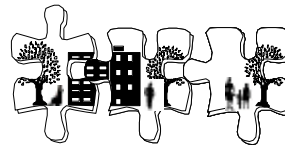




Phase I Final Report

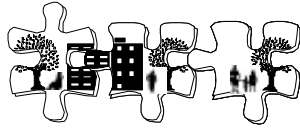
Written By Keely Ten Fingers, B.A.
Research and Policy Development Unit
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs



Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance

February 2005



Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada



This research was financially supported by the Winnipeg Inner City Research Alliance (WIRA) which is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). The Institute of Urban Studies provides administrative support for WIRA. The opinions of the authors found herein do not necessarily reflect those of WIRA, the funders or the Institute of Urban Studies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to say *Pidamayakiye* (“thank you” in Dakota) to the urban Dakota participants and *Mahseecho* (“thank you” in Dene) to the urban Dene participants for the knowledge and experiences they shared with me. Your love for your culture, your people, and your land, is inspiring. I hope that, in some way, this project allowed you to reconnect with your culture and with each other. Looking towards the future, I hope that you are able to reconnect with your home communities, and lead happy and successful lives in Winnipeg.

Pidamayakiye to Elder Calvin Pompana of the White Buffalo Society for allowing us to come to your sweat lodge ceremony. Your efforts in ensuring the Dakota culture continues into the future, especially, here in Winnipeg, are appreciated.

Mahseecho to Chief Charles Tom, Sayisi Dene First Nation, for sharing your story at the Feast of how Dene and Dakota people worked together long ago.

Miigwetch (“thank you” in Ojibway) to Grand Chief Dennis White Bird, Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC), and son Nolan, for attending the Feast. Your words of acknowledgement, encouragement, and commitment, were appreciated. Thank you to AMC for establishing the Research and Policy Development Unit to encourage equity-based original indigenous research as the basis for decision-making by the Chiefs and Councils, and for our partners.

Mahseecho to Jedrick Steven Thorassie, the Dene graphic artist that created the logo for this project. You were able to capture representations of both the Buffalo people (Dakota) and the Caribou People (Dene) in Winnipeg. Your talents, youth, and culture will carry you far.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Background of the Dakota and Dene Peoples in Manitoba	4
Dakota Nations of Manitoba	4
Dene Nations of Manitoba	6
First Nations People of Winnipeg	7
Project Rationale	7
Past and Current Quality of Life Indicators	8
<i>Gross Domestic Product</i>	8
<i>United Nations Human Development Index</i>	8
<i>American Developments</i>	8
<i>Canadian Developments</i>	9
<i>Conclusion</i>	10
Project Overview	10
Objective	10
Methodology	10
<i>Sample</i>	12
<i>Phase and Step Format</i>	13
<i>Discussion Format</i>	15
<i>Project Discussions and Developments</i>	15
Dakota Participant Group	17
(i) Expansion of Values	17
(ii) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Dakota QOL Indicators	19
(iii) Large Group Consensus of Dakota QOL Indicators	20
(iv) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Measurements of Dakota QOL indicators	20
(v) Large Group Consensus of Measurements of Dakota QOL Indicators	21
(vi) Compilation of Questionnaire and Pre-Test	21
Dene Participant Group	22
(i) Expansion of Values	22
(ii) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Dene QOL Indicators	24
(iii) Large Group Consensus of Dene QOL Indicators	25
(iv) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Measurements of Dene QOL Indicators	25
(v) Large Group Consensus of Measurements of Dene QOL Indicators	26
(vi) Compilation of Questionnaire and Pre-Test	26
Traditional Feast with All Participants	27
Findings	28
Urban Dakota	28
Urban Dene	29
Analysis	34
<i>Need for Separate and Distinct QOL Indicators</i>	34
<i>Well-Being and Cultural Connectedness</i>	36

<i>Observations of Usefulness for Policy and Program Development</i>	36
<i>Consideration of Methodology</i>	37
Evaluation	37
Urban Dakota	37
Urban Dene	39
Recommendations	40
Conclusion	40
References	42
Appendix A: Project Consent Form	43
Appendix B: “Draft One” Urban Dakota QOL Survey	45
Appendix C: “Draft One” Urban Dene QOL Survey	49
Appendix D: Project Evaluation Form	55

Executive Summary

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) Research and Policy Development (RPD) Unit applied to the Winnipeg Inner-City Research Alliance (WIRA) to examine the urban experience of two of the First Peoples in central Canada – the Dakota, the Buffalo People of the Prairies, and the Dene, the Caribou Hunters of the Barrenlands. WIRA funded Phase I of this project to engage Dakota and Dene people in identifying and developing meaningful and appropriate Quality of Life (QOL) Indicators that accurately tell our story and experience of life in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This development will be facilitated by both Indigenous and Western research methodologies.

