VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

INDIGI-X

FOR INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONALS

FINAL REPORT

JUNE 2021

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CANADA, FIJI AND NEW ZEALAND

HIGHLIGHTS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tansi, kia ora koutou, bula vinaka...

First, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of our ancestors, whose efforts both in the living world and Spirit realm laid the path for us to be here today. And to all residential school students (survivors and those in the Spirit world), we respect you and strive to honour you and your experiences in all the work we do.

Our deepest thanks to Elder Dr. Ken Kennedy for opening and closing the virtual exchange in a good way. To Knowledge-Keeper, Bob Silverthorne, who went above and beyond in offering his prayers, wisdom, and guidance to our network – your spirit is embedded in the foundation of our program.

To our second cohort of 22 amazing Indigenous professionals in Aotearoa, Canada, and Fiji whose time and effort created this report – all we can say is WOW! We are in awe of the experience, passion, and heart that you have brought to the table. It is truly an honour to have met you and we look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve you in your personal and professional lives going forward.

To our alumni who laid the groundwork in our first exchange – your participation, liveliness, and lived experiences you still bring to the network today reverberate throughout our endeavors and the network of Indigenous professionals and allies that we are privileged to co-create with.

Many thanks to Ms. Maraia Vakasilimiratu from the Fiji High Commission for connecting us with some amazing new delegates in the program. Your commitment to the prosperity of the people of Fiji is admirable. And the work you are doing abroad is vital.

We also express gratitude to the New Zealand High Commission in Canada who have been incredibly supportive of this program since day one. We truly enjoy working with you. The connections you have made for the program have been invaluable.

INTRODUCTION

It is my pleasure to share the product of many hundreds of hours of hard work from the INDIGI-X program's second virtual exchange cohort.

While the program is merely a year old, it has truly taken on a life of its own.

Our alumni have been awarded new contracts, accepted board positions, and taken on new, exciting roles due to their involvement with the INDIGI-X program and the connections they have made. Perhaps most importantly, new and long-lasting friendships have been formed by people across the globe. There is a certain strength in working across borders, and an underlying, synergic power that comes from the solidarity of an international network of Indigenous people.

Although the format of our second virtual exchange was lengthened from four to six weeks, it felt like time was ticking away much faster! Perhaps it was Zoom fatigue, and the seemingly endless waves of covid. Nevertheless, the final outcome is nothing short of spectacular.

Let's be honest - it is an incredibly difficult task to meet 21 other people in a virtual setting, sort yourselves into groups, and then mutually agree upon a topic that you are all passionate about! Then, to synthesize your collective thoughts, the key issues, and recommendations in such a short time period – it truly is an achievement. I am in awe of what you have produced and honoured to have had the opportunity to support you in this journey.

Lastly, I am deeply grateful for the strength and support the network has offered me personally during this last year. I look forward to working with you to continue to forge a path forward for this important exchange, and continue to serve our vibrant network of Indigenous leaders

Kinanâskomitin.

Raylene Whitford

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the 20 recommendations put forward by our second cohort.

To learn more about the delegates who have authored this report, please refer to our Welcome Handbook available at: www.INDIGI-X.com.

Indigenous Economic Revitalization

1. **Build** an online platform for Indigenous entrepreneurs around the world.

2. **Host** a National Round Table on Indigenous Economic Revitalization in Canada.

3. **Create** programs to assist Indigenous communities to obtain equity investments in all industries in Canada.

4. **Establish** a New Zealand tourism task force led by Māori and Indigenous Peoples.

5. **Provide** access to additional sources of funding for Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans.

6. **Allocate** resources to the Fiji Indigenous Council to launch an awards scheme for entrepreneurs.

Nothing About Us, Without Us

7. **Complete** an assessment & adjust resourcing for all available funding pools.

8. **Commit** to increasing participation of Indigenous people in the existing programs.

9. **Create** a centralised platform for funding for Indigenous entrepreneurs, communities, and people.

10. **Allocate** designated supports to assist individuals in navigating the available resources.
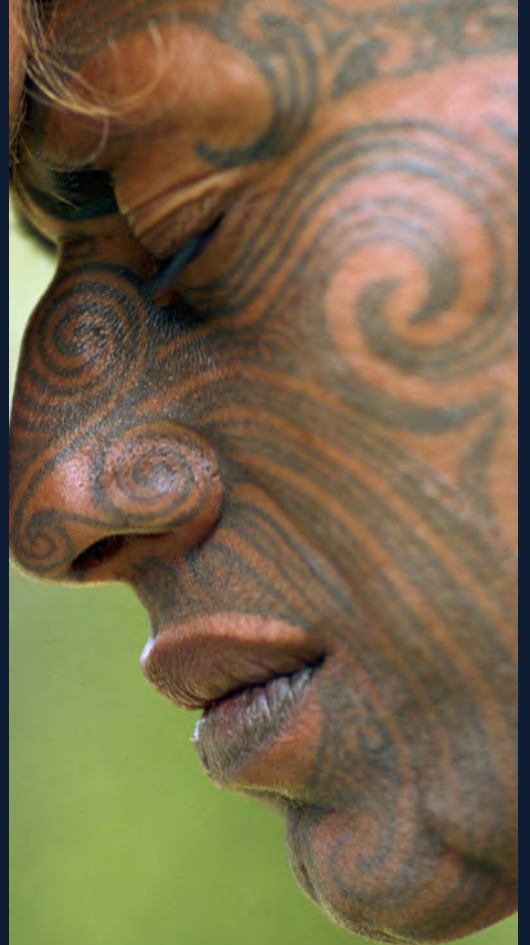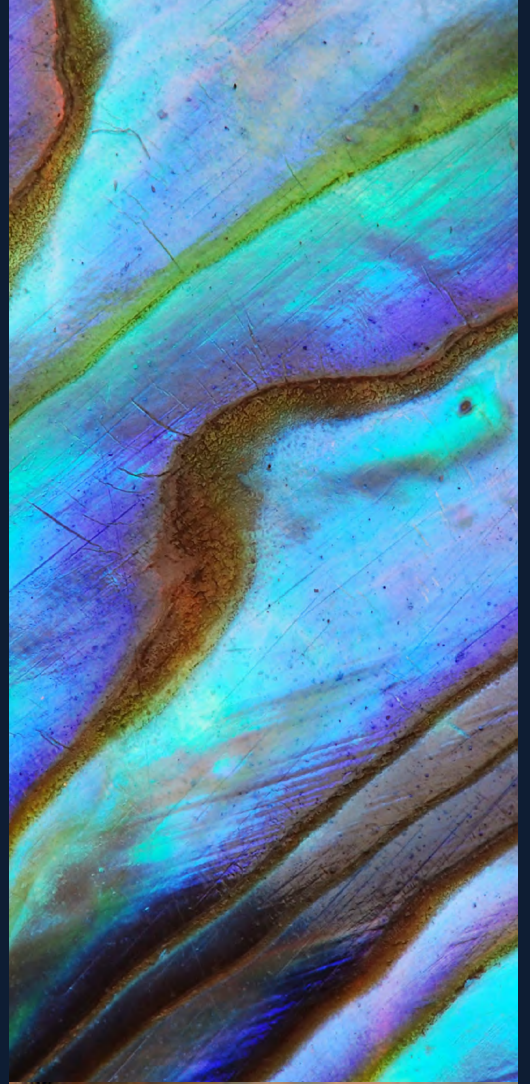
Building Up, Looking Out

11. **Co-design** capacity-building frameworks to enable climate justice.

12. **Prioritize** Indigenous voices in IPCC activities.

13. **Implement/Appoint** an Indigenous Climate Secretariat in Canada.

14. **Work** with the Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation to progress recommendations in the Matike Mai Aotearoa Report.

15. **Institute** programs to advance Indigenous Equity Ownership of new energy sources.

16. **Appoint** an Indigenous Working Group to advise on the expansion of the CPTPP.

Bridging the Education Gap

17. **Implement** a bilateral task force to identify best practices and supports for Indigenous students.

18. **Pilot** a paid internship program for Indigenous professionals.

19. **Identify** a research pathway to establish a unique Indigenous leadership traits framework and resulting leadership programs.

20. **Engage** with INDIGI-X alumni to review and implement all of the above recommendations in this report.

Joseph Alaimoana

Patricia Crowe

Koila Ganilau

Denise Halfyard

GROUP 1:

INDIGENOUS ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION

Stories of challenges, successes and hopes for the future from Aotearoa, Turtle Island and Viti

Tatiana Kiwi-Knight

Ula Kotoisuva - Macomber

Moira Solvalu

Overview

Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit, Métis, iTaukei, Rotuman, and Māori, were working together, doing business, and trading with each other for thousands of years prior to colonization.

This report explores the successes and challenges Indigenous people have faced in Aotearoa, Canada, and Fiji since colonization, and highlights some contemporary stories of revitalization.

Pāua - a symbol of revitalization

Despite being more than 13,000 kilometers apart, Indigenous people from Aotearoa, Turtle Island, and Viti have more in common than you may think. From a deep connection to the land, rich oral histories, and sophisticated trading networks, the Indigenous Peoples share many of the same values and challenges.

One example is the importance of Abalone - or Pāua - the beautiful, large sea snail, to these three groups.

