Promoting and Evaluating Joint Action for Reconciliation Between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Saskatchewan, Canada

Peacebuilding M&E Solutions Forum
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Saskatchewan
Inequity for Indigenous People in Canada

- Health
- Education
- Income
- Justice
- Per-Capita Government Spending
Indigenous Peoples in Saskatchewan

- “Aboriginal peoples” in Canadian Constitution:
  - Indians (First Nations)
  - Inuit
  - Métis
- 175,015 in 2016 (16.3% of population)
- 22% growth from 2006
- 24.3 median age (40.6 for non-Indigenous)
- Seven Indigenous linguistic groups:
  - Cree, Dakota, Dene, Lakota, Nakota, Saulteaux, Michif
The Numbered Treaties

- Historical Context – transition

Access to Land for Treaty Rights
- Annuities
- Medicine Chest
- School house
- Agricultural supplies
- Hunting, fishing, trapping
- Shelter
What Happened? The Indian Act - 1876

- Complete government control - Indian Agent
- Citizenship
- Cultural and spiritual practices
- Governance systems
- Penalties and permits for trade
- Pass system – 1885 to 1930
- No legal council until 1950
- Indian Act changed but still in place today
Current Saskatchewan Context

- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Duty to Consult and Accommodate
- Strengthened civil society
- Ongoing tensions, racism
- Growing movement for change
Foreign Diplomacy

→

SK Reconciliation
Collective Impact

- Common Agenda
  - Common understanding
  - Shared vision for change

- Backbone Support
  - Separate organization(s) with staff
  - Resources and skills convene and coordinate participating organizations

- Communicate Continuously
  - Consistent and open communication
  - Focus on building trust

- Shared Measurement
  - Collecting data and measuring results
  - Focus on performance management
  - Shared accountability

- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
  - Differentiated approaches
  - Coordination through joint plan of action
Reconciliation Saskatchewan

- Began in April 2014
- OTC as neutral facilitator
- Three Strategies:
  - Create coalitions of diverse “champions”
  - Mobilize around a common vision
  - Stories of success – inspire action and learning
The Process

- April 2014 – 18 diverse champions
  - What kind of relationships do we need among Treaty partners to enhance the quality of life of all Saskatchewan residents - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike?
  - How do we influence movement in that direction?

- Dec. 2014 – Concept Note. Three priorities:
  - Municipality/First Nation cooperation
  - Communication and Education
  - Economic Livelihood
The Process

- March 2015
  - Challenged group to act. Not taken up.
  - Right people at the table? Too early?

- May 2015
  - Support from Treaty Table
  - Legitimacy for OTC role from Federation of Saskatchewan Indigenous Nations and Government of Canada
  - Proposed 30 leaders in 3 meetings creating vision, evaluation
The Process

- June 2015
  - Top 100 Leaders Exercise
  - Define reconciliation for health, justice, economic development, education, child welfare
  - What are the questions we need to ask leaders:
    - What is our vision for reconciliation? Where do we want to go?
    - Are you on board? Are you prepared to work toward reconciliation?
    - How would you benefit from reconciliation?
    - How do we get there?
    - How will you/your organisation contribute?
    - How do we measure success?
Creating a Vision for Reconciliation

- Asked these questions to 380 leaders from over 70 organizations
- 8 different gatherings in five communities
- Grainne Kelly and Brandon Hamber (2004)

Reconciliation after conflict is necessary, but must be voluntary. Reconciliation has 5 interwoven ideas:

- "Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society"
- Acknowledging and dealing with the past
- Building positive relationships
- Significant cultural and attitudinal change
- Substantial social, economic and political change"
Reconciliation in Saskatchewan is...

Each citizen of the province taking personal responsibility to do what they can to create an interdependent and fair society where:

- Indigenous cultures, languages, ways of knowing and governance structures are strong and sovereign, while also included in and contributing to the overall fabric of Saskatchewan life;
- We share a common understanding of Saskatchewan’s history, and our personal place within it;
- Justice for past wrongs has been achieved, and families and communities are strong and healing;
- Safe spaces exist and skills are developed for mutual learning, communication across cultures, trust building, partnerships, and shared social experiences;
- We all enjoy a high quality of life, and full participation in the economy;
- Governance at all levels, including institutions of education, health, justice, economy and social services, represent and benefit from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous leadership, values, history and ways of knowing.
Coalitions of Champions

- July 2015 – Saskatoon City Council declares a “Year of Reconciliation”
  - 8 partners became over 30 in 3 months
  - Logo
  - Flag Raising
  - Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation
- Common Project → Trust, laughter
- Meet Monthly – co-chaired by City, OTC
  - Over 90 partners in circle today
Coalitions of Champions

- Groups now in 8 regions
  - 12 urban municipalities
  - 5 First Nations
  - Numerous Métis organizations
  - 4 rural municipalities
  - 3 Tribal Councils
  - Elders and Residential School survivors
  - Business, faith groups, community orgs, schools
Measurement

- Hired intern
- Contracted with University of Saskatchewan
- Logic model and evaluation matrix
- Conscious selection of tools
Reconciliation Saskatchewan is...