This report documents activity undertaken in Phase I of two phases in the overall project. Phase I involves the preliminary identification of QOL indicators and development of each an urban Dakota and Dene QOL survey. These activities and developments involved engaging, in total, eleven Dakota and twelve Dene people living in Winnipeg in six discussions each over the course of sixteen weeks. These preliminary indicators demonstrate that the uniqueness of these two First Nations cultural groups have a profound impact on their perspectives of their quality of life.

Although this project did not explore the underlying reasons for differences in indicators and measures of indicators, the research participants' discussions clearly point to a combination of:

- (a) distance and displacement from their home territory;
- (b) the comparative cultural-historical trauma, and the consequent disruption of transmission of culture, which is central for both Dene and Dakota quality of life; and,
- (c) different experiences of political disconnection.

Phase II of this project will involve some participants of Phase I further developing and refining these QOL indicators and surveys with First Nations technicians, administering the resulting surveys, analyzing the data, and sharing results with decision-makers of all levels of government and First Nations governments.

This project is a response to the need to raise awareness of First Nations peoples' unique life experiences and perspectives, to develop tools to accurately assess First Nations well-being, and to use these tools to advocate and make meaningful changes to policies, programs, and services that affect First Nations peoples.

Phase I of the Urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Project found:

- Culture is an important and key theme of quality of life for Dakota and Dene living in Winnipeg.
- According to the preliminary Quality of Life indicators identified by Dakota participants in this project, Dakota people in Winnipeg are doing well, with the exception of sustaining and strengthening their culture in the city.
- According to the preliminary indicators identified by Dene participants in this project, Dene people in Winnipeg face many challenges and difficulties, including an overwhelming sense of disconnection and lack of sense of belonging. Much needs to be done to improve their situation.
- Both the Urban Dakota and Dene people turn to their own First Nations governments and institutions, and themselves, to improve their situations.
- Due to the unique cultures and cultural perspectives of Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg, it is important that separate and distinct Quality of Life indicators, and resulting surveys, must be respected and maintained.

This project demonstrated the vitality and sustainability of First Nations-developed research principles of ownership, access, control, and possession (OCAP) of research as the guiding principles of identification, data compilation, and assessment of urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators. It is recommended by the participants that this project continue into Phase II.

Background of the Dakota and Dene Peoples in Manitoba

Dakota Nations of Manitoba

Dakota/Lakota/Nakota people are often referred to as the *Tatanka Oyate*, or Buffalo People/Nation, because buffalo was a major source of physical and spiritual sustenance. As the buffalo knew no boundaries, the Dakota/Lakota/Nakota had a vast territory that expanded west to the Rockies, North into the tree line of central Manitoba, east to Niagara Falls, and south through present-day Nebraska. This movement is documented in both historic and archaeological records.

Two significant historical events are often cited as the reason for Dakota settlements in Manitoba. The first is the 1862 Minnesota Uprising.

Chief Big Eagle commented, "...the whites were always trying to make the Indians give up their way of life and live like white men...the Dakotas did not know how to do that, and did not want to..." (Laviolette, 132) This attempt to

assimilate Dakota/Lakota/Nakota, as well as other indigenous nations, included taking away their land base and confining them to reserves/reservations.

For instance, prior to the Minnesota Uprising, Dakota/Lakota/Nakota Territory was shrinking. The provisions of the 1851 Treaty of Ft. Laramie included 60 million acres in and around the Black Hills of present-day South Dakota, and into parts of North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and Nebraska. When gold was discovered in the Black Hills, and settlers breached the 1851 treaty boundaries, a second Ft. Laramie Treaty was signed in 1868, but just by a few Chiefs. It reduced the land base to 20 million acres. This treaty and its settlement remain controversial to this day for a number of reasons.

Dakota frustration with these events, the desire to protect and maintain their culture, land base, and way of life, and increased tensions fueled by starvation tactics by Indian Agents, led to a series of hostile exchanges referred to as the 1862 Minnesota Uprising. This event resulted in a number of Dakota seeking refuge in Canada.