Indigenous people in these three countries have deep spiritual connections to Pāua - these more-than-human beings, and each with their own stories about how this connection came to be. Once an important food source for coastal communities, it was an important item of trade and often used in ceremony.
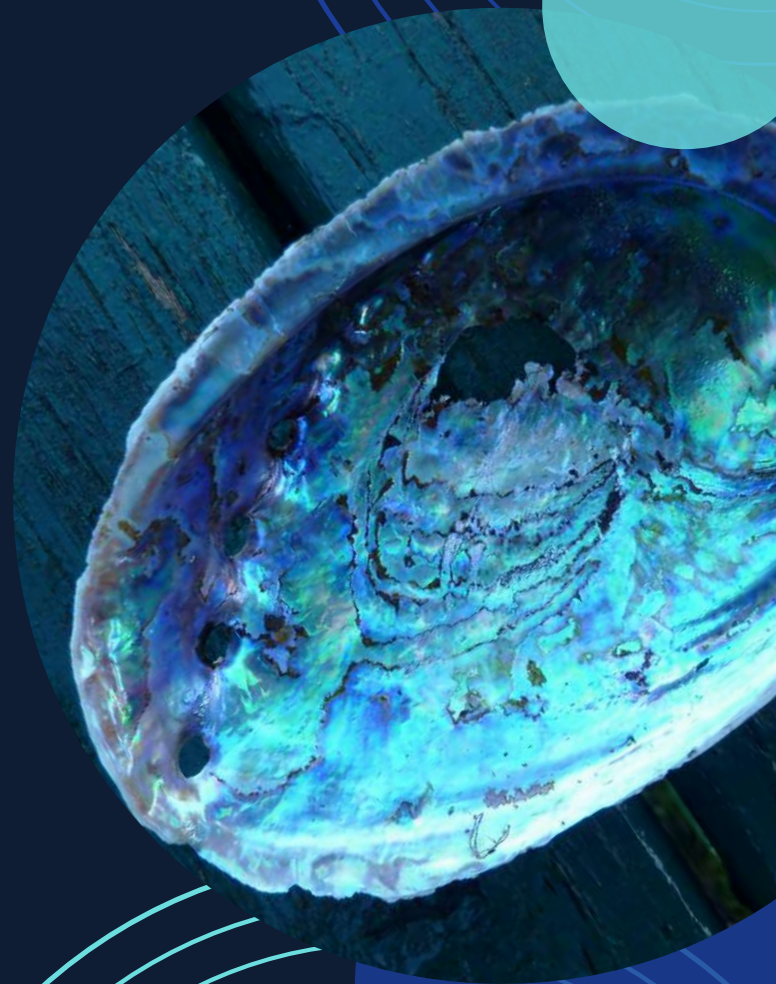
Post-contact, the shells became an item that was highly revered by settlers, eventually suffering from over-harvesting and poaching. Its survival was at risk in all three locations, threatening the Indigenous Peoples' connection with this important being.
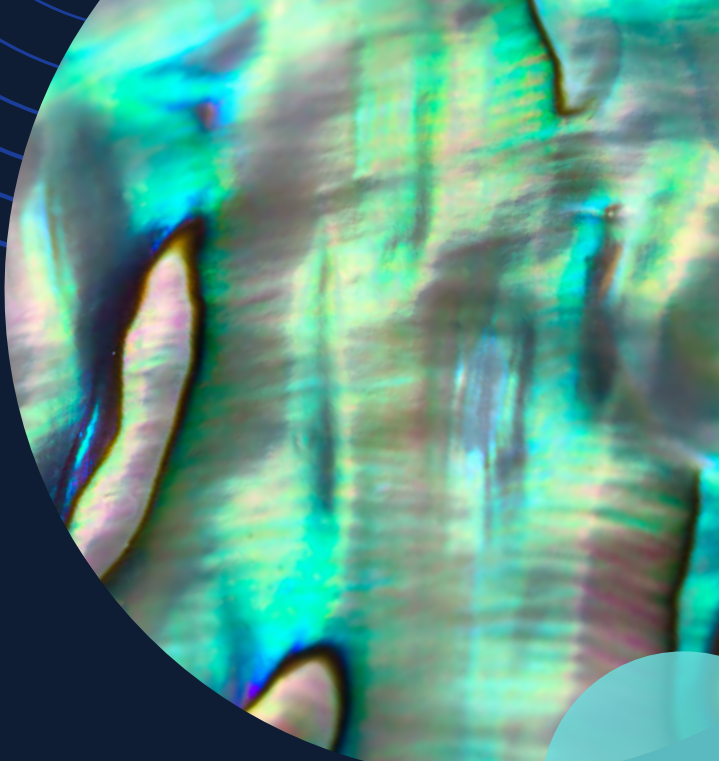
The numbers of Abalone - or Pāua have since improved and the relationship between Indigenous people and Pāua continues on today. Indigenous artisans in all three countries work closely with the shells to produce beautiful artwork, providing income for Indigenous families and community members. The Pāua's irredescent shell is a perfect symbol for Indigenous revitalization, as it brings with it new life and vitality.

Learning from the Past

Our ancestors followed an Indigenous worldview based on principles of teamwork and structure, and working together as a family or community (Hilton, 2021). If you faced a challenge, someone was there to teach you, to guide you, and share their knowledge. The Métis were there for the first trading posts, the First Nations built businesses out of the fur trade, and the Māori were there at the birth of the tourism industry in Aotearoa.

Indigenous Tourism Successes

Tourists have been drawn to the beautiful Māori culture that is entwined with the whenua (land). Indigenous values of manaakitanga - caring for others, and kaitiakitanga - guardianship and stewardship of the environment to ensure a sustainable resource for future generations, have seen an obvious alignment between Māori and tourism that has resulted in tourism being a critical industry in the Māori economy.

Our forefathers believed that the land is mana - magic. However, they did not know how to utilize their resources to gain access into the industrialized, entrepreneurial world until very recently. To them, the land did not belong to one person, but to a whole clan, thus, making it more difficult for business minded individuals in the "mataqali/fuag rikainaga" (tribe/clan) to use the land as collateral for their start start-ups.

Imposed Disparity: Mid-Century Land Reforms in Fiji

Early Fiji land reforms enabled one Indigenous group in Fiji, the iTaukei, to lease or sell their land to start-up businesses. However, in Rotuma, an Indigenous minority, have had close to no chance at leasing or dealing with their communally-owned land.

Early attempts to establish a formal land tenure system in Rotuma proved woefully unsuccessful. In 1959 the colonial government, in consultation with a few resident Rotumans in Fiji, decided that it would be desirable to legally codify the Rotuman system of land tenure and to survey boundaries.

An ordinance was passed, which attempted to do just that (Rotuma Lands Act, 1959). The Ordinance authorized a commission to be sent to Rotuma to register owners of land and to survey land holdings. However, the Indigenous community refused to cooperate with the commissioners, due largely to the fact that the system of land tenure under the ordinance was based on patrilineal inheritance, as opposed to the Rotuman custom of bilineal inheritance.

In their rationale, the authors of the ordinance pointed to a large number of unresolved disputes, and the difficulty of arbitrating them when individuals were able to make claims in so many parcels through so many routes. Nevertheless, threats of violence were made, and in short order, the commission was withdrawn.

Although the Act remains a valid law in Fiji, the the work of the Commission was never properly undertaken. Rotumans are unable to utilize their lands in any significant way so as to produce economic benefits and thus are usually forced to rely purely on the subsistence farming or to move to the main island of Fiji for work. This is why Rotumans are an Indigenous minority today. Rotumans can never, ever have the privilege of using their resources on the island as collateral for business start-ups.
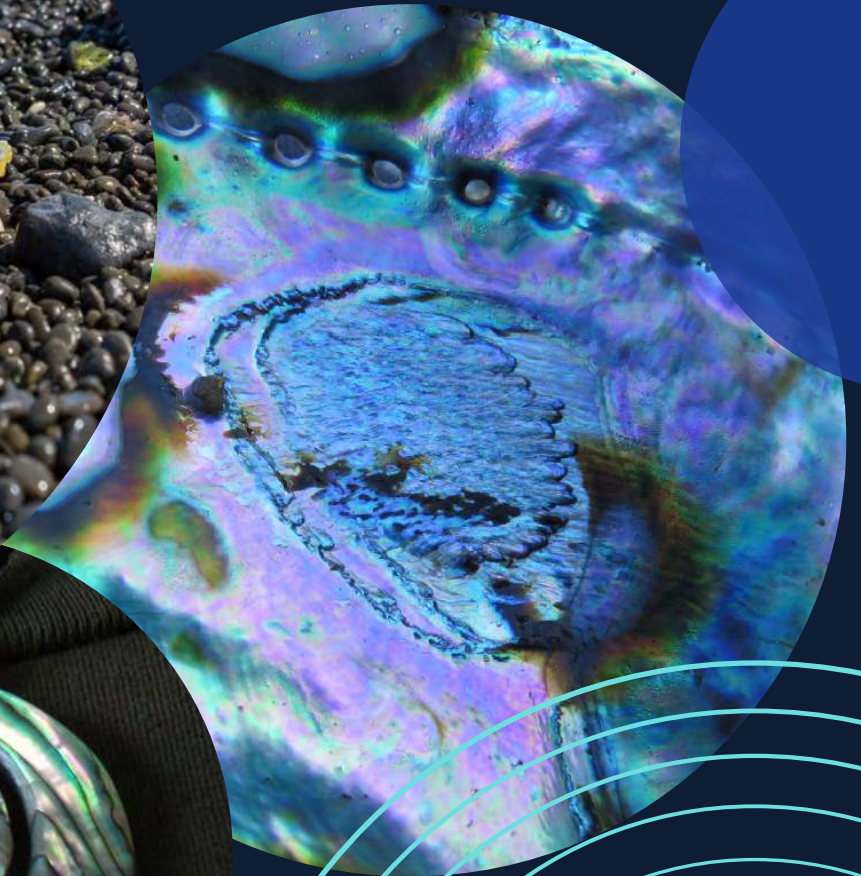
Celebrating Our Present

With the inability to gather in person due to the global pandemic, this last year saw many Indigenous communities turn to the internet to keep us connected. We also saw people use this as an opportunity to get back to our roots and reconnect with the land and our culture. Entrepreneurs who relied on in-person events had to bring their businesses online.

The LIFT Collective: Supporting Indigenous Women Entrepreneurs

In Canada, Indigenous women entrepreneurs came together and formed the Indigenous LIFT Collective, an online resource where information is shared, and where one can ask for advice or for help amplifying their business (Indigenous LIFT Collective website).

Through the Indigenous LIFT Collective, free workshops are offered once a month on a variety of topics, such as social media marketing, managing money, and talking to media (Ibid.). New business ideas have come to fruition using resources and guidance available through the collective.

For example, Indigimall.net is an online mall for Indigenous vendors to feature their Indigenous-made art, fashion, and beadwork from around the world (IndigiMall website). Collaborations are created even among businesses, which from a Western perspective would be seen as competition. Just before Christmas, following the subscription box trend, businesses such as the Yukon Soap Company and Sisters Sage (both health and wellness brands) collaborated and created a subscription box together (Ibid.).

Tourism Provides Opportunities, Even During COVID

The tourism industry for Māori was also devastated by Covid-19. Some operators closed their doors and had to let their staff go until there is a clear timeline on when international visitors will return (Tourism Industry Assoc., 2020). However, some tourism operators showed great resilience, pivoting, and diversifying in order to stay operational and retain their employees.

One particular Māori tourism operator, MDA Experiences, responded to the pandemic by drawing from their values as Māori. Offering a variety of tours, including mountain bike tours, they saw their tours crater from 419 in 2019 to 3 in 2020. To stay in alignment with their values of manaakitanga - caring for others, and kaitiakitanga - the importance of guardianship and stewardship of the environment, MDA Experiences removed their profit KPIs and focused on retaining and developing their staff. Staff remuneration (excluding senior management) increased by 10% over the last six months and they have taken this opportunity to test new offerings on the domestic tourism market, so that when international tourism is safe again, they are in a position to respond (MDA Experiences website).

A Return to Farming

In Fiji, 75% of the tourism industry came to a standstill due to the crippling effects of Covid-19, directly and indirectly affecting more than 150,000 Fijians. However, many Indigenous Fijians in the urban centres who were left unemployed returned to their villages and created job opportunities using their natural resources, coupled with their savings to reinvent the entrepreneurial wheel and a boost in the agricultural sector was seen.

Back to Bartering

Long before colonization, Indigenous people fostered an economy of kindness through methods of bargaining such as the "barter system." Revitalization meant revisiting the past to reinvent an exchange of goods and services without the use of cash and a "Barter for Better Fiji" page was opened on Facebook, where trading took place online and has been very successful (see Barter for Better Fiji Facebook page).

