



MCIS LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPACT REPORT

2025-2026



Executive Summary

Purpose

This report illustrates how MCIS Language Solutions leveraged its Social Benefit Initiative (SBI) fund and advocacy work to address systemic gaps identified across Canada’s health, settlement, social inclusion, and justice systems during the 2025/2026 fiscal year. The report highlights the role of language access in advancing the human right to be informed, heard, and understood while contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Metric	Value
Total SBI Budget Allocated	\$95,000
Total Estimated Market Value	\$107,502
Total Interpretation Requests Supported	279
Total Translation Projects Supported	127
Total Training Opportunities Provided	17
Equity-Deserving Applicant Share	94.12%
Total #LAD26 Participants	244
Total Microgrant Funding Awarded	\$20,000

Introduction

The State of Public Systems in 2025/26

The past year exposed growing pressures across Canada's public systems. Health care faces severe workforce shortages, growing wait times, and primary care attachment challenges. Settlement and social inclusion systems struggled to keep pace with population growth and immigration targets, while justice systems continued to face affordability, accessibility, and equity challenges.

Across all sectors, language barriers remained a common obstacle limiting access for newcomers, refugees, low-income individuals, racialized communities, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and other equity-deserving populations.

MCIS Response

MCIS addresses these challenges through the provision and coordination of:

- Free language services and training funded through MCIS' Social Benefit Initiative fund
- Direct support towards Language Advocacy Day (LAD)
- The MCIS Language Advocacy Microgrants Program
- Strategic partnerships and sector leadership

SDGs

A Global Framework for Sustainable Change

In 2015, all United Nations Member States adopted the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, a shared blueprint for building a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable world. At the heart of this agenda are the **17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, which address some of the world's most pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, from poverty and health, to equality, justice, and climate action. The SDGs provide a common language for measuring progress and understanding how local initiatives contribute to broader societal change.



At MCIS, we believe that language access is not only a service. It is a catalyst for equity, inclusion, and participation. Whether supporting access to healthcare, helping newcomers navigate essential services, or strengthening civic engagement, our work contributes to outcomes that align directly with the Sustainable Development Goals.

How MCIS Contributes to the SDGs

While our work supports multiple Sustainable Development Goals, three SDGs most closely reflect our mission and impact:

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being



Language barriers can prevent people from accessing healthcare, understanding treatment options, and making informed decisions about their well-being. Through professional interpretation and translation services, MCIS helps improve communication between service providers and individuals, supporting safer, more equitable access to health services.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities



Language should never determine a person's ability to access services, exercise rights, or participate fully in society. By addressing communication barriers faced by newcomers, and speakers of non-official languages, MCIS helps reduce systemic inequities and promote inclusion.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



Inclusive institutions depend on effective communication. Language access enables meaningful participation in legal, civic, and public systems, helping ensure that individuals can understand information, access services, and exercise their rights.

Measuring What Matters

The stories and metrics presented throughout this report are organized using the SDG framework, demonstrating how language access creates value at both the individual and community level. Together, these goals reflect our commitment to a future where everyone, regardless of language, can access services, participate fully in society, and thrive.

SDG 3

Good Health and Well-Being

Healthcare systems across Ontario and Canada experienced the continuation of unprecedented strain in the past year. Health workforce shortages, long wait times, and widespread difficulty accessing primary care disproportionately impacted vulnerable populations. Equity-deserving groups, including newcomers, faced additional challenges navigating healthcare systems due to language barriers, further compounding existing inequities.

MCIS responded by prioritizing language services that supported individuals access healthcare, mental health supports, and critical health information.