The second historical event to have been a source of Dakota/Lakota influx into Canada is the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876. Dakota/Lakota joined forces with the Cheyenne against General Custer and his Seventh United States Cavalry, because of continued breaches of the Ft. Laramie treaties. Having decimated the General Custer and his men, Chief Sitting Bull of the Hunkpapas (Dakota) led his people across the “medicine line” (Canada-US border) to safety. This protective relation led to the Canadian government seeing Dakotas as refugees; therefore, the Crown did not sign a treaty with the Dakota. However, as the Buffalo People, the Dakota and other Siouian Nations have inherent rights in Canada.

Today, there are five Dakota Nations located in southwestern Manitoba, including Sioux Valley, Canupawakpa, Birdtail Sioux, Dakota Plains, and Dakota Tipi. These Dakota Nations are part of a larger Siouian Confederacy, which includes other Dakota and Lakota and Nakota Nations, who share the same culture and belief system, but have different language dialects.

The approximate total population of four of five of these Dakota Nations is 3604, with 58% living on Dakota reserves, 40% off-reserve, and 2% on other reserves (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, November 2004). Dakota Tipi disallows Statistics Canada (StatsCan), which is a major source of population data for INAC, to conduct surveys in its territory because of their dissatisfaction with StatsCan and others regarding their methodology. Their non-participation is an assertion of self-governance. Sioux Valley is the only First Nation in Manitoba to negotiate a governance agreement with Canada, with an Agreement in Principle signed in 2001.

Dene Nations of Manitoba

The Dene people are often referred to as the “Caribou People” because the caribou, like the buffalo for the Dakota, was their main source of sustenance. Since time immemorial they have lived on the land just west of the Hudson Bay, on land that straddles the border between present-day northern Manitoba and Northwest Territories (Bussidor et al., 1997).

Today there are two Dene Nation communities in northern Manitoba, Northlands Denesuline and Sayisi Dene. The total approximate Dene population in this region is 1580, with 70% of this population living on-reserve (Dene) and 30% living off-reserve. There is a higher proportion of Sayisi Dene (51%) living off-reserve than those from Northlands Denesuline (16%) (INAC, 2004).

In 1956, the Dene people of Duck Lake, now referred to as Sayisi Dene, were forced to begin relocation to Churchill (Bussidor, 1997). This relocation came about because the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) was closing down its post located closest to Duck Lake Band, and, “...even more important, their [Dene] traditional caribou hunt had become unacceptable to [Provincial] conservation officials” (Bussidor, 1997).

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada forced the relocation of Duck Lake people to Churchill without providing them with shelter, and no explanation as to why this was occurring. Amidst this, the Dene had a great concern that this place would not sustain all the people and future generations. In the next month, they were moved to either North River or Sand Island, both north of Churchill. Indian Affairs promised the Sayisi Dene materials for homes and food, but these shipments were either lost or were inadequate.

All in all, the poor planning by Indian Affairs in relocating an entire community...disturbed everyone terribly...Everyone felt displaced. The people couldn’t adapt to this strange way of living, ...they just drifted like lost souls. It took a few years for our people to start drinking.

Charlie Kithithee, Sayisi Dene (Bussidor, 1997)

Relocation occurred through 1966, when a final move, for some, to Dene Village occurred. This was located about five kilometres southeast of Churchill. However, the lack of preparation and commitment to provide adequate housing and opportunities for the Dene in this move occurred again. Also, the “spiritual and social decay” experienced in previous moves “moved with them [the Dene] to Dene Village” (Bussidor, 1997).

Ila Bussidor, former Chief of Sayisi Dene First Nation, wrote of this relocation era, “only ten short years before the establishment of the Dene village, the Sayisi

Dene had been an independent and self-reliant people...now they were broken” (Bussidor, 1997). The Sayisi Dene lived, survived, and thrived by hunting caribou and living according to their culture, on their land; however, due to the forced relocation, which was compounded by the residential school era, they experienced a rapid decline in culture and health, social, emotional, and mental well-being.

First Nations People of Winnipeg

Sixty percent of Manitoba’s population lives in Winnipeg (Statistics Canada, 2001). However, the proportion of First Nations people, including the proportion of Dakota and Dene people, is not known. There are data sources that project future populations of First Nations in Winnipeg. These projections indicate this city will become a favoured destination for First Nations people, which will have implications for education, health, jobs, and housing.