Pivoting from High Fashion to Reusable Diapers

For Indigenous fashion design company in Fiji, 8 Mountains, the pandemic triggered a complete reset in the company's direction. From producing high quality, bespoke fashion items to manufacturing reusable masks, scrubs, as well as reusable diapers and sanitary pads, 8 Mountains business model has changed. The revitalization meant a complete overhaul of the customer base as well as the product lines. This Indigenous company's ability to pivot proved to be a lifeline.
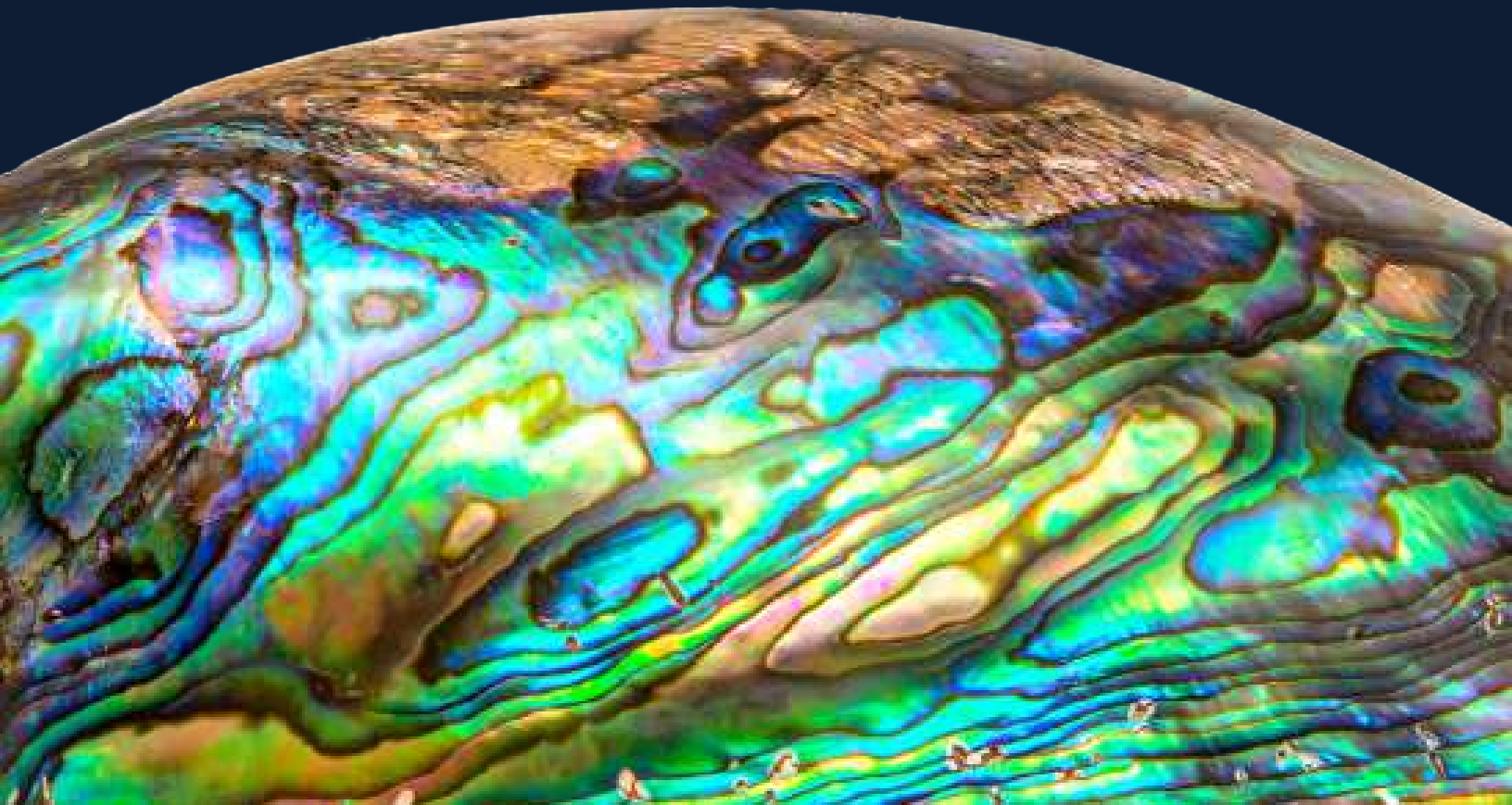
Looking to the Future

As countries slowly emerge from the pandemic and open up their economies, we look to a future where we, Indigenous people, must own our independence and build our economic wealth through equity and entrepreneurial sustenance, while continuing to leverage Indigenous values and spirit.

The following vignettes offer ideas of how Indigenous people in Aotearoa, Turtle Island, and Viti can continue the process of economic revitalization.

Embedding Mātauranga in Tourism

The discourse around the economic revitalization of the tourism industry tends to separate the Māori culture from the sustainability of the industry. However, we disagree with this tendency. The vision of a tourism industry that fully aligns with Māori values, protecting and showcasing their natural environment and culture is the core of the revitalization for the whole tourism industry. This requires wider acceptance and appreciation of the mātauranga (knowledge) that Māori have.
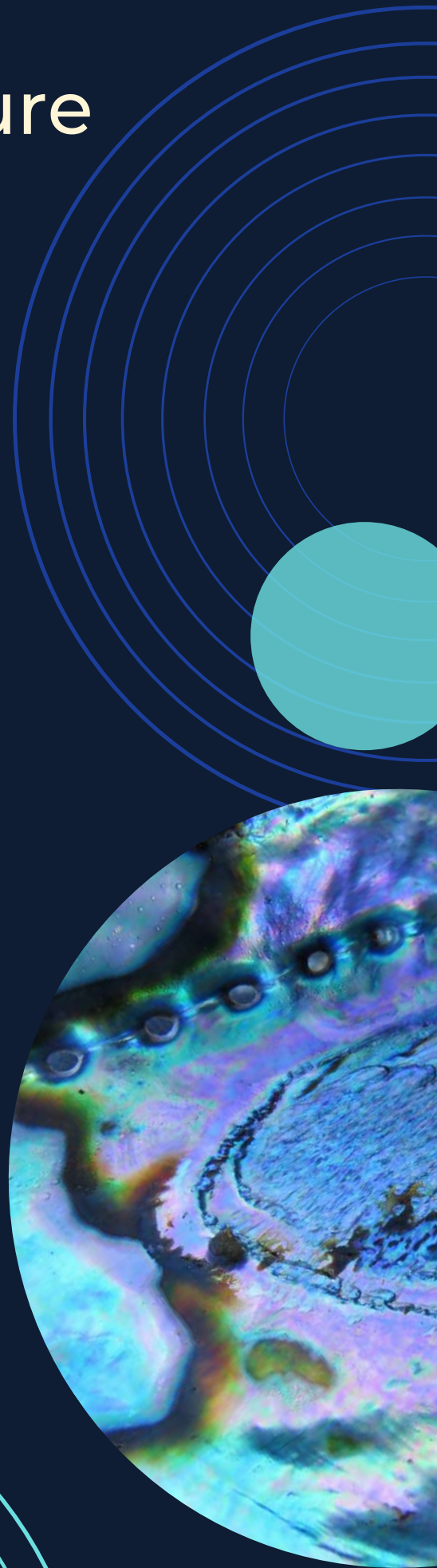
Métis Resurgence

Métis have created an entrepreneurial ecosystem of capital, training, networking, culture, and economic climate, which has proven to be incredibly successful. Their distinct voice and ways of knowing and being will continue to contribute to the success of Indigenous economic revitalization through their history of self-determination, defiance, and independence.

There is an opportunity to host a series of multilateral roundtable discussions around how we, as Indigenous people, with an organized conversation with one moderator and several chosen speakers who bring a variety of perspectives to a subject, and an audience who may simply observe or participate by asking questions.

Equity Stakes in Major Projects

Indigenous communities are gaining independence and creating their own sources of revenue through equity stakes in major projects, thereby not having to rely on outside funding. Some examples we have seen recently include the Fort Nelson First Nations on the Clark Geothermal Project and the Mi'kmaq First Nation coalition/Premium brands jointly purchasing Clearwater Seafoods. With increased Indigenous participation in major project equity opportunities, members can and are starting up their own businesses, providing more employment opportunities that are skilled in trade.

There are certain programs available to assist First Nation communities to create long-term opportunities through equity investments. A review of the structure of these programs should be undertaken and new supports created to encourage new investments.

Conclusion

Walk in Our Shoes

Learning from the past has taught us that we can, and must, carry our traditions and values forward into the realm of economic development through opportunities such as tourism. An Indigenous resurgence, coupled with the re-opening of the world economy post pandemic, will pave the way for long-term opportunities for Indigenous communities to develop and build sustainable economies, while continuing to draw on Indigenous values and spirit.

There is much gratitude for the unique connection established between our four Indigenous ethnicities across the globe through the INDIGI-X platform, respecting the various historical journeys, the sharing of stories of progress through pivotal adjustments made to businesses, communities, households, and beings in light of the current situation within the global pandemic.

This connection has gifted its members various options to establish an international Indigenous collaboration. Through the exchange, our Indigenous professionals have been able to forge many powerful, transnational recommendations.

Recommendations

1 **Build an online platform for Indigenous entrepreneurs around the world to seek advice, learn and offer support,** further expanding their global exposure.

2 **Host a National Round Table on Indigenous Economic Revitalization in Canada**, inclusive of a distinct Métis voice and three ex-officio seats for INDIGI-X cohort alumni.

3 **Create and promote awareness of programs to assist Indigenous communities to obtain equity investments** in all industries in Canada. Share the blueprint of these government programs to be implemented for our network in Fiji and Aotearoa.

4 **Establish a New Zealand tourism Task Force led by Māori and Indigenous Peoples**, with the mandate to develop frameworks that incentivizes businesses that operate in adherence with Indigenous values and implement a similar force across all industries to lead our economic revitalization.

5 **Provide access to additional sources of funding for Indigenous Fijians and Rotumans to develop and expand their businesses**. The program can be monitored by the Fijian Business Council and training / mentorship opportunities provided to new entrepreneurs.

6 **Allocate resources to the Fiji Indigenous Council to launch an awards scheme for entrepreneurs.** An Indigenous category could be inserted into the Prime Minister's Business in Excellence Awards.

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Te Puritanga Jefferies

Georgina Naigulevu

Angela Preissl

Scott Wikohika

GROUP 2:

NOTHING ABOUT US, WITHOUT US

Indigenous Funding and Governance

Overview

Our vision is that Indigenous Peoples are empowered in the creation of mechanisms, delivery of funding, and governance of resources, which contribute to tangible outcomes in the development and wellbeing of our communities. We acknowledge that our three countries of New Zealand, Fiji, and Canada are at different stages for Indigenous funding and governance. As a result, implementation of our global vision will vary in each country.

We see an **undeniable disconnect in the flow and distribution of funding** from governments to Indigenous entrepreneurs, communities, and governments. Further, we see a **clear need to indigenize the process of funding.** Presently, policies impacting Indigenous Peoples and businesses are created and implemented with little to no Indigenous input or guidance.

Decision-making that is socially, economically, and environmentally sound requires Indigenous Peoples to be meaningfully involved as joint decision-makers.

The following sections will discuss the current landscape, opportunities, and challenges faced by Indigenous people from Aotearoa, Viti, and Turtle Island.

NEW ZEALAND

The Māori economy in New Zealand is not just surviving, it is thriving.

A 2018 report estimates the Māori economy's contribution to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of New Zealand was $69 billion NZD, up previously from an estimate of $43 billion NZD. Given the national GDP is approximately $200 billion NZD, it is clear that Māori are major contributors to the national economy of Aotearoa (Te Ōhanga Māori, 2018).

The report also notes that assets of the businesses of more than 9,900 Māori employers continue to make up the bulk of this asset base. In 2018, this component totalled $39 billion NZD, up from $23 billion NZD in 2013. Also, nearly $21 billion NZD resides and is managed within Māori trusts, incorporations, and tribal entities (Ibid.).