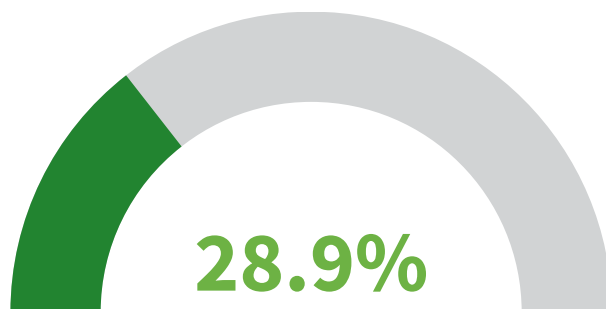
Expanding Access to Health Services

While the prevalent delivery method used to bridge healthcare language access gaps has been interpretation, the total requests across different service types have amounted to 28.9% of MCIS' entire SBI portfolio, with an estimated market value of \$11,212.

Healthcare Share of SBI Services

SBI Estimated Market Value
(Healthcare Share)

\$11,212



Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health continues to be a key challenge identified in our research, although we have seen a decline in requests from last year, mental-health-specific assignments still amounted to 28% of the total healthcare disbursement.

Mental Health Share of SBI Healthcare Services



"This interpretation will allow our client to access our 2SLGBTQI+ programs, which will improve the quality of their life and their feelings of isolation."

The Ripple Effect of Health Equity



Health outcomes are shaped by more than access to medical care alone. By removing language barriers, MCIS contributes not only to **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being**, but also to **SDG 1: No Poverty**, recognizing the close relationship between health and economic well-being. Individuals

experiencing poverty often face greater barriers to accessing healthcare, while poor health can in turn limit economic participation, stability, and opportunity. Language access helps address both dimensions by supporting individuals in understanding, navigating, and benefiting from the services available to them.

MCIS's work also contributes to **SDG 5: Gender Equality** by improving access to information and supports for women, caregivers, survivors of gender-based violence, and individuals facing gender-related barriers to care. At the same time, it advances **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities** by helping newcomers,



refugees, racialized communities, and other equity-deserving groups navigate healthcare systems with greater confidence and dignity. Together, these connections highlight how equitable communication creates benefits that extend well beyond health outcomes alone.

“Access to informed, survivor-centred support can play a vital role in safety, recovery, and long-term well-being. This training helps strengthen responses to gender-based violence through more intersectional and trauma-informed approaches.”

“With this interpretation, our client will be able to address their health concerns and obtain critical information for their upcoming surgery.”

SDG 10

Reduced Inequalities

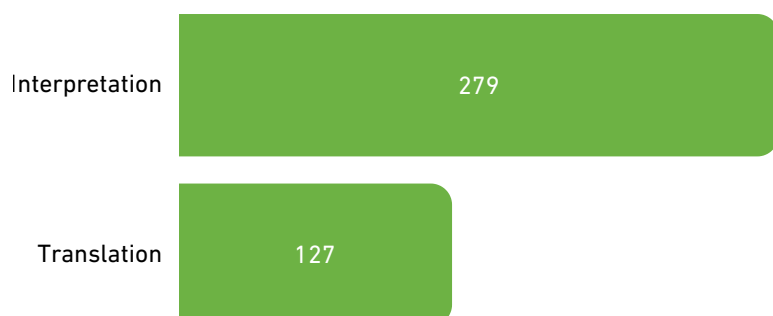
Canada's accelerated population growth and increasing diversity exposed significant gaps in settlement, accessibility, and social inclusion systems. Language barriers remained a major obstacle limiting participation in education, employment, public services, and community life.

MCIS addressed these inequities by expanding access to language services for equity-deserving communities and speakers of underrepresented languages.

Expanding Access Through Free Services

Looking at the complete range of supports provided through the SBI fund, the estimated total market value amounted to \$107,502. This includes 279 interpretation requests completed, 127 translation projects delivered, and 17 training opportunities to support trainees and learners. When considering interpretation requests, we are also including immediate phone interpreting calls (OPI), which are often used in urgent and emergency cases where equity-deserving community members are more at risk of being failed. In 2025/26 MCIS completed a total of 4,697 total OPI minutes.

Scale of SBI Support Across Service Streams



SBI OPI Minutes

4,697

SBI Training Offered

17

Reaching Equity-Deserving Communities

The Equity-Deserving Applicant Share and the Newcomer Applicant Share represent the percentages of applicants who voluntarily self-identified as belonging to one or more equity-deserving groups through the application intake process. This includes, but is not limited to, newcomer status, racialized identity, Indigenous identity, disability, and 2SLGBTQIA+ identity.

