

Making Modern Treaties Work – LCAC
Breakout 1C: It's All Connected: Socioeconomic Outcomes & Wellbeing

Moderator: Daniel T'seleie, Self-Government Negotiator, K'asho Got'ine

PANELIST 1: Thierry Rodon, Research Chair in Northern Sustainable Development, Université Laval University:

- We are conducting a short research project developed with the Land Claims Agreements Coalition. Karen Bouchard will explain the research. Our goal is to measure the impact of a treaty. What does it do to have a treaty? Can we measure the difference that is created by self-governance and land claim agreements?
- One of our central questions is: What are the measures of success?
- Every community has different needs and not all treaties are equal. Are treaties helping? Suicide rates are not going down. However, there are other factors to consider: climate change, etc. What are the best indicators and measures of the impact of a treaty?

PANELIST 2: Karen Bouchard, PhD Candidate, Université Laval:

- We are creating a forthcoming public report on wellbeing measures to develop qualitative and quantitative data on wellbeing to better understand treaty implementation. It is agreed upon that wellbeing is a broad and multidimensional topic that describes a positive and sustainable state for groups and individuals to thrive.
- Quantitative methods include statistical data and indexes, such as the Human Development Index. Indexes are useful because they can cover long periods of time and make it easy to compare information. When working with indexes, the following questions are beneficial: What is a good indicator? Are all indicators equal?
- There are various challenges to data collection. For example, if census data is collected from a small group, is it feasible to develop estimates about everyone? Other things to consider include how frequently these tests are administered, as well as questions of self-identification amongst indigenous people. With administrative data, not all output data can measure outcomes. This data can be hard to access due to privacy acts and sensitive information. Experiences are not always captured by statistical data. Themes such as cultural vitality and relation to land are challenging to develop.
- Qualitative approach is rich, includes context, and involves interviews and discussions. However, it can be expensive and again, is hard to generalize.
- An important question to ask is: what is the use of the framework? Is it to measure wellbeing right now or over time? Are comparisons valuable between different pools of data? Many factors are to be considered: gender, age, residential areas, etc.
- There are a few interesting examples of wellbeing measurements outside of Canada.
 - o New Zealand has the 'Living Standards Framework', developed by the treasury, which is an integrated system with twelve domains of wellbeing.

- The Australian government has set out goals and identified a number of indicators by which they measure wellbeing, all of which are available online.
- Canada has some initiatives for the wellbeing of First Nations as well, such as the First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness.
- What is health and wellbeing? Self-determining individuals and communities are considered healthy. The UN states that health is a fluid concept and is not confined to remaining the same but is adapted and appropriated by communities. We aim to have a shared understanding of the holistic vision of health.
- Diversity and multiplicity: it is important to consistently embrace a vision for broad objectives and specific goals. We are seeking to find new ways to compile data in the best way. Harvard suggests mixing quantitative and qualitative methods. When thinking about treaties and treaty implementation, governments should not only think about community goals but the influences on peoples' lives.

PANELIST 3: Adam Perry, Data Analyst, Nisga'a Lisims Government:

- We have been collecting baseline data for Nisga'a Nation, using sampling methodology to look at the implementation issues around us.
- We have had great experiences presenting the data to the community and receiving feedback.
- For the Nisga'a Nation, the existing data was helpful. There were certain deficiencies, which we used to inform our research. We used all the data we could that would inform policies. It is worth it for Indigenous governments to invest in this research. They might spend \$200,000 conducting a survey and receive \$1 million in funding based on the results.
- Our questionnaire was similar to a long form census. It was ten pages long and based on themes in the Nisga'a Nation's existing Quality of Life Framework, which addresses the state of culture and language, family, health, etc. Our survey followed the hybrid approach; it was designed to get qualitative and quantitative data. There was also space to tell one's story and we conducted interviews that lasted over 3 hours.
- Our work is grounded in implementation from the self-government point of view. We went to every single house. We received a little lower response rate than we thought, but still quite a bit.
- Another benefit of our work is that we refined the Nisga'a's citizenship registry. We were striving for the gold standard of sampling methodology. We randomly selected and allowed for snowballing, talking to anyone who was interested. We received a 31% response rate to the survey. This survey was not law enforced, and perhaps should be next time.

PANELIST 4: Shannon West-Johnson, Research Assistant, Nisga'a Lisims Government:

- It was challenging to get people to take the survey going door to door.

PANELIST 3: Adam Perry:

- People on the ground are integral. One needs consistent staff that can weather the storm. The idea was to track changes over time, and conduct a household survey in between two censuses. Some questions were identical to the questions on the census. If Nisga'a wants to do this again, when thinking of replication and doing a longitudinal study, we will be considering what indicators are best.
- Part of this work is for us to be transparent. In more rural areas there was a good distribution of age cohorts and gender, but we struggled more in the urban context. This is where we got the non-response bias. We received many refusals, people saying that they don't have time and asking us why we were there.
- If we share where we are at, we can dispel myths that surveys from self-governments aren't valid because of the quality of data.
- In terms of whether we achieved reasonable representation I can confidently say that we are reasonably representative.
- If we were to do it again, it might be wise to better incentivize the survey. I'm really happy Nisga'a invested in this. If others are thinking of doing it, know that it requires dedication and a lot of work. It would be great to have the in-house capacity for this and not need to outsource it.
- We have a better understanding of the needs of the community. The information is so immediate and helps to inform policies and decision-makers of where the needs are.
- General takeaways included the necessity to have committed staff and to be transparent.