However, it is important to recognise that any meaningful description of the Māori economy must go beyond the treaty settlement process that has been underway for several decades. Many Māori businesses, enterprises, organisations, and trusts existed well before the beginning of the settlement processes. For example, Ngāti Ira, a sub-tribe of Te Whakatōhea in the Bay of Plenty, were wealthy traders and farmers in 1860. A flour mill was built on their land in 1861. A cutter registered in Hira Te Popo's name (a chief of the tribe) and owned by Ngāti Ira, was used to transport their produce to the Auckland market (Lyall, 2005).

Māori also represent a significant part of the current and future workforce of Aotearoa. Māori employers, entrepreneurs, and employees are in every industry and every sector, generating wealth and wellbeing. Around 300,000 Māori now work in Aotearoa's workforce, with approximately 74,000 of them in highly-skilled roles (Gibson, 2021).

The Māori economy is key to the wellbeing of Māori; it is a significant and increasingly important contributor to the wider economy of Aotearoa.

In March 2005, there was a Māori economic development summit held called Hui Taumata. Approximately 450 leaders from the Māori world gathered to reflect on the Māori economic and social development of the last twenty years, and to forge a vision for the next twenty years. These influential leaders concluded that Māori-led economic development was key to building prosperity and success for Māori in New Zealand (see Ellison, 2010).

"A key issue for Māori and iwi is to exercise a greater self-determining influence over the models of development that they utilise and ensure that these models appropriately reflect their economic interests and their social and cultural development aspirations. The power to 'self-develop' is a key strategy." - Professor Graham Smith, He Mangopare Amohia, Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, 2015.

There is continued emphasis on local level solutions as the key to local challenges, whilst also calling for a whole-of-government approach to Māori issues, and capacity building for Māori. There have been several reports produced throughout the years regarding Māori economic development and consistent throughout these reports are the challenges around access to capital and the ability to leverage existing assets.

Funding, along with resource allocation and management in New Zealand is becoming more and more complex and requires participation at all levels to achieve agreed environmental, social, cultural, and economic goals and outcomes. The key for achieving a clean, healthy environment balanced with expectations for economic growth and opportunity is our ability to work productively together. Participation lies at the heart of this.

Through the multitude of reports produced, access to capital continues to be highlighted as a major barrier for Māori (see Icehouse, 2013; KPMG, 2017; Te Ōhanga Māori, 2018). It is through active participation in decision-making around funding and resource allocation in the 21st Century that we will we finally see a correcting of the imbalance of equity and control; this has not occurred for over 180 years.

There are several funding pools and resources available to Māori across central government agencies including: Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and the Ministry for Primary Industries. The New Zealand government announced a budget of $900 million NZD in Budget 2020 to support whānau, hapū, and iwi to deal with the fall-out of Covid-19. There are opportunities abound. However, there is a lack of transparency in how that funding is spent, to what extent Māori are involved in that process, and a lack of consistency and collaboration across agencies to fully leverage the potential of the funding to provide outcomes for our communities and our Nation (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2007; Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, 2015).

Quality decision-making requires effective participation between key stakeholders, and should be built on trust, respect, and understanding. On occasion it also sometimes requires consideration of the diverse perspectives of an issue, and the integration of different types of knowledge and worldviews.

FIJI

A race to preserve
Indigenous knowledges.

Fiji has a diverse range of Indigenous people, just as each province has their own set of dialects and community protocols. Although there is also a common Indigenous Fijian dialect used and understood just like English to the general public within Fiji, the diversity of Indigenous communities comes with their own set of knowledge, and ways of life are similar and yet different at the same time (Minority Rights Group International, 2017).

The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs is the custodian of official records relating to iTaukei land, fishing grounds, headship titles, expressions of culture, and other traditional knowledges. It is mandated to deal with dispute resolution over land, fishing grounds, chiefly and traditional headship titles. The ministry is also charged with safeguarding and preserving language and culture through various advocacy programs (I-Taukei Trust Fund Board website).

Apart from the 14 provinces, there is also Rotuma, a Nation of its own, which is so remote that it would take 3 days by boat or a 3-hour flight to travel from Fiji. Other minority Pacific Indigenous communities, such as the Banabans, came from Ocean Island to reside on Rabi Island.

Fiji manages its natural resources through a federal ministry and a statutory trust was established in 1940 to control and administer iTaukei land on behalf and for its Indigenous owners in the 14 provinces. Rotuma has a separate land act and management of their natural resources, which are managed by the Rotuman Council.

In 2004, the Government of Fiji established the iTaukei Trust Fund Board (TTFB) to uplift the wellbeing of iTaukei and Rotuman Peoples. Globalization has brought with it modern development, but at the same time widened the gap within generations of the Indigenous community, as the preservation of Indigenous knowledge is fast becoming limited.

There are some initiatives to assist with this loss. For example, in 2006, TTFB approved the funding of a Rotuman Fine Mat Weaving project (I-Taukei Trust Fund Board website). The project was administered by the Fiji Arts Council in recognition of special weaving skills and knowledge, which are in danger of being lost. Its aims were to raise the awareness of the significance of Rotuman fine mats – their various types, names, sizes, usage and meanings in the Rotuman culture. Revival workshops were held in Suva, Lautoka, and Rotuma in order to train young women, and transmit the inherent skills and knowledge of fine mat weaving.

The other Pacific Indigenous communities also separately manage their own resources within their own jurisdictions. However, funding allocation is highly competitive, as only a handful of applicants are aware of what resources are available, whilst the remaining struggle and work on their own to survive with what little they have.

CANADA

Striving towards a one-hundred-billion dollar Indigenous economy.

Though leaps and bounds are being made, the socioeconomic indicators experienced by most Indigenous Canadians are below non-Indigenous Canadians. This growing population experiences an average income below the national poverty line, experiences an above-average unemployment rate, and still less than 10% of Indigenous youth go on to graduate from post-secondary with a degree (Statistics Canada, 2018).

Self-Employment as a Solution

One of the ways to move towards self-determination is through self-employment. More Indigenous Canadians are seeing self-employment as a way to increase economic well-being. Between 2001-2016, Indigenous self-employment rates have increased by 99.5% (Statistics Canada, 2016).

Though this number is positive, Indigenous self-employment still falls behind the non-Indigenous self-employment rate (Statistics Canada, 2017). Access to capital and perceived availability of fragmented supports are often cited as a barrier to self-employment (Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business, 2016). Though there are hundreds of millions of targeted funding supports for Indigenous economic development, many Indigenous entrepreneurs do not feel that they are able to access those supports.

To better move towards a hundred-billion dollar Indigenous economy, a review of Indigenous funding mechanisms must be completed to understand which areas are not having the desired impacts.

Frustrations of Funding Applications

Funding applications in Canada require extensive time, energy, and capacity. Often administered by teams in Ottawa, federal programs for Indigenous economic development have varying requirements, timelines, and applications that are required. These processes often propose rigid criteria and a "one-size fits all" approach, resulting in many small Indigenous communities being denied funding.

Indigenous Peoples are already under extreme pressure from government consultation, reconciliation, and economic expansion whilst striving to be good stewards of their lands and enhancing their social, community, and spiritual wellbeing. Therefore, applications that require significant time, energy, and capacity may often be rushed due to lack of resources and capacity, and then are subsequently denied.

With the right environment, support, and funding, Indigenous Peoples and the federal government can unlock the immense economic potential of small Indigenous, together and in partnership.

Conclusion

Participating in the INDIGI-X program and working alongside our Indigenous counterparts has reinforced the need for greater collaboration of our People on the many opportunities and challenges that we share. Although there are differences in the contexts and the stage of the journey that our Indigenous communities are currently at across Aotearoa, Fiji, and Canada, we all share the same history of colonization and a vision for the prosperity of our environments and our people. The below recommendations are the first steps to empower our Indigenous Peoples in key decision-making, and better outcomes for all.

Nothing About Us, Without Us.

Recommendations

7

Complete an assessment & adjust resourcing for all available funding pools. We recommend a third-party, external reviewer assesses all funding pools and resources allocated across government that aim to support Indigenous entrepreneurs and enterprises. The identification of overlaps, gaps, and inequitable distribution is key.

8

Commit to increasing participation in the existing programs. Given the outcomes of the above, make adjustments to the systems and processes accordingly. As a foundation, we expect the values of participation, partnership, transparency, mutual trust, and equitable outcomes to be key in this process. Nothing about us, without us.

9

Create a centralised platform for funding for Indigenous entrepreneurs, communities, and people. This brings together the two previous recommendations. First, we assess, then we adjust, and now we are tailoring it to best meet the needs of our audience. Establish a centralised, user-friendly platform as a one-stop shop. Individuals can see all applicable information, understand how to apply, what the full process looks like, and what it will involve.

10

Allocate designated supports to assist individuals in navigating the available resources. Someone dedicated to the vision and supporting the implementation. We have the tools (centralized platform), now we need support to translate "government speak", to navigate through the information, and to undertake the application process to lead to successful applications and tangible outcomes within Indigenous communities.

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Patricia Sayer

GROUP 3:

BUILDING UP, LOOKING OUT
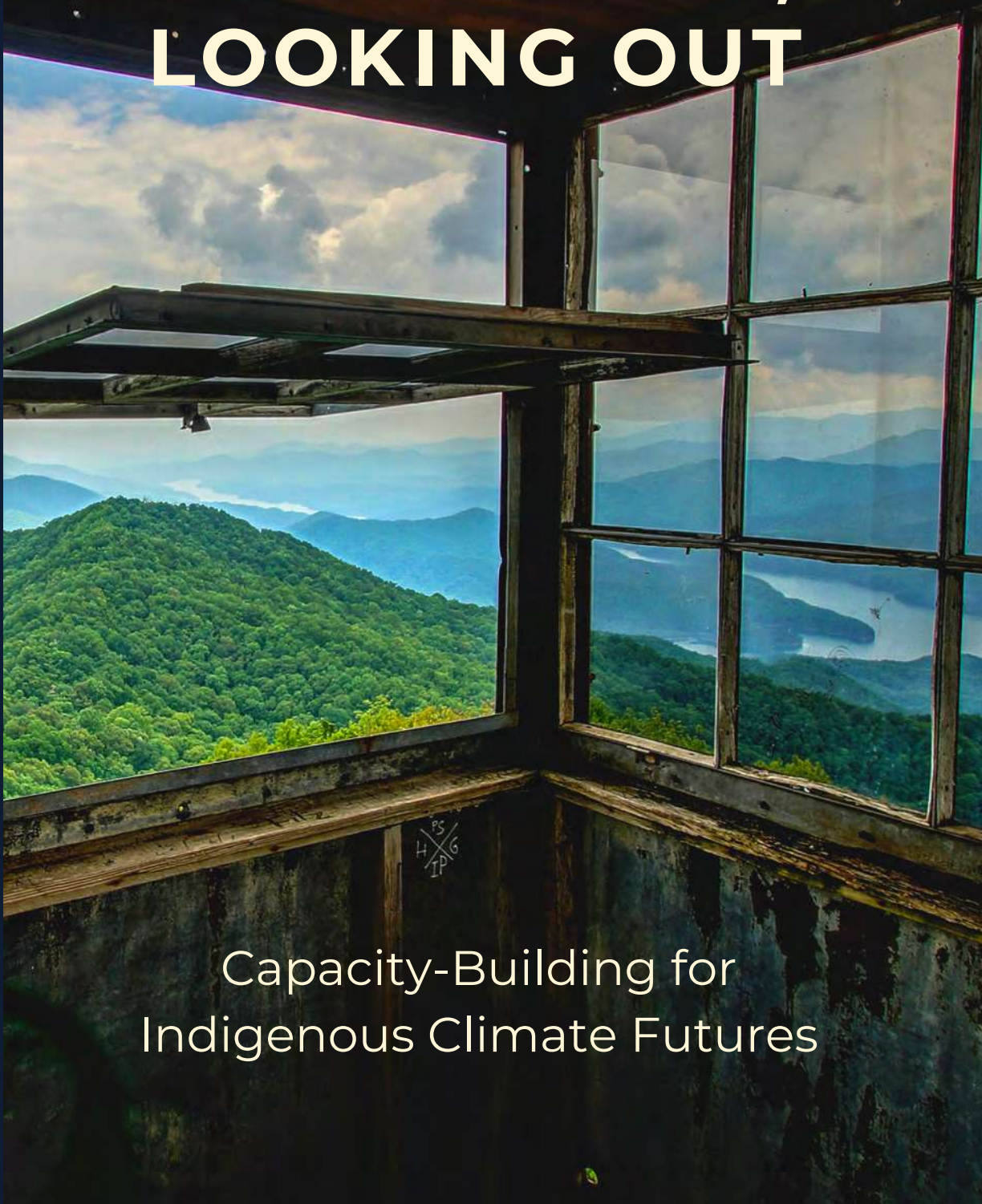
Capacity-Building for Indigenous Climate Futures