The metrics provide a high-level indication of the program's reach among communities that have historically faced barriers to access

to services, funding, and opportunities, helping MCIS assess progress toward more equitable participation and inclusion.

Equity-Deserving
SBI Applicant Share

94.12%

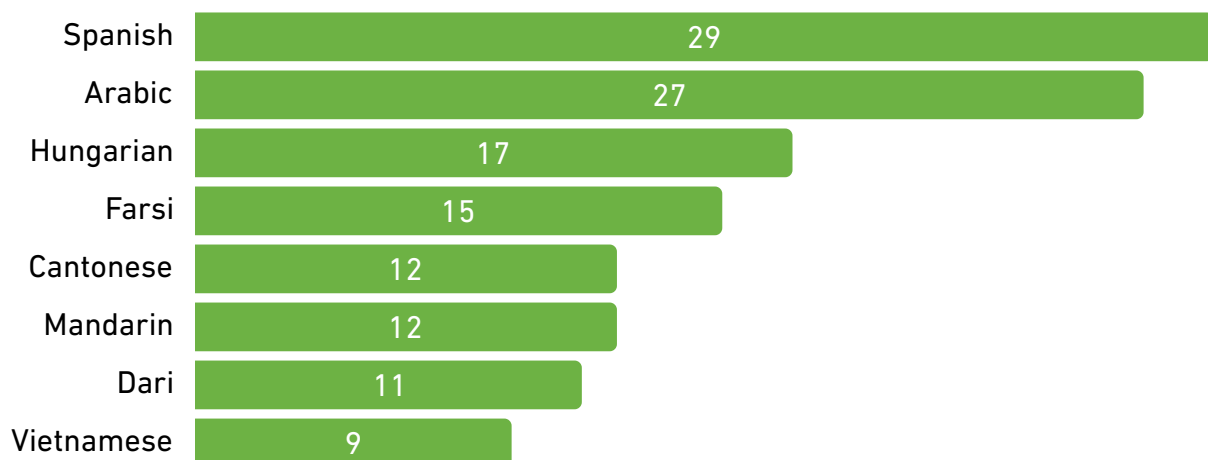
Newcomer SBI
Applicant Share

86.93%

Supporting Linguistic Diversity

Beyond Canada's official languages, language access remains an essential component of equitable participation.

Top 8 Languages Requested Across SBI Services



Where Language Access Drives Equity

Language barriers often intersect with broader social, economic, and systemic inequalities, affecting an individual's ability to access critical services, exercise their rights, and participate fully in society. Through interpretation and translation services, MCIS invests in removing these barriers across a wide range of sectors. The treemap below illustrates the estimated market value of language services delivered across service categories, providing a snapshot of where investments were concentrated to support equitable access. From healthcare and settlement services to education, justice, and community supports, these investments help ensure that language is not a barrier to inclusion, participation, or opportunity.

Estimated SBI Market Value by Service Category



The Ripple Effect of Reducing Inequalities



While the outcomes highlighted in this section contribute directly to **SDG**

10: Reduced Inequalities, the impact of language access extends across many dimensions of social and economic life. Expanding equitable access to information, services, and opportunities supports **SDG 4: Quality Education**

by helping learners, families, and educators overcome communication barriers that can limit participation and achievement. It also contributes to **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth**, as language access can improve access to employment services, workforce development opportunities, and economic participation.



The benefits extend further to **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**, where inclusive communities depend on the ability of residents to access local services, engage with community institutions, and participate in civic life. At the same time, language access advances **SDG 16:**

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions by helping individuals understand information, exercise their rights, and navigate legal, civic, and public systems with greater confidence. Together, these connections demonstrate how reducing inequalities creates ripple effects that strengthen inclusion, participation, and opportunity across multiple areas of community life.



“Through this translation, this family’s children will be able to register to school and access special support.”

