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Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network | Réseau de connaissances des Autochtones en milieu urbain
Prairie Research Centre

RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

Prairie Research Centre

Name of Project:

Collaborative Processes and Co-Creation for Supporting Urban Movers in Transition

Research Start-up Summary and Abstract:

Collaborative Processes and Co-Creation for Supporting *Urban Movers* in Transition
Urbanization influences the transformation of Indigenous cultures around the world (King, Smith and Gracey, 2009). As of 2006, migration of Indigenous people in Canada changed significantly from half a century earlier; more than half of identified Indigenous people lived in cities, versus only 6.7% in 1951 (Norris, Clatworthy, and Peters, 2013). This migration has vast effects on *human development* and *social cohesion* of individuals and families moving away from traditional lands (Letkemann, 2004; Wilson and Peters, 2005; Norris, Clatworthy and Peters, 2013). To develop identity and a sense of community in the urban Aboriginal context, there are two needs; decolonization as a reaffirmation of the current identity of a person and/or group, and having resources available to support the emerging context of life so a person or group may become that to which they aspire (Andersen, 2013). The supports existing in cities are based on helping the urban mover adapt to urban society – in short, colonizing movers. Urban movers, however want to maintain their attachments to reserve communities; retain their Indigenous identity; and, participate in a similar community life to that on reserve (Ponting, 2005; Distasio, Sylvestre and Wall-Wieler, 2016). Identity maintenance needs support from Federations, Tribal Councils, non- profit organizations, and Band urban services offices in Saskatchewan.

Little research exists as to how and when urban services are accessed and whether these services and formats are effective. There is also a need for identifying ways to enhance social cohesion and identity maintenance for urban movers. Facilitating the connection between urban service programs, and formal and informal supports on reserves will augment wellbeing for urban movers. Funding applications are currently underway to help establish the level of access and the benefits of urban services from the client's perspectives (for example, the proposed Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 2016-2017

Urban Services Development Project at the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and Regina). While these projects are still developing, FSIN has urgent needs for capacity building, and baseline data on urban services programs.

Engagement objectives:

We seek to explore the access, effectiveness, potential for, and processes of collaboration among urban service providers for urban movers. Our proposal includes Indigenous methodologies and a co-created knowledge mobilization product that will be developed across interdisciplinary collaboration on campus, and with service providers themselves.

Three reports will be developed for the federation and service providers that align with the proposed journal articles as per below. These reports will be living documents that expand as reflection occurs and new insights are generated. The reports describe:

1. The case study and process of collaboration including successes and challenges.
2. The effectiveness of the video for sharing knowledge of urban movers' use of services.
3. The lessons learned for enhancing support services provided in urban areas, and how they can be developed to maintain and enhance identity and social cohesion.

Second, to share the results of the project with *policy makers and academics*, the PDF and graduate student(s) will present at a conference, and will publish three papers:

1. Describing the case study and process of collaboration (target journal: AlterNative)
2. Describing the effectiveness of the video for sharing knowledge of transition services (target journal: International Journal of Qualitative Methodologies)
3. The meta-level lessons on enhancing policy and processes for supporting identity and social cohesion for urban movers (target journal: Pimatisiwin)

Third, to share results with the *general public*, we will host an open house which will include a viewing of the video with an accompanying talk by agents from service providers. Using these three methods of knowledge mobilization we will be able to share the learning among urban movers and support agencies (government and non-government organizations), academics and other researchers, and the general public.

Methodology:

Using Indigenous methodologies, we will catalog perspectives on the gaps in policy and service delivery. We will also guide the creation of a collaborative project which involves co-analyzing the results of the study and co-creating the whiteboard animation video with other groups, such as urban Friendship Centers and Health Region Programs. The video will be co-designed to help clients autonomously navigate services while encouraging existing identity and social cohesion. We will map the process for moving this co-produced knowledge into the video. The process map will show service providers how they have worked together. We also test the effectiveness of a co-created product for sharing information about existing supports with urban movers. This project and the process involved in creating the video will provide lessons for improved collaboration among the

diverse service providers in the urban context and support a mutual goal of easing transitions to urban living while maintaining identity. Lessons learned in the process will support policy creation by and for Aboriginal people in urban areas and demonstrate a path to doing so. It will also offer evidence for which services are working effectively through Step 1; allow for meaningful consultation with Aboriginal service providers in all Steps, and promote capacity-building by providing an opportunity for collaboration and training of graduate students.

Main contact and Principal Investigators:

Project Team:

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