



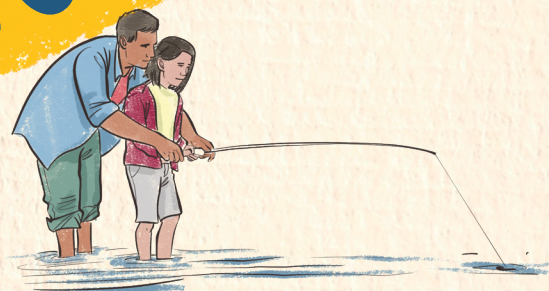
PATHWAYS TO THRIVING:



Indigenous Community Language Planning



WORKBOOK



Authors:

Onowa McIvor Whitinui & Kanen'tó:kon Hemlock

Purpose of this Workbook

This resource emerged from a 2-year project working with several Indigenous communities who were focusing on Community Language Planning. We created it for Indigenous Peoples looking to develop a community language plan to strengthen and protect their language.

You may be a community leader, language teacher, advocate or learner working at keeping your language vibrant. This workbook is a guide for creating a practical and straightforward language plan focused on your community needs.

We hope this workbook supports you to create an innovative and culturally grounded community language plan that is helpful towards your language revitalization efforts.



What makes a strong and useful Community Language Plan?

Many Indigenous communities have taken intentional actions to ensure that their languages and cultures are strengthened and nourished to thrive. Communities with well thought out and robust plans, paired with community capacity and support, have manifested radical change in language revitalization efforts for their collective wellbeing.

We have observed that many successful plans have strong emphasis on:

- Implementing promising practices to build a stronger capacity of speakers, teachers, and resources in the language
- Succession planning for long-term sustainability of revitalization efforts
- Aligning community policies and structures to support language revitalization (such as independent language authorities, independent administration, etc.)
- Increased protection, space, autonomy, and support of Indigenous language leadership and immersive language learning environments
- Addressing the specific language needs of your community
- Creation of new first language speakers
- Attending to wellness for the community and all those working in language

It is essential to development practical next steps for your language revitalization efforts. Your vision for the language will come to life when there are clear achievable goals. Creating language plans, with clear outcomes linked to strategic goals will propel you move forward in the work.

How to Create an Effective Community Language Plan

The following tips emerged from working with partner communities. We offer these as reflections to consider as you begin your community language planning journey.

- Start by scanning the landscape: What language work is already happening in your community?
- Take stock of the community's language revitalization history, motivations, challenges and achievements to-date.
- Consider the following when embarking on your strategic planning process:
 - profile of your community (i.e. urban, rural, remote)
 - number and proficiency of language speakers
 - your current stage in the language revitalization process
- Scan where the language "lives today" by mapping out community language initiatives and resources. Examples: language classes, recordings, immersion programs, traditional/ceremonial spaces, home-based immersion, resource materials.

- Examine “how the language lives” in these spaces. Allow for reflection and analysis of the different ways that language is being used in a variety of spaces. Gathering this information can guide the planning process to become clearer on what resources, language use, and spaces are available (and needed) for revitalization efforts.
- Identify who is working to keep the language alive and who is supporting them.
- It is essential to include as many voices and visions into the planning as possible, from elders to youth, to teachers and leaders.
- Gather supporters of the language and decide together what you want to accomplish.
- Consider what you need to continue progressing—is it: physical space, funding, more teachers, more speakers, greater community support...
- Collectively brainstorm culturally relevant teachings and metaphors to ground your language revitalization work.
- Many language movements have started with just one person, who drew others into their vision. That might be you!



GUIDING QUESTIONS

for Creating a Community Language Plan

What is Happening for Language
in Your Community?

Take time to reflect on what is happening in your community for language. You could create a list or a visual map to respond to the following questions.

What are the initiatives, activities and programs that are currently happening in your community?



Where does the language live in your community, and how does it live in that space?

Are there related language communities who are also doing language work? Don't forget to look further if you have closely related language communities to connect with.



WHO ARE THE HELPERS?

The best resources for the survival of your language are the people who are working to breathe life into it. This could be paid staff, volunteers, family members, speakers, learners, youth and certainly you! But also consider those who may not yet be helpers but have skills and knowledge that can support bringing the vision. Compile a list of community members who you could draw upon as helpers.