TE TOTO O TE TANGATA, HE KAI;
TE ORANGA O TE TANGATA;
HE WHENUA
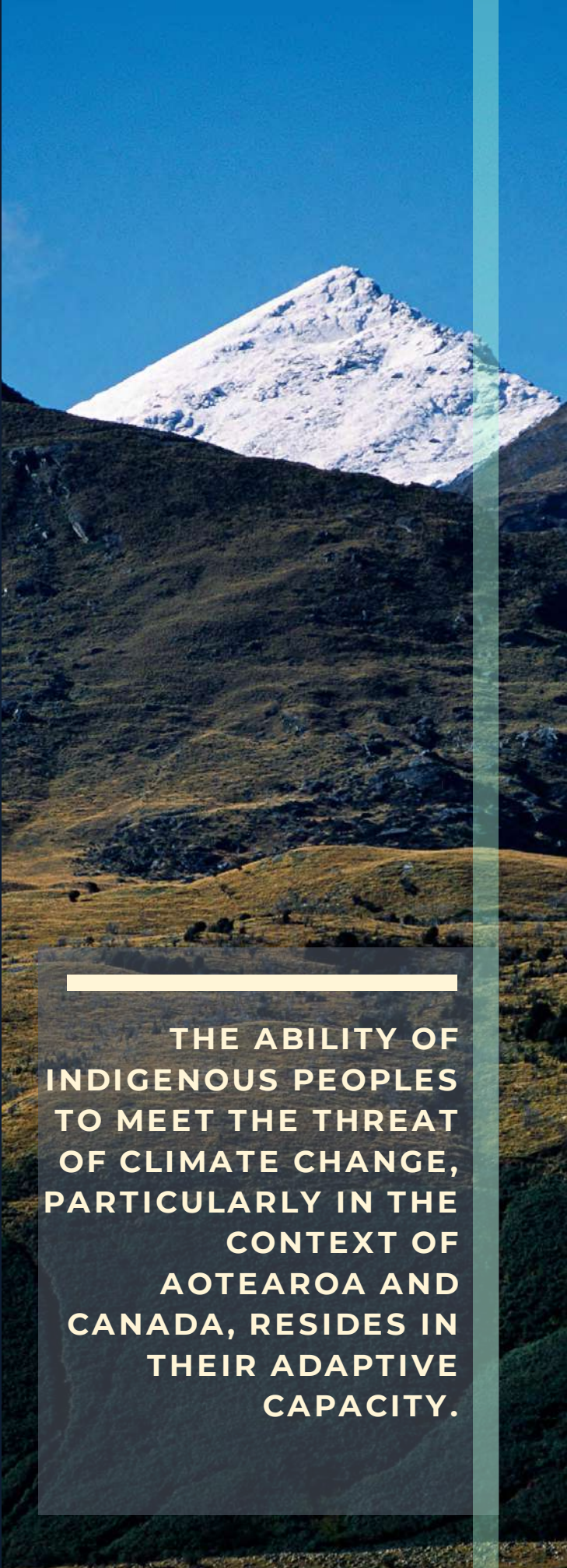
WHILE FOOD PROVIDES THE BLOOD IN OUR VEINS, OUR HEALTH IS DRAWN FROM THE LAND

Introduction

Climate change is a global crisis and a particular threat to Indigenous Peoples worldwide who are broadly connected to their respective natural environments. Research and analysis have concluded that climate change, currently and into the future, will have material negative impacts to Indigenous Peoples worldwide, culturally, environmentally, economically, and socially (United Nations, 2021).

Indigenous Peoples in Canada and Aotearoa are working towards addressing climate change in their respective domains; however, several communities do not currently have the ability to meet these challenges and opportunities. One of the ongoing effects of colonialism is that the adaptive capacity of Indigenous communities has been significantly eroded. Indigenous community vulnerability to climate impacts must be understood in this context.

THE ABILITY OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO MEET THE THREAT OF CLIMATE CHANGE, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF AOTEAROA AND CANADA, RESIDES IN THEIR ADAPTIVE CAPACITY.

Indigenous Adaptive Capacity Explained

In climate science, there are three key terms that help to determine the extent of climate change vulnerability: **exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity** (Babu, 2019). The relationship between the three terms, when combined, define the level of vulnerability an area or society has to climate change.

Indigenous Peoples have lived under systems of colonialism, defined as "control by one power over a dependent area or people," for over 500 years (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Colonialism has forced language, cultural values, religious beliefs, and legal systems upon Indigenous Peoples, removing their ability to self-govern and to maintain their own lands and resources. Built upon the unceded lands and resources of Indigenous Peoples, the rise of the industrialization, extractive industries, and the market economy have led to an increase in carbon-intensive global economies, which in turn has led us to the climate change crisis that we face today (White, 2017).

In this context, we can frame the climate change crisis as the persistence of colonialism. Drawing on the three key terms of climate science, exposure would be the contact between Indigenous communities and the respective colonial systems of rule for over 200 years. Therefore, sensitivity would be the resulting effects of those systems and would include:

- Underfunding of infrastructure, education, and programs;

- Attempted destruction of cultural, social, and community fabrics; and,

- Removal of stewardship rights and responsibilities over traditional land, territories, and resources.
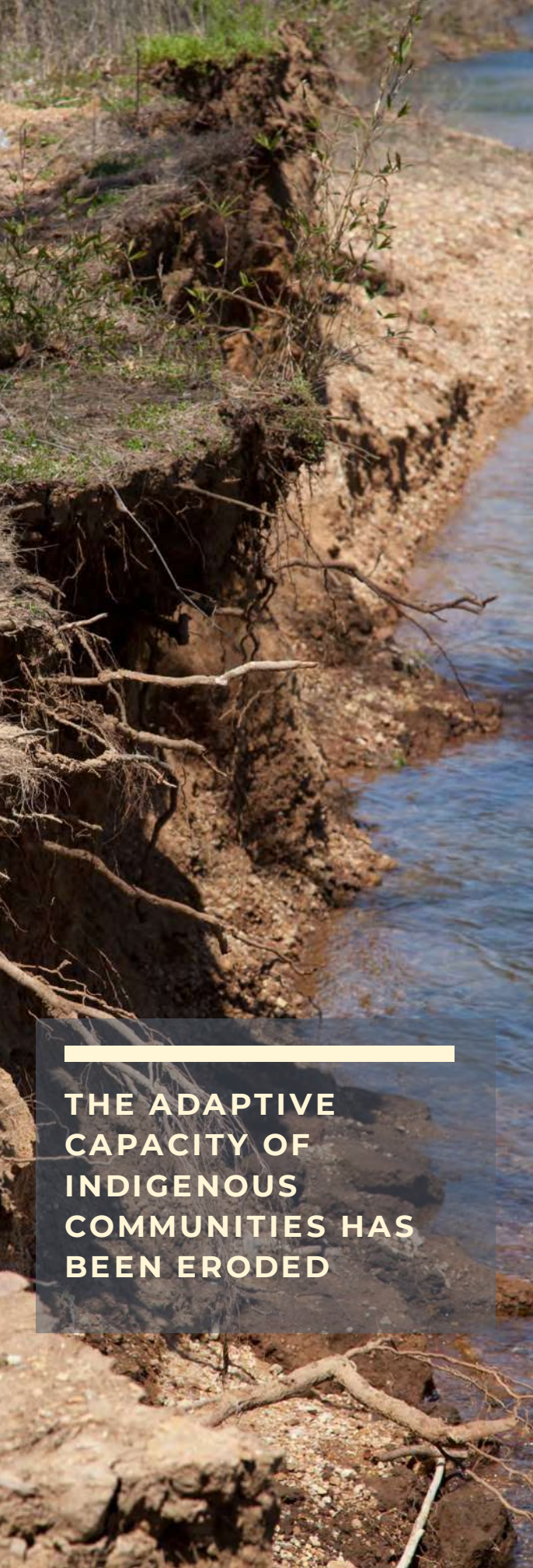
Key Components of Vulnerability - adapted from Glick and Edelson, 2011

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┌─────────────┐        ┌─────────────┐
│  Exposure   │        │ Sensitivity │
└─────────────┘        └─────────────┘
                              │
                              ▼
┌──────────────┐       ┌──────────────────┐
│Climate Impacts│      │ Adaptive Capacity │
└──────────────┘       └──────────────────┘
        │
        ▼
   ┌──────────────┐
   │ Vulnerability │
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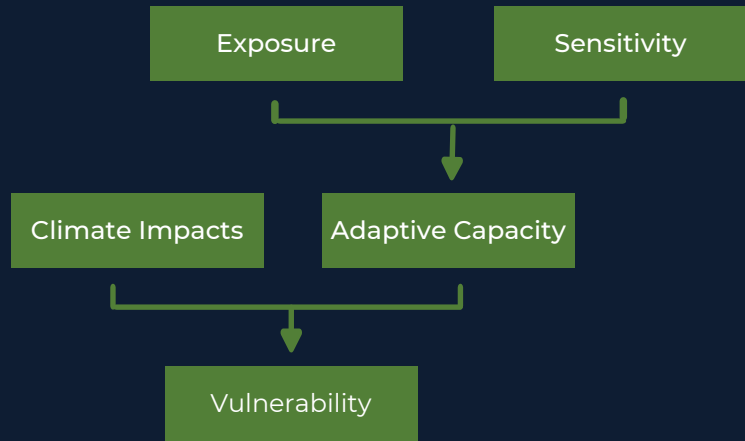
Rebuilding Indigenous adaptive capacity is a function of increasing access to financial, technical, educational, and community resources. If these deficits were addressed in a meaningful way, the increased capacity would allow Indigenous communities the ability to develop resilience and adapt to climate risks as self-determining Peoples.

