Inter Constitution of 1982, where Melonal and Inuit and Meta parates of Casolie

The words "Audo" and "North" are used areas not Intended, as precise geographic designation Independent commissions in Canada's these and Canadam provinces.