In 1991, the First Nations population in Winnipeg comprised 15.9% of the total First Nations population in Manitoba, and this is expected to rise to 33% by the year 2016 (Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, 1997). In analysis of demographics from 1998 through projections for 2008, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) predicts there will be increasing pressures for housing, employment, and other services required for people entering the labor force as First Nations enter into a new phase in the demographic cycle (INAC, 2000). According to the INAC 2000 survey, in 1998, First Nations people 19 years of age and under comprised 42% of the Manitoba First Nations population. By 2008, it is projected this number will decrease to approximately 39%. At this time, there will be an increase in the working age population (20 to 64 years of age) from 53% to 56% over this period. The median age for First Nations in 2008 is expected to be 26.6 years, compared to the rest of Canada at 35.9 years. Other reports support these projections (Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, 1997).

Project Rationale

Research on urban First Nations and other Aboriginal populations seek understanding of the overall experience of these groups as a generic population. For example, the *First Nations/Metis/Inuit Mobility Study* (Mobility Study) documents the mobility characteristics and services usage and needs of these populations in Winnipeg (Institute of Urban Studies (IUS), 2003). Most (90.7%) respondents of this study were First Nations. The primary reason for moving to Winnipeg was for family, employment, and education. This report also documented a high mobility rate of these populations, both within the city and back and forth to the home reserve, and a “disconnect” between many recent arrivals and the services they need (IUS, 2003). With an increasing population requiring services and opportunities, AMC proposed to utilize indigenous research methods to examine specific indigenous people’s experiences.

While it is important to understand urban First Nations mobility and utilization of services, it is also important to understand how these factors impact the quality of life of particular First Nations peoples. For instance, while the *Mobility Study* shed light on which services are accessed, and level of satisfaction with these services, it is not known how these services impact the quality of life of Dakota and Dene peoples. This project fills that knowledge gap, to give new understanding to decision-makers in municipal, provincial, and federal organizations and First Nations governments.

Past and Current Quality of Life Indicators

Quality of Life Indicators measure people's well-being, and are increasingly popular with decision-makers in producing report cards on progress. They typically have been defined in an economic sense, and more recently, in socio-cultural terms.

Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been the leading economic indicator for progress and growth, and the traditional way to measure well-being. In recent years, however, there has been growing recognition that GDP has many limitations, which require further work on indicators of well-being. A first limitation of GDP is that it does not capture and reflect non-market forces, such as health, social status and culture (Human Resources Development Canada, 1997). Secondly, the underlying assumption that an improvement in GDP will mark an improvement in social well-being belies the reality of increased poverty amidst increasing wealth of industrial nations.

United Nations Human Development Index

The United Nations (UN) developed the Human Development Index (HDI) to assess development of member countries. However, limitations of this Index are recognized by the UN and its Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (United Nations, 2004). The latter acknowledges the "indivisibility of culture and development", and accordingly, that socio-economic development should also be understood as "a means of achieving a satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence" (UNESCO, 2004). Other indices, for example, the Gender Empowerment Measure, have been developed to capture the broader reality of human development.

American Developments

In 1986, Marc Miringoff of Fordham University, New York, developed the Index of Social Health (ISH). An attempt at devising a single quantitative measure of social well-being, the ISH focuses on sixteen specific social issues, stratified by stages of life, and monitors them over time to determine if improvements have

been made or not. Data for these indicators was compiled for the years 1970 through 1996, and an aggregate ISH score was identified for each year. In turn, this score was measured against the GDP per capita for each year during that period. While the GDP and ISH were at similar levels for the initial few years under review, they diverged after 1974, with GDP increasing and ISH decreasing. The analysis concluded that neither the GDP nor the ISH is a good measure of social well-being.

Canadian Developments

Accordingly, in 1997, the Applied Research Branch and Statistics Canada replicated this index (ISH) in Canada, but with a couple of changes (HRDC, 1997). The Canadian version includes fifteen indicators compared to Fordham Institute's sixteen, with the exclusion of health insurance, as this is universal in Canada, and the change of "number of recipients of food stamps" (US) with "number of social welfare recipients" (Canada). The period under review was from 1970 to 1995. The Canadian version of the ISH moved in tandem with the GDP per capita until 1982, after which there was a widening gap through to 1995, with GDP rising and ISH declining. It is recognized that although this indicator fills a void in terms of offering social considerations of well-being, it also has its limitations similar to other single indicators.