PANELIST 5: Duane Gastant' Aucoin, Yanyeyidi Executive Councillor, Chair, Language & Culture Oversight Committee Teslin Tlingit Council:

- It is a pleasure to be here. I am not a statistician. I'm a high school drop out in leadership. I am going to share Teslin's benefits of our Self-Government agreement and what's been holding us back.
- I saw Teslin transition from an Indian Act Band to a Self-Governing Nation in 1992. I've seen improvements in these past 25 years, but there is still a long way to go.
- A recent survey found that income of the Yukon First Nations is the highest of the First Nations in Canada, but is still below the income of non-First Nations in the Yukon, which is below the income of Canadians elsewhere.
- The goal of our elders was not to make things a little better, but to bring us up to equity. Instead, we get the Canadian government underfunding us in all departments.
- From day one, they haven't honored the agreement we signed. They still treat us like we're under the Indian Act even though we're self-governing.
- "In reality down on the ground, we're Indian Act 2.0." - Duane Gastant' Aucoin
- We are not where the elders who supported us envisioned we would be.
- The Liberal government is better than Harper, but they're just starving us a little slower. We still needed to take the Liberals to court for underfunding us. Canada is responsible for poverty in First Nations. No Nation can say that after signing self-government agreements everything has become rosy. The Canadian government keeps us in poverty because it makes it harder for us to say no when

- they want to exploit our resources. When Indigenous people need a roof over their heads, of course they're going to say yes when the government says they want to put in a pipeline. They force us to embrace industry.
- In Teslin, we're not against resource development, but it has to respect the environment. What good is it if we leave dirty air and water for future generations?
 - Elders say that we need to focus on language and culture. Residential schools took this away and replaced it with abuse. Our people have said that language and culture is our priority, and that it is the foundation our community needs to be built upon. We followed the direction of our elders and in 2017 we developed our Language and Culture Act and presented it to general council.
 - We are going to find all the answers in language and culture about social wellbeing, the economy and how to care for each other. Before contact, our communities weren't perfect, but they each had their own 'way'. We see so much turmoil in our families and communities because the harmony has been ruined.

Question:

1. **Moderator Daniel T'seleie:** Are there strategies that leadership can use to take this data information and turn it into positive change? How do we use it to assert our rights and exercise self-determination?

Adam Perry:

- Three things.
- 1) Know your *own* baseline data. It isn't always about comparison.
- 2) See the issues and ask for funding.
- 3) Have the community give feedback on your results. The community might be able to tell you, 'That's a good survey, but that's not the real issue. You're seeing that because x y and z'. We want to turn data into stories.

Duane Gastant' Aucoin:

- Data plays an invaluable role in determining how to help our people, but we cannot forget the data from traditional knowledge.
 - For the question of salmon in the Yukon, thousands of years of experiential knowledge was overlooked.
 - Data is important, but we can't forget traditional knowledge.
2. We have been able to utilize the data of Adam Perry and we are very grateful. We have advanced the needs for assisted living and are now taking care of our elders in a more respectful manner. The data was also used for a Language and Cultural Centre. We know that if we recognize our citizens' use of language and culture, it validates who they are and gives them self-esteem. Those that were sent to residential schools were not able to have that pride in who they were. One challenge is the small understanding of the need for data in measuring quality of life. Now that we have data, we can improve our government and gauge where there is work to be done.

3. Baseline data can help First Nations advocate or negotiate amendment in agreements. Duane, what is your experience with the discrepancy and negotiating revision amendments?

Duane Gastant' Aucoin:

- Here is where the government has their play. They said that the other Nations had already given what we had, so it all evens out.
- The figures really helped when we took them to court.

4. We don't just want to know the number of people not working and of kids not going to school, but why they aren't and what their issues are. We need that data in order to know how to address the issues and empower the people that need to be empowered. In our community, we are looking at ways to get housing. We're the smallest community and are left out of big decisions. Our goal is to be a distinct legal entity, to create businesses and be the First Nisga'a Nation that doesn't rely on government funding.

5. Do self-government and land claims agreements improve socio-economic wellbeing?

Adam Perry:

- I think this is more of an academic question.
- To definitively say yes or no is missing a lot of colonial history and context.
- It is a better use of time to fix the issues than to compare the different treaties, to compare the communities with and without treaties; these are very long agreements.
- Are things better? Of course they are. Indigenous communities can finally make their own decisions about where to spend their money and not need to be reaching out to the government all the time. The question isn't about making comparisons between before and after, it's about solving issues.

Thierry Rodon:

- It takes about 50 years for self-government agreements to show change. It is more important to have data that shows where we need to act, even after signing an agreement.

6. I will simply say that having a treaty for the Nisga'a Nation gave us hope. I am a direct descendent of someone who negotiated. When you are collecting your data and writing your policies, you need to get a little more engaged and understand who we are and why we have such a passion to be self-governing. Unfortunately, it takes Western style data collection to be able to verify and validate ourselves to institutions like the federal government. The news is covered with environmental tragedies. Our elders knew about this and told us. I couldn't help but respond to the types of questions that are being posed.

7. Can you give us some examples of what the hybrid of qualitative and quantitative data collection might look like and how it might be used in practice?

Karen Bouchard:

- A great number of initiatives are using it. I would be happy to share a draft of the report with you.

Adam Perry:

- Our questionnaire used the hybrid approach. For example, we asked questions about the water quality. There's a check box for water quality, but also room for notes, such as 'it's really bad and there's also a smell'. If we see patterns, we can summarize and present qualitative stories. We would say, '30% say bad water', and write down a few of the common words from the notes.

Karen Bouchard:

- Yes, the qualitative approach can be incorporated into the building of the questionnaire by leaving space for notes.