“This service will help our client greatly in applying for a scholarship and continue their education. As a person who relies on social assistance, this will have a great impact on their life and it could be a transitional point.”

SDG 16

Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Although Canada maintains strong institutions overall, access to justice has been uneven. High legal costs, barriers to legal aid, and systemic inequities continued to limit access for low-income, newcomer, and Indigenous communities.

MCIS responded by strengthening legal language access, supporting advocacy efforts, and investing in community-led language initiatives.

Expanding Access to Justice

This year, MCIS delivered 41 legal-specific interpretation and translation requests, representing an estimated market value of \$16,572, an increase of 20% from the previous year. While legal services ranked third among service categories this year, their growing market value reflects a continued need for specialized language support within justice-related contexts.

At the same time, access to justice extends beyond services categorized strictly as legal. Many of the interpretation and translation services delivered within the **Settlement and Immigration** category support individuals navigating refugee claims, immigration applications hearings, official documentation, and other processes that are closely connected to the legal system. As MCIS's largest service category year after year, settlement and

SBI Estimated Market Value
(Legal Share)

\$16,572

immigration services demonstrate how access to justice is often intertwined with broader efforts to help newcomers understand and navigate the institutions, rights, and responsibilities that shape life in Canada.

MCIS Microgrants Program

While interpretation, translation, and training services help address immediate language barriers, lasting change also depends on empowering communities to develop their own solutions. The **MCIS Language Advocacy Microgrants Program** invests in community-led initiatives that advance language access, linguistic justice, and social inclusion across Canada. Through annual grants, the program supports projects that strengthen language rights, improve access to essential services, preserve and revitalize languages, and foster more equitable participation in community life.

Microgrants Funding
Awarded

\$20,000

Applications
Received

19

Jurisdictions
Represented

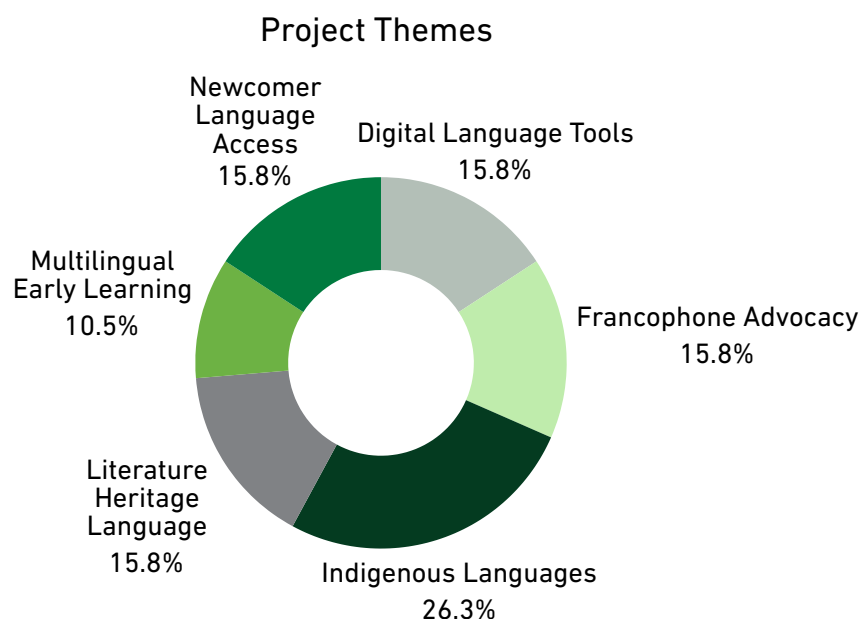
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This year, MCIS awarded \$20,000 in funding through the program, receiving 19 applications from 7 jurisdictions. The breadth of interest demonstrates the growing demand for community-based approaches to language access and inclusion. By supporting local leadership, innovation, and advocacy, the program contributes to stronger institutions, greater civic participation, and more equitable communities.