In October 2000, Canadian Policy Research Networks undertook a number of dialogues across Canada towards developing a national set of quality of life indicators (Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2001). Their starting point was Canadian citizens. While this approach was adopted to obtain a more accurate account of what makes the lives of citizens good or bad, it is not known if First Nations people were involved in these discussions. There are strong indications that they were not. For example, in explaining the "priority themes" of "political rights and general values", treaty and inherent rights were not mentioned, and culture was not mentioned at all. Furthermore, in discussing the "next steps" of this work, it was suggested a "single generic model" be developed that would "by mandate link jurisdictions (such as community through city and province to a national perspective)". One obvious jurisdictional entity missing from this schema is that of First Nations.

Dan Beavon, Research and Analysis Directorate, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), has adapted the UN's HDI for application to First Nations populations in Canada using 1996 Census/Aboriginal Peoples Survey data (Aboriginal Strategies Conference, 2003). He indicated that this index would be applied to INAC programs and policies, and, in particular, to those that require a measure of First Nations "well-being". This federal practice is used despite major limitations of, and concerns with, this index as expressed by the UN and others. At a national Aboriginal Strategies Conference in 2003, Mr. Beavon was questioned about the possibility of further adapting this index to include culture and about collaboration with First Nations people in this endeavor. He responded

that no such dialogue or development would occur. This approach of excluding First Nations people is unacceptable and colonialistic, and will no doubt lead to ineffective and inappropriate policies and programs.

Conclusion

This review of developments-to-date demonstrates the need to broaden the scope of discussion and development of indicators of well-being and quality of life beyond economic and social measures to include culture, especially in the context of First Nations people. Implicit in this need is the engagement of First Nations people. The inclusion of culture and First Nations people in these discussions and developments will provide decision-makers with an accurate and meaningful tool with which to develop effective and appropriate policies, program, and services.

This project marks the beginning of a broadened discussion that will continue through time until the story and experience of First Nations can be accurately shared. This study proceeds with Indigenous and Western research methods to attempt to create and test First Nations-identified and First Nations–developed indicators of well-being and quality of life.

Project Overview

Objective

The objective of this project is to engage Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg in identifying and developing quality of life indicators, utilizing both Indigenous and Western research methodologies. This will occur through completing two phases. Phase I (completed December 2004) involves preliminary identification of urban Dakota and Dene quality of life indicators and preliminary development of associated surveys by participants. Phase II (Summer/Fall 2005) proposes to involve further development and refinement of these respective indicators and surveys, administering resulting surveys, analyzing data, and sharing results with decision-makers of all levels of government and First Nations governments. At the release of this report, there has been no formal confirmation of funding for Phase II.

Methodology

It was important in this project to utilize both indigenous and Western research methodologies. First Nations and other indigenous people recognize the significance and importance of using our own ways of locating and transmitting knowledge. These ways replace colonial research methods which establish and maintain dichotomies of superior/inferior and valued/not valued between Western researchers and First Nations peoples, cultures, and knowledge systems. In this project, Dakota and Dene participants are empowered to carry out their own

research through observance of Dakota and Dene cultural values and protocols of humility and respect, establishing a balance between researcher and participants and establishing recognition of the value of knowledge that each participant possesses.

To ensure this project met research ethics standards, an ethics review by the University of Winnipeg Research Ethics Board was required before the start of the project, and approval was obtained. Additionally, as a Lakota and indigenous researcher cognizant of many of the issues of research and First Nations people, I recognized the need to meet cultural expectations and protocols for locating knowledge, including the use of indigenous research methods.

One example of indigenous methods includes utilizing the Dakota and Dene languages. This was important to the project for a number of reasons. First, it was meant to heighten cultural pride and identity. Second, in getting participants to “speak” their languages, it was hoped, they would also “think” according to the cultural values and beliefs rooted in and transmitted through the languages. These two aspects together ensure that the unique cultural perspectives, beliefs, and perspectives of the participants are expressed.

Third, the use of traditional languages was meant to signify to participants that this project belongs to them, and they are not mere “research subjects”. The legacy of colonial, Western research has created dichotomies of inferior/superior and valued/not valued between Western researchers and methodologies and First Nations people and our ways of locating and transmitting knowledge. Accordingly, many First Nations people are reluctant to engage in research. Therefore, it was vital to demonstrate to the participants, as well as continually reassure them, that they, and the knowledge they share in the project, are valued.

Unfortunately, it was a challenge to get the participants to talk in their language. It was also difficult to get people from the participant groups, or their wider community, to facilitate (in the traditional language) and translate. Often times, when participants were asked to speak or think in their language, they would, but they would start with English and then translate to Dakota or Dene. The traditional language was not the starting point for most of the participants. Part of the reason was the participants recognized that the researcher was Lakota and not fluent in Dakota or Dene. The participants respected their connectedness of culture and experience with the researcher and did not wish to exclude her.