The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, 2007) affirms a broad range of rights and freedoms, including the right to self-determination, culture and identity, and rights to the environment. Canada and Aotearoa's commitment to the implementation of UNDRIP principles can be used as drivers to rebuild the adaptive capacity of Indigenous Peoples.

Working with respective Indigenous leaders and communities, governments need to provide the tools, regulatory environment, and funding to support Indigenous Peoples to be self-determining in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

THE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES HAS BEEN ERODED

How Can We Improve the Adaptive Capacities of Indigenous Communities?

Within the context of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and Aotearoa, we have identified three spheres currently exhibiting low adaptive capacity that need to be improved:

1) Having a voice at international and national decision-making tables;

2) Improving community adaptation;

3) Developing energy economic opportunities.

We have braided some articles of UNDRIP into these three spheres: UNDRIP implementation will support all three spheres of action needed to support Indigenous community adaptive capacity-building.

Sphere 1 – Indigenous voices at the table to inform climate change agreements & policy

Adaptive capacity in this sphere is about having active Indigenous voices in all places where climate change decisions are being made. This includes international and national climate forums with Indigenous representatives leading and implementing relevant climate programs within international, national, and provincial settings.

Internationally, these forums are the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Convention of Parties (COP), which guides policymakers with climate projections, impacts and risks, as well as advancing adaptation and mitigation options.

The IPCC has identified that Indigenous populations are highly vulnerable to climate change and that Indigenous knowledge is important in combatting climate change. However, scholarly research has identified an institutional gap in the IPCC assessments, such that the voice of Indigenous Peoples is not captured in the IPCC assessment reports (Ford et al., 2011). It is essential that the voice of Indigenous Peoples resonates loudly in the upcoming 6th IPCC report, which will focus on risk assessment and adaptation responses, and provide a useful insight on key risk areas for all communities and their adaptive capacity (IPCC website).

New Zealand, Canadian, and Fijian governments must also examine their own contributions to international climate agreements to ensure that action is advanced in partnership with Indigenous Nations, both at the table during these discussions and afterwards.

National climate implementation must provide the necessary tools, regulatory environment, and funding to enable self-determining climate adaptation and mitigation implementation by Indigenous Peoples. In this context, the Indigenous voice is there, and this voice needs to be amplified, heard, and allowed to lead at the national level. Specifically, including Indigenous voices in the areas of representation and decision-making, job development, skill redeployment, financial incentives, and investment opportunities will enable Indigenous communities to build their capacity as they see fit. This is outlined in the submissions of Indigenous people to the recent He Pou a Rangi (Climate Change Commission) advice to government report (Charters et al., 2019).

There are outstanding examples of communities and collectives of Indigenous people filling the gaps left by the inaction of governments and industry in the climate challenge we globally face (Ford et al., 2011). These communities are not only responding, but also leading towards a future that can be sustained for the co-benefit of all. This demonstrates that Indigenous communities have an important role in shaping, creating, and delivering a positive future for themselves and for future generations. Many of these are built on the narratives, traditions, and values of the communities and their wider members. They speak of resilience, partnership, deep knowledge, wisdom, and the need to unite to thrive (Te Urunga o Kea).

Having Indigenous voices at all decision-making tables will ensure that these successes and models can be used to scale up an Indigenous-led response to climate change.

Sphere 2 – Indigenous communities' ability to assess and meet climate change challenges as self-determining governments

Adaptive capacity in this sphere is in relation to the local community capacity to address climate change challenges. The importance of adaptive capacity at the community level is imperative for several reasons:

- Climate challenges are felt at the local level - as placed-based communities, Indigenous Peoples are best situated to provide localized responses to climate change;

- Indigenous communities will be at the frontline of climate impacts, and without adaptive capacity to mitigate/adapt to the climate crisis, this will add another layer of trauma impacts to Indigenous communities;

- Indigenous Peoples have globally recognized rights as self-determining people and to the conservation and protection of the environment (IWGIA, 2021; UNDRIP, 2007);

- Research shows that 82% of worldwide biodiversity is contained in areas managed by Indigenous people and identifies that Indigenous Peoples are best placed to address the biodiversity challenges (IPBES, 2019).

The need for local responses to climate change by Indigenous Peoples in their traditional territories is crucial to ensuring that the appropriate, localized responses to climate change can be developed and implemented.

As noted in Sphere 1, there are strong examples of Indigenous success, including:

- Landscape scale restoration projects that are co-led, co-governed and co-delivered by Indigenous Peoples in their territories (Coastal First Nations, Taranaki Mounga);

- Responses to Civil Defense and Emergency management though the COVID-19 pandemic that provide a model for the capacity and resilience of Indigenous communities (Te Puni Koriri);

- Haida Gwaii co-governance arrangements that provide a model of co-governance practice over tribal areas in partnership with national and provincial governments (Haida Gwaii); and,

- Strategies produced by Indigenous communities based on their own narratives and worldviews that inform the approaches and priorities for their response to climate change and provide governments with a clear road map to support indigenous communities in their response and adaptive capacity challenges (Te Urunga o Kea).
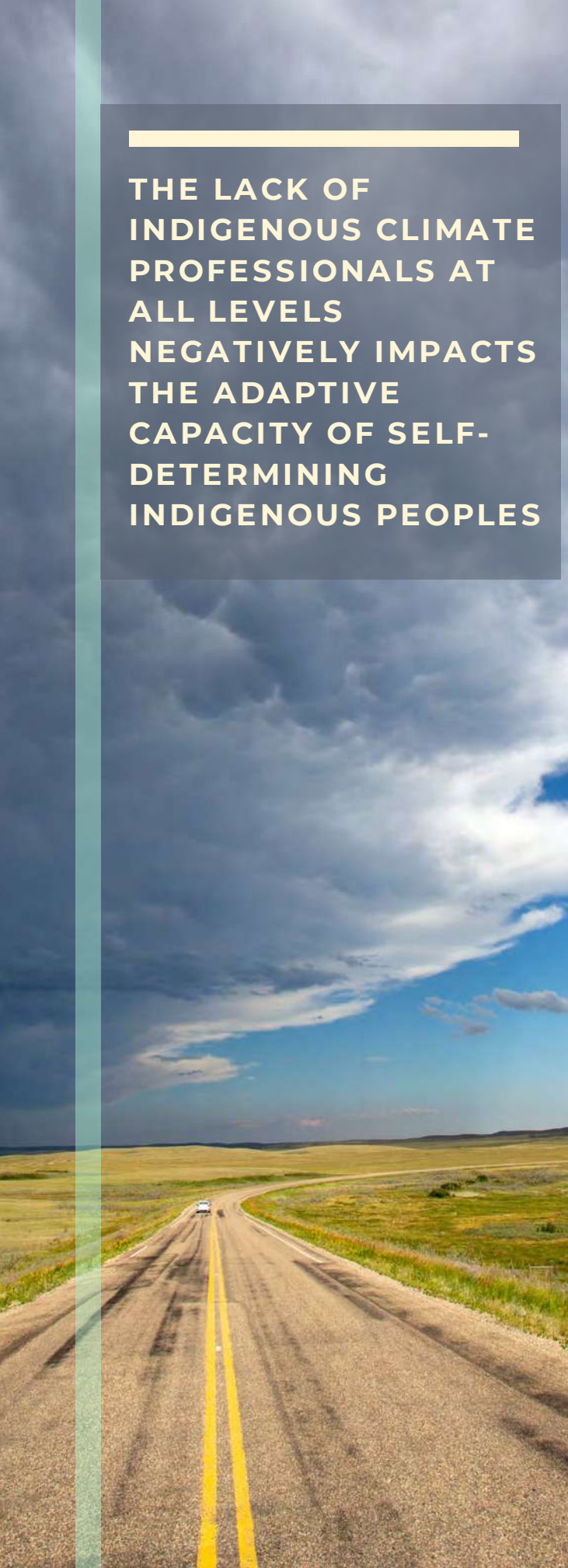
However, the ability of Indigenous communities to increase their adaptive capacity is not always straightforward. In the next section, we identify several challenges that contribute to the adaptive capacity of Indigenous Peoples of Canada and Aotearoa.

The first challenge is that Indigenous communities must navigate a maze of legislation, regulation & policy.

In Canada, at the federal level, there are at least eight different Acts to consider when it comes to climate and the environment (see Indian Act, 1985, and etc.). This does not include other orders of governments and their respective legislation and regulation. This is also a challenge in Aotearoa.

A multi-level, complex maze of regulatory frameworks creates a capacity challenge for communities to effectively and efficiently implement local adaptation strategies. It should be noted that this is happening concurrently in an everchanging legal environment of treaty-making and rights-based litigation, making the maze of legislation even more lengthy and complex.

THE LACK OF INDIGENOUS CLIMATE PROFESSIONALS AT ALL LEVELS NEGATIVELY IMPACTS THE ADAPTIVE CAPACITY OF SELF-DETERMINING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

The second challenge is the lack of qualified Indigenous climate professionals. A recent report by ECO Canada, an organization that does workforce research and training specifically for the environmental space, identified that there will be a shortage of environmental workers in the coming years (ECO Canada website). This translates to an even more acute shortage for Indigenous environmental professionals. While organizations like ECO Canada provide environmental training for Indigenous communities, the training is focused on entry-level positions. There is a need for skilled Indigenous professionals across the full spectrum of the environmental labour force.

For example, the tribal group or iwi, Te Urunga o Kea, recently published a climate change strategy to address climate challenges at the local level for this community in Aotearoa. While the strategy was developed and led by the group - supported by non-Māori, researchers, climate scientists, and funders. However, despite recognition through a Gold Standard from the Funding Research Office - it has not resulted in additional funding for implementation or research projects due to a lack of perceived capability.

The situation is similar in Canada. The lack of Indigenous climate professionals, at all levels, negatively impacts the adaptive capacity of self-determining Indigenous Peoples.

The final challenge is the inaccessibility of existing climate change funding programs. Existing government funding opportunities for climate change programs often have a low uptake from Indigenous communities. As an example, First Nations Adapt, a Canadian federal funding program, funded 168 projects for the fiscal year 2019/2020 (Government of Canada, 2021) of which only 18 were in British Columbia, which has the largest number of First Nations in Canada - 198 (British Columbia website). This demonstrates the low uptake for existing programs, which can be explained by the first two challenges mentioned above, and also by the context of colonialism that has eroded Indigenous capacity.

These challenges can be addressed by funding an Indigenous Climate Secretariat in Canada, increasing the number of Indigenous climate and environmental professionals in Aotearoa and Canada, and by fully implementing UNDRIP in both countries.

Sphere 3 – Energy economic opportunities

Rebuilding adaptive capacity in this sphere is in relation the economic opportunities associated with the coming energy transition.

To meet climate commitments associated with the Paris Agreement, and specifically the target of "net-zero" emissions by 2050, significant investments in new sources of energy will be needed by all governments (Paris Agreement, Government of Canada). In 2019, hydrocarbon-based energy (Oil, Natural Gas, and Coal) accounted for 75% of Canada's (Oil 35%, Natural Gas 35%, Coal 5%) and 58% of New Zealand's (Oil 32%, Natural Gas 19%, Coal 7%) energy production (IEA, 2019). The significant investment in electricity production, storage, and distribution that will occur over the decades to come presents a substantive opportunity for increased economic participation by Indigenous communities.