Community-Led Solutions for Language Access

The diversity of applications received through the MCIS Language Advocacy Microgrants Program demonstrates the many ways language access intersects with equity, inclusion, and community participation. Proposed initiatives spanned a wide range of focus areas, including newcomer and refugee language access, multilingual education and early learning, Francophone and French-language access, Indigenous language revitalization, digital and AI-powered language learning tools, literary translation, and heritage language preservation.



This year's funded projects reflect the creativity and leadership of communities working to address language barriers in innovative ways. Together, these projects demonstrate how community-led innovation can strengthen language rights, expand access to services, and foster more inclusive participation across diverse communities.

- **Reception House Waterloo Region:** AI-supported language learning tool for refugees with low literacy.
- **The Mohawk Mapping Collective:** Kanyen'kéha place-name documentation project.
- **OISE, University of Toronto:** Expanding support for multilingual learners in French immersion programs.

Supporting Language Advocacy Day

Creating equitable and accessible systems requires both direct support and collective action. Through its ongoing support of the **Language Access Coalition of Canada (LACC)**, MCIS contributed to the success of **Language Advocacy Day**, a national platform dedicated to raising awareness of language barriers and advancing solutions that promote inclusion, participation, and equitable access to services. By bringing together organizations, advocates, policymakers, service providers, and community members, Language Advocacy Day helped strengthen the growing movement for language access in Canada.



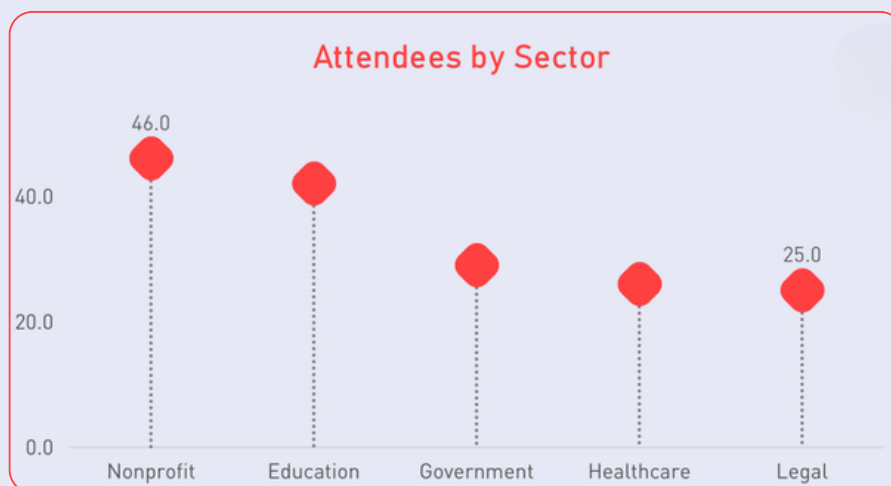
#LAD26 LANGUAGE ADVOCACY DAY

Total #LAD26
Attendees

244

Organizations
Represented

111



Conclusion

Language Access as Infrastructure

The findings from 2025/26 demonstrate that language access is not ancillary to public systems. It is infrastructure that enables equitable participation across healthcare, settlement, education, employment, social services, and justice.

Throughout the year, MCIS helped reduce communication barriers through direct language services, specialized training, community-led microgrants, and advocacy initiatives. The data presented in this report highlights both the breadth and interconnected nature of language access needs. While Settlement and Immigration remained the largest service category, reflecting the complex realities faced by newcomers navigating multiple systems, growing investments in legal and social services underscored the important role language access plays in helping individuals understand information, exercise their rights, and access essential supports.

As communities across Canada continue to grow in linguistic diversity, language access remains a critical foundation for health, equity, justice, and belonging. Investing in communication is ultimately an investment in more inclusive institutions, stronger communities, and a society where everyone can participate fully.

No language left behind. No one left behind.

Notes on Data and Quotes

Unless otherwise indicated, all data presented in this report reflects activities undertaken during the reporting period. Demographic information is based on voluntary self-identification collected through program intake and participation processes. Some participant quotations have been edited for length, clarity, and anonymity while preserving their original intent and meaning.