- **A shared understanding of our history:**
  - We will understand and honour the truth and history of this land, including past and present wrongs
  - We will have respectful relationships to our ancestors and to the land
  - Individuals, families, communities and nations will be strong and healing

- **Authentic Relationships:**
  - Strong relationships, partnerships and trust will exist among all people
  - Safe spaces will exist for shared cultural learning
  - We will have greater skills for communication and managing conflict

- **Strong Cultures, World Views and Interwoven Experiences:**
  - Our cultures and languages will be strong, world views respected
  - Diversity will be celebrated, racism rejected
  - Our social experiences will be woven together; we share and learn from each other

- **Political, Economic and Social Systems that Represent and Benefit Us All:**
  - We will have quality of life for all
  - Representative leadership, workforce
  - We will implement the Treaties and achieve Indigenous sovereignty
Reconciliation

Capacity & Community Building (Awareness, Attitudes, Communication, Motivation)

Increased awareness of reconciliation as a concept in those unaware or uninterested in need for social, political, and economic change

Increased awareness of a reconciliation climate

Adoption of new status quo (better relationships)

Cultural Shift (Ownership of Need for Change, Behavior & Systemic Change)

Self-reflection on personal meaning of reconciliation

Personal reconciliation experiences sought

Feel empowered to contribute to reconciliation

Better understanding of the urgency & importance of reconciliation (increase in positive attitudes)

Understanding the urgency of and committing to challenging the status quo to work towards reconciliation

Reconciliation is completely advocated for & acted upon at the personal, organizational level (personal & organization change)

Identification & consensus of a common reconciliation agenda

A new sustainable, collective, and peaceful treaty relationship is negotiated, formal, and respected by all

Creation of Safe Spaces

Increased motivation and commitment for social, political, and economic change

Strong reconciliation leadership is built and supported

Increased understanding of the historical and current realities of Canada's peoples

Indigenous voices are respected and amplified

Increased communication of reconciliation stories & events (attitudes, decision)

Increased positive narrative between peoples (skills, managing conflict)

Reconciliation is completely advocated for & acted upon at the personal, organizational level (personal & organization change)

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Learning, Inspiring, Supporting

Increased understanding of role & responsibility in reconciliation

Increased understanding of role & responsibility in reconciliation

Increased resilience and ability to walk in two worlds (working together)

Increased positive narrative between peoples (skills, managing conflict)

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Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Continuous Communication

Outcomes of mutual respect, understanding, and meaningful engagement

Mutually reinforcing activities

Shared Measurement

Common Agenda

Backbone Support

Strong relationships, partnerships, and trust will exist among all people (sense of community, authentic relationships)

Our cultures will be strong, world views respected, racism rejected, social experiences are woven together

Our institutions and systems will represent & benefit us all

OTC Vision

External factors: 1) All parties at the table continue to accept reconciliation as an important framework for discussions; 2) Different interpretations of treaty implementation; 3) Diversity of stakeholders; 4) Resistance to reconciliation; 5) Positive or negative socio-cultural influence beyond Saskatchewan; 6) Urgency of reconciliation climate in Saskatchewan
Who’s doing what? Creating a map
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Indicators for Success

- Taking each of the four pillars of the reconciliation vision
  - What would be an indicator of success in your organization?
  - What information are you collecting?
  - What information would you like to collect?
Next steps

- Collect input in other regions
- Provincial survey on attitudes to reconciliation
- Consulting Knowledge Keepers and Survivors
- Take to ceremony
- Tool development - May or June 2019
- Looking for more resources to expand model, build evaluation capacity
Lesson: Indigenous Ways of Knowing

- Relationships building
- Stories, oral traditions
- Bringing vision to ceremony
- Local context
- Culturally responsive evaluation

• **A Shared Understanding of Our History:** We will have acknowledged, honoured, achieved justice, and healed from the truth and history of this land;

• **Authentic Relationships:** Strong relationships, partnerships and trust will exist among all people;

• **Strong Cultures and Interwoven World Views:** Our cultures will be strong, world views respected and our social experiences will have been woven together;

• **Social, Economic and Political Change:** Our institutions and systems will represent and benefit us all.
Lessons: Evaluation Tools

- Importance of Residential School Survivors
- Community Driven – process as important as product
- Takes time and patience
- Reconciliation about combining world views – changing the way we do things
- Think outside the box - LISTEN
- Evaluation as a tool for accountability, coordination and learning
Thank you

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