The energy sector is highly regulated, and government regulators have significant sway over the ownership, design, construction, and operation of energy infrastructure. Therefore, the Governments of Canada and Aotearoa could exercise their regulatory power to help address socio-economic issues within Indigenous communities using the long-term, stable revenues that are associated with commercial electricity production and distribution.

Specifically, we recommend that both governments set public targets for Indigenous equity ownership in all new commercial energy projects that are federally regulated; then following a normalization period (~5-years) where new expectations are communicated to the market, shift to a mandated level of Indigenous equity ownership where inclusion is implemented at the regulatory level. We suggest the following levels of Indigenous equity ownership in new energy projects that require regulatory approval based on the approximate percentage of people who are Indigenous in the respective counties:

- The Government of Canada to mandate a minimum of 5% Indigenous equity ownership in federally-regulated projects where new electricity generation, storage, transmission is proposed.

- The Government of Aotearoa to mandate a minimum of 15% for Indigenous equity ownership in federally regulated projects where new electricity generation, storage, transmission is proposed.

The recommended Government action to increase Indigenous equity ownership aligns with UNDRIP Article 4 (UNDRIP, 2007). Specifically, Indigenous equity ownership in the energy sector would significantly aid in the development of "ways and means for financing" that is needed for Indigenous communities to exercise self-determination.

A strategy of establishing a public target with a stated plan to mandate will drive companies and Crown corporations into innovative relationships with Indigenous business and communities, where ultimately new and significant own source revenue can be generated to address the many socio-economic issues that are present in both countries. Own source revenue is critical to ending poverty, addressing inequality, and ultimately moving away from a government-dependency model.

Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was respectively endorsed by Canada in 2016 and by Aotearoa in 2010. It is an important international instrument with which to guide and assist governments in living up to the commitments in Canada and New Zealand's founding constitutional documents and in doing so, meet minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and well-being of the Indigenous Peoples. Through an environmental lens, the articles in UNDRIP can provide higher protection and recognition of Indigenous voices, rights to self-government, environmental management, and reconciliation. Rather than an interpretive tool aimed at contextualizing customary rights, we support using UNDRIP as a vehicle for advancing strength and support in capacity-building.

National action plans have been identified internationally as an important mechanism for concrete actions improving outcomes for Indigenous Peoples. Canadian proposed law Bill C-15 (to harmonize Canadian laws with UNDRIP articles) discusses a national action plan and instructs Ministers to involve Indigenous Peoples in developing an action plan. In Aotearoa, a technical working group has been established to develop initial proposals of a national action plan. Aotearoa's position is that a national action plan for UNDRIP can provide a clearer narrative for their Indigenous rights journey and provides an opportunity to report on how the government is giving effect to the articles (New Zealand Parliament Debates, 2010).

Given the premature stages of both countries' tactics to develop national implementation plans, it is crucial to raise Indigenous climate discussions here and now so we can use UNDRIP to advance Indigenous rights to the environment and build effective measures into our national frameworks that will assist our Indigenous communities in combating the climate crisis. Our voices need to be included and heeded to in these national action plans.

The identified spheres of low adaptive capacity discussed earlier are all areas where there is clear alignment with UNDRIP articles. Ultimately, we strongly believe the following articles can act as functioning wheels to turn these spheres from low to high:

- Article 4: Indigenous Peoples, in exercising their right to self-determination, have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to their internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.

- Article 19: States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous Peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

- Article 25: Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

- Article 29: Indigenous Peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous Peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

In Sphere 1, including Indigenous voices at the table, articles 4 and 19 can assemble the legal framework for enhancing voices by aiming to establish local, regional, and national consultative partnerships and mechanisms towards environmental sustainability of Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories and resources.

Sphere 2 expanded on the ability of Indigenous communities to assess and meet climate change issues as self-determining governments. Article 19 stands as a pillar for advancing self-determination within Indigenous communities and partnerships with other nations or the Crown. Articles 25 and 29 enhances and protects our relationship (cultural duties and responsibilities) to the environment. These in turn, will provide greater support for Indigenous Peoples responding to climate change with their own initiatives.

Our discussion on Sphere 3 encompassed energy economic opportunities. As we have already looked at ways and means of financing our ways to exercise our autonomy in article 4, article 29 can be tailored to Indigenous equity ownership in the energy sector as part of productive capacity.

A note regarding the definitions contained in UNDRIP

The definition of "consent" must be ascertained by Indigenous communities, not government.

There is an incredible amount of work to be done to ensure that gaps in critical terms / definitions have been addressed; especially in relation to the term "consent." In some cases, the lack of clear agreement at the community level around how "consent" is defined poses a significant risk and potential further hindrance to Indigenous communities looking to grow their economies and address the substantive socio-economic issues that currently exist as a result of colonial practices.

To obtain such a definition, the full and proper engagement of community membership must be undertaken when definitions of such critical terms (and the associated processes) are developed.

This engagement work around "consent" presents an opportunity for governments to support early UNDRIP adoption work at the community level by providing capacity funding for these types of initiatives that begin to answer critical questions, such as:

- "How is consent defined by the community?"

- "For which decisions is consent required?", and,

- "How is consent modified or withdrawn should it be provided?"

Conclusion

Rebuilding adaptive capacity is key to protecting Indigenous communities from the impacts of climate change. The implementation of UNDRIP presents an opportunity for both Canada and New Zealand to deal with the challenges of climate change and support the prosperity of Indigenous communities.

Recommendations

11 Canadian and New Zealand governments to commit to **work with Indigenous Nations, Hapū and Iwi, to co-design and implement capacity-building frameworks to enable climate justice in adaptation and mitigation;** and, to articulate this commitment into respective UNDRIP implementation action plans.

12 Agree to and make financial and policy provisions to **prioritize the contribution of Indigenous voices from** Aotearoa, Canada, and Fiji **in upcoming and future IPCC processes and reports**.

13 I**mplement an Indigenous Climate Secretariat in Canada** to streamline climate change program and policies, and provide development, research, and support of Indigenous-led climate initiatives.

14 **Work with the Independent Working Group on Constitutional Transformation to progress the recommendations in the Matike Mai Aotearoa Report** in New Zealand.

15 Canadian and New Zealand governments to **institute policies and programs that promote and advance Indigenous Equity Ownership of new energy sources** and/or energy infrastructure that will used to address climate change.

16 **Appoint an Indigenous Working Group to advise on the expansion of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership**.

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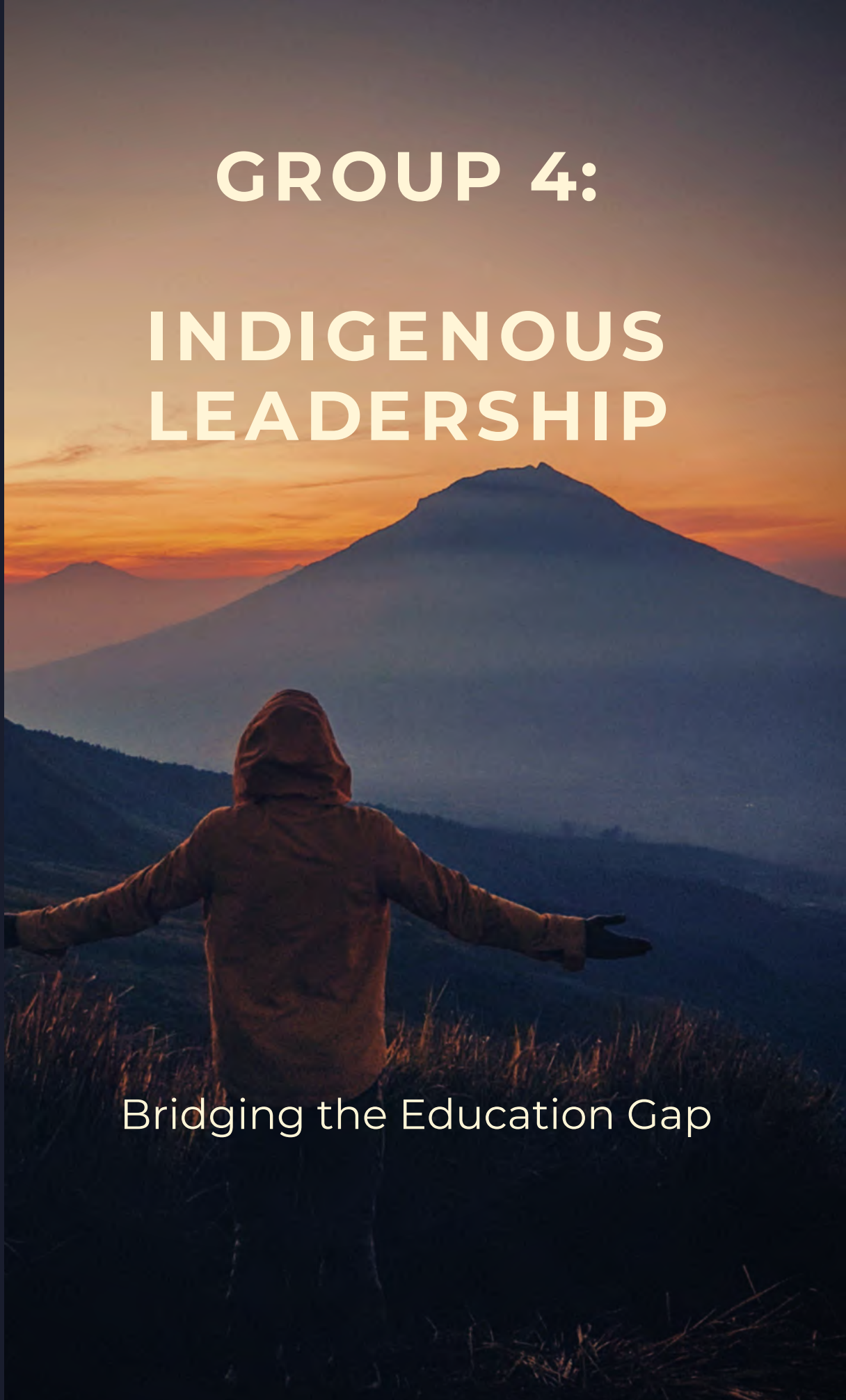# INDIGENOUS LEADERSHIP

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Bridging the Education Gap

Overview

Indigenous people are significantly underrepresented in leadership positions around the world. This is a significant and pressing issue, as the inclusion of Indigenous people within all levels of management directly contributes to their economic, political, and social conditions (United Nations, 2009a). Indigenous leaders worldwide are working hard to build bridges to address these gaps for their people, however, there is much work to be done.

As both Canada and New Zealand begin to distance themselves from their colonial histories, Indigenous voices must be included across all industries and in all levels of government. However, there is a common trend of separation or exclusion within educational systems for Indigenous students in both Canada and New Zealand, which adversely impacts their ability to prosper as leaders. Furthermore, the impacts of colonialism have meant that many of the unique Indigenous leadership traits of our people are at risk or have been lost.

This report is structured in two sections: The first addresses three of the educational gaps for Indigenous students and the supports required so that Indigenous leaders can be better represented at all levels in businesses and government.