Who are the people that are helping keep the language alive?

Who are others who could help with strengthening the language in your community?

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

Having a focused plan will keep the work on track. Brainstorm and prioritize the goals you want to meet for the coming year and include clear benchmarks to ensure the work is progressing. Create your goals by reflecting on the following:

What do you want to do with the language? What are BIG 3 goals for this year? (If you have more than 3 it is okay to list them but remember we can't do everything all at once, so we challenge you to prioritize your top 3!)

What are your longer-term goals and dreams for the future (after this year)?

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU NEED?

Every community has different resources to draw on that can be utilized to revitalize language. Having created your 3 main goals, look to what is available, and what you will need to achieve these goals. Resources vary from written and recorded language material to space(s) and funding. Having a list of what is available and what is needed will help to meet your community language goals.

What resources are
available to implement,
support or improve on
your top 3 GOALS?

What else do you need to implement, support or improve on your top 3 GOALS?

Such as space, funding (if so, how much), etc.





WHAT IS GOING WELL?

Revitalizing language and culture for your community can be an empowering and inspirational journey. Take time to reflect and recognize the successes and progress that's been made in your community, whether big or small. Notice and acknowledge the powerful work happening around your community keeping your language and culture alive.

What is going well with language in your community?

What do you feel proud of or happy about in your own or your community's language work?



Sketch or doodle
your ideas here!

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

Once the language plan is implemented, it is important to consider if you are on track to meet your goals. This allows you to gauge progress and ensure effective allocation of resources.

Remember: plans are not stagnant. They are living documents that may evolve along the way. It is important to acknowledge that life happens and not meeting a goal on time does not mean failure. Ensure each goal is assigned a clear benchmark, designated person and specific time for follow up. State if the goal is: Completed/On-going/Needs Follow-up.

What are benchmarks for the language goals you have created?

How will you measure the benchmark?



CENTRE CULTURE



Ensure the language and culture remain interconnected to your language planning throughout the process. Cultural protocols and teachings provide guidance and strength in your work.

Put time aside for yourself to ensure a cultural foundation is grounding your work. Remember the spirit of the language lies within the culture and traditions of your people.

What cultural metaphor could represent language and culture revitalization in your community? (ex. canoeing – canoe represents the work; the paddlers are the teachers, speakers, community members; rough waters are challenges, etc.)

What are cultural teachings from your chosen metaphor(s) that can ground and guide your language revitalization work?

CREATE A WELLNESS PLAN

Openly including self-care in your language planning was emphasized as important by the communities we've worked with. Integrating a personal and community wellness plan in your language work recognizes the emotional and mental demands on those working in language revitalization. We strongly encourage you to include a formal wellness plan for yourself and all those working within your language movement. We urge you to build in regular and reoccurring wellness days and activities to check in your language workers and offer supports for their wellness.

Take care of yourselves, stay healthy and be good role models for those around you. Others will be attracted to the language by observing your way of being and your work.



We recommend reviewing the following resource for building a wellness plan for all of those working with the language.

 [languagewellbeing.net](https://www.languagewellbeing.net)

What would a wellness plan look like in your community for those working in language revitalization?



Sketch or doodle
your ideas here!

Conclusion

This workbook was designed to assist you to create an Indigenous community language plan. The insights that you have compiled highlight the areas of strength in your community and the future vision you aim to achieve in the continuance of your language and culture.

We hope that prompts were helpful in pushing your thinking on the possibilities that lay before you and your community. Revisit these questions from time to time, as the answers may change as your language plan progresses and evolves. You can answer these questions by yourself first, then with a group of community members who are also working to revitalize your language.

Enjoy the process and try not to get overwhelmed – remind yourself that the work will take time. There are many passionate people in your community who also want to see the language and culture survive. Draw on these people to support your plan to come to life.

Having a well thought out plan with clear goals, practical steps, specific resources, and committed community members are powerful tools in guiding your language work forward for your community and future generations.

We honour the work, knowledge and efforts you are doing to revitalize your language and culture. We are all rooting for you and look forward to witnessing your plans come to life – continuing your ways of life for the next seven generations.



YOUR NOTES



Office of the Commissioner of
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