The second section identifies an opportunity to investigate and illuminate the unique leadership traits that are distinct to Indigenous cultural groups in order to develop Indigenous leadership programs and ensure that these traits are well understood and encouraged for generations to come.

Exploring the Structural Gaps in the Mainstream Education System

"Education is what got us here,
and EDUCATION is what will get us out." -
Honorable Justice Murray Sinclair, 2016

We have identified three key issues common to both Canada and Aotearoa:

1. **Structural Inequalities in School Systems**

Indigenous children are more likely to arrive at school hungry, ill and tired, they are often bullied. Ethnic and cultural discrimination at schools are major obstacles to equal access to education, causing poor performance and higher dropout rates (United Nations, 2009b).

Current structural inequalities in educational systems in Canada and Aotearoa do not foster, recognize, or develop unique Indigenous cognitive diversity. This must be addressed for Indigenous people to be able to obtain the knowledge and skills they need to obtain leadership positions. Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy are valid and appropriate tools to use in any classroom.

Integrating Indigenous perspectives in curriculum will assist Indigenous students in developing a positive self-identity and will equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to participate more fully in the unique civic and cultural realities of their community.

To correct the biases in the education systems, they must be re-structured and curriculums re-written in order to truly accommodate Indigenous students and assist them in developing the skills they need to become leaders.

Co-Creation Models Work

Co-creation educational models are inclusive of Indigenous knowledge and ensure a balanced approach to learning for all students. They are developed in partnership with community members, Elders and educational institutions to deliver education in a culturally sensitive way that also upholds Indigenous knowledge and values (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001).

The key elements of a co-creation model include:

- Mentorship
- Decolonizing practices
- Structural changes to the educational system

Ensuring there is adequate representation and cultural safety through the use Indigenous co-creation frameworks will facilitate the opportunity for respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility in educational systems (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 2001).

2. Significant Barriers to Obtaining Higher Education

Indigenous people are often frustrated by the additional challenges they face in obtaining the formal qualifications required for positions of leadership. Many professional leadership roles require, at minimum, a bachelor's degree, often with a preference of successful applicants holding a master's degree and/or other professional certifications & designations.

A study conducted in Aotearoa illustrated that with a bachelor's degree, Māori could increase their income by 36% and their income increased by a further 52% with a postgraduate qualification (Green, 2020). However, there has recently been a decrease in Māori enrolment in universities by an average of 2.8% (Education Counts, 2021) and only 5% of academic staff in Aotearoa are Māori (McAllister et al., 2019). This decrease may ultimately result in future social and economic disadvantages if not remedied (Grant, 2018).

In Canada, there are also major barriers to obtaining higher education for Indigenous people. An estimated 29% of Indigenous children aged 18 and under live in poverty, while 51% of children living with one parent live in poverty (Statistics Canada, 2021). Furthermore, Indigenous people from isolated, rural communities may face additional challenges in accessing higher education, as they have to move from their homes to urban centres in order to attend higher learning institutions.

These findings highlight that ensuring access to a formal educational background is a foundation for Indigenous representation in corporate and government leadership positions. However, structural changes are needed to reduce barriers for Indigenous people to increase their enrolment in these institutions.

3. Little or No Mentorship and Wrap-Around Supports are Available for Indigenous Professionals

Once successful students graduate and transition to the career world, Indigenous professionals in leadership roles in non-profits, corporations, and government need mentorship to support them in their journey. However, many career pathways often do not offer culturally-specific supports to Indigenous people in their organizations.

In addition to higher education requirements, senior-level roles typically require many years of experience. For example, a recent 10-year study with over 17,000 C-suite executives found that, on average, it takes a CEO approximately 24 years to attain their position (Johnson Hess, 2018). Therefore, to ensure Indigenous people remain engaged long enough to climb the ranks, organizations must offer culturally-appropriate supports and mentorship programs so that Indigenous leaders are able to obtain the skills and experience they need to be change-makers.

Fostering Indigenous Leadership Traits in Future Leaders

It is a time-honoured belief among many Indigenous Peoples that each person is born with innate strengths that can assist in the overall betterment of the community (Kenny, 2012).

All organizations - both Indigenous and non - can be enhanced through utilisation of unique Indigenous leadership traits.

To illustrate, the table below presents a simplistic consideration of leadership style and setting relative to indigenous weighting.

Situational Leadership Scenarios

Mainstream setting. Mainstream leadership approach.	Mainstream setting. Indigenous leadership approach.
Indigenous setting. Mainstream leadership approach.	Indigenous setting. Indigenous leadership approach.

Source: Macredie, 2021

Whilst all of the four quadrants above warrant further examination, the proposed area of focus is the top right quadrant, which pertains to situations and opportunities where unique Indigenous cultural leadership strengths are used within mainstream workplaces, communities, and agencies.

Indigenous Leadership Traits are Advantageous

Unique leadership traits drawn from Indigenous culture, historic identity and heritage offer a distinct difference and competitive advantage. Development of these traits are advantageous to organizations and communities because they are more broadly founded than mainstream approaches.

These unique Indigenous leadership traits must be identified from the outset and programs built to develop these traits to assist Indigenous leaders (Macredie, 2021).

An Indigenous person who gains a mainstream qualification and then progresses through a mainstream career pathway may or may not develop, nor utilise the particular unique Indigenous leadership strengths they possess. Therefore, the development of their unique Indigenous leadership traits are completely left to chance deployment and development, thereby possibly resulting in unused potential.

Unique Indigenous leadership traits can be divided into many subcategories, all of which warrant attention as they offer an opportunity to empower Indigenous leaders and optimize organizations.

A detailed examination of these traits will enable the building of programs and pedagogy that delivers unique Indigenous leadership frameworks with certainty. And when these traits are embedded in organizations, we will ultimately see a diversifying and strengthening in organizational culture, processes, and outcomes (Ibid.). The potential for such programs to enhance the leadership capabilities of non-Indigenous leaders should also be noted (Ibid.).

Some initial detail as to how some of these unique Indigenous leadership traits may apply to leadership environments in modern mainstream contexts are outlined in the following table. It should be noted that this sample list is partial and is drawn only from the traditional Māori leadership paradigm only; variations and differences may apply when drawing from other Indigenous Nations.

Indigenous Leadership Trait, Capability or Concept	Explanation	Potential Applications in Mainstream Leadership Settings
Whanaungatanga Family, Tribe, Nationhood. Underpins all aspects of life and community	Larger groups of people form the primary basis for life and progress	The configuration and mobilisation of teams is enhanced by the Indigenous leader's ability to readily understand multiple personality types and generations, thereby configuring these aspects to optimize the intra-workings of teams
Te Ao Time Continuum Equity	The past present and future are equally weighted and valued into all aspects of life and thought	Problem definition / opportunity conversion is of a higher quality as the time lens considers three dimensions not one. Progress reviews are strengthened because, the three time dimensions are cross referenced to identify weakness in any particular singular time lens perspective
Pakiwaitara Traditional ancestral stories of challenges and achievements	A wide range of in-depth stories of ancestors feats and accomplishments is possessed across all individuals within a community	A wide range of information is deeply held and is available referencing from within the indigenous leaders psyche. This can both invigorate passion and charisma in the leadership expression. Increased inputs for all aspects of leadership thought and expression
Kawa - Tikanga Cultural structures that that endorse gender-specific attributes whilst maintaining gender equity	Explores specific feats and achievements within ancient and recent history where gender traits were significant factors	The ways in which gender traits and behaviours interrelate and compliment in the workplace may be more readily understood and optimised
Matakite Intuitive reasoning	The rapid absorption of multiple inputs and information sources. Subliminal analysis, and time-efficient extrapolation	Where quick decisions are needed, this type of thought is vital. Better opportunism and greater enhancement of left brain analytical function as right brain is embraced, equitable and active rather than suppressed

Source: Macredie, 2021

Indigenous Leadership Working Group (Ibid.)

There is an opportunity to assemble a working group, both at a national and international level, consisting of Indigenous Elders, leaders, professionals, and academics with the objective of:

1. Illuminating the leadership traits and capabilities that are unique to Indigenous cultural groups;

2. Investigating these traits using an appreciative enquiry framework;

3. Articulating specific leadership approaches sourced from Indigenous traditions and history (both ancient and contemporary), such as:

- Understanding the event in the historical context,
- Understanding the accomplishments of key individuals, groups and subgroups in the events,
- Understanding how the event influenced the evolution of leadership amongst Indigenous cultural groups,
- Exploring the leadership dynamics and traits for inclusion in the establishment of Indigenous leadership development programs.

Conclusion

Barriers for Indigenous leaders have existed since colonization and continue to be a challenge for Indigenous people in Canada and New Zealand today. To achieve equitable representation of Indigenous voices across all sectors, there is considerable work that needs to be done to support the learning paths of Indigenous leaders.

There are still significant faults in the contemporary mainstream education system, which must be corrected. Time and resources must be devoted to ensuring that these gaps are bridged in order to allow Indigenous people, communities, and nations to prosper. There are significant cross-border learnings that can assist in this process.

Furthermore, developing Indigenous leadership programs are critical for the empowerment of Indigenous people and essential to our Nation's recovery from the impacts of colonization. Resources must be devoted to understanding these unique leadership traits in detail and developing programming to support subsequent generations of Indigenous change-makers.

Recommendations

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Implement a bilateral task force to identify best practices and supports for Indigenous students. The task force consisting of delegates from Canada and New Zealand would be focused on supporting Indigenous higher learning in both countries and would work together complete a comprehensive study of the needs for Indigenous students to achieve successful in achieve success in their educational journey. The task force would be composed of representatives from Indigenous communities and organizations to discuss the problems on this specific issue, as well as relevant delegates from universities. Their work would be time-bound, outcome-focused, and shared with the governments and post-secondary institutions in both countries.

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Pilot a paid internship program for Indigenous professionals. An international internship program for Indigenous professionals would offer delegates the experience and global perspective they need to facilitate their leadership journey in their own communities. We recommend a pilot project of a paid internship program which would provide opportunities for Indigenous professionals to work alongside other Indigenous and non-Indigenous professionals at the senior and executive levels in non-profits, corporations and governments.

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Identify and present a research pathway to establish a unique Indigenous leadership traits framework and resulting leadership programs. Assemble a group of Indigenous Elders, leaders, professionals and educational research agencies from INDIGI-X's participating countries to build a staged research program that would feed into a global Indigenous leadership program pilot.

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CLOSING THOUGHTS

The issues this cohort explored are inherently complex, challenging, and constantly changing.

To begin to solve these will require additional effort, time, and resources. However, it is critical that the federal governments listen and take appropriate action.

What has become abundantly clear once again, is the value in connecting Indigenous professionals across borders. It is through these relationships, based on trust, reciprocity, and kindness, that Indigenous Peoples and their economies the opportunity to grow and prosper.

In closing, we offer a final recommendation to the governments to consider. This is not a time for delays and inaction - it is a perfect opportunity engage with an experienced, insightful group of professionals to begin to find solutions to these important issues at hand.

Engage with INDIGI-X alumni to review and implement recommendations. The previous two cohorts of INDIGI-X included more than 40 Indigenous professionals, all of whom have had their own experiences in overcoming challenges in their path to leadership. Engaging with this ever-growing group of professionals offers an opportunity for industry, government, and community to gain informed insights to the issues facing Indigenous Peoples today.

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