Another challenge with respect to language was that participant-speakers did not write the language, as with most indigenous North American languages, Dakota and Dene remain to this day, mostly oral languages.

Although language was not significantly utilized in this project, significant concepts were identified in these languages. For example, when Dakota

participant groups identified and discussed important cultural values, “tiospaye”, or the Dakota kinship system, was identified and its significance explained. Moreover, the level of cultural identity and knowledge possessed by the participants and the comfort they felt in expressing these findings still resulted in uniquely Dakota and Dene findings.

The Dakota and Dene were selected to engage in this project because they are the smallest populations of the First Nations peoples in Manitoba. This is significant for a couple of reasons. First, it makes the project more manageable, especially in terms of number of participants. Second, it was felt there was a need to engage these groups simply because their numbers are the minority. It is understood that the minority is sometimes not heard, and sometimes lack the opportunity to share their experience and have their concerns addressed. It was felt this project would be an opportunity for the Dakota and Dene to be heard and to work towards meeting their needs.

Sample

The populations engaged in this project were the Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg. Because there was not a listing of these populations, it was not appropriate to use probability sampling techniques, which would have provided each person within these populations an equal chance of being selected for participation. Therefore, quota sampling, a non-probability technique was used. This technique involves selection of participants on the basis of meeting certain characteristics, and the sample would be complete once all the required characteristics have been met. To get a diversity of perspectives and experiences, characteristics of this sample included considerations of gender, employment, age, and marital status. Accordingly, the initial sample was to include:

- 2 Elders – a male and female over 65 years of age.
- 2 Adults – a male and female over aged 31-64 years.
- 2 Youth – a male and female aged 15-30 years.
- 2 Social Assistance Recipients - male and female.
- 2 Professionals (or employed) – male and female.
- 2 Single Parents – male and female.
- 1 Married Couple.

After a month of advertising the project on NCI-FM, putting up posters throughout the city, mass emailing, and utilizing various community events newsletters, responses to participate were few. Due to time constraints, the criterion was expanded to the sole factor of just being Dakota or Dene living in Winnipeg. While this could have resulted in over-representation of one characteristic or another, it did not to the extent that it would have drastically affected the entire project. A total of eleven Dakota and twelve Dene people participated in the project. There was an almost equivalent amount of male and females in each

group. There were slightly more unemployed than employed in each group. There were not any married couples in either group.

Issues with this sample were that most Dakota participants had ties to Sioux Valley and most Dene participants had ties to Sayisi Dene. Additionally, most in both groups were related to each other. While these issues initially may look like a problem, they really are not for a couple of reasons. First, out of all Dakota and Dene Nations in Manitoba, both Sioux Valley and Sayisi Dene have the largest proportion of their citizens living off-reserve in comparison to their Dakota and Dene counterparts.

Second, while most of the participants were related to each other, a more diverse (i.e. from many different reserve communities) participant group would most likely result in the same amount, or slightly less, participants who are related to each other. This is due to the extended family system of First Nations peoples and cultures. For instance, second or third cousins in the mainstream concept of relations are just as close as first cousins, and first cousins are brothers and sisters in First Nations cultural concept of relations. The concept of *Mitakuye Oyasin* (“We are all related” in Lakota/Dakota/Nakota) is often used to describe this concept. In considering this, it is not significant, in terms of over-representation (i.e. of families), that most participants were related to each other, even though they did not discover this until later discussions. This last issue of not knowing one’s relatives was such a great concern of participants that it later translated into the importance of “family and friends” to their quality of life.

Phase and Step Format

At the outset, four major “steps” were identified in the overall development, implementation and utilization of Urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators:

- (1) identification and development of Indicators;
- (2) development of measures of indicators and draft survey;
- (3) finalizing and conducting survey and data analysis; and
- (4) knowledge transfer, especially to First Nations leadership, and municipal, provincial and federal government officials for policy, program, and service delivery development and/or changes.

“Step One” was explained as the step in which participants identify and develop meaningful indicators that tell how good or bad urban Dakota and Dene people are doing.

“Step Two” in this project was described as how we can measure those things that are important in making the lives of urban Dakota and Dene people good and to monitor those things that make their lives challenging or hard. This step would also involve developing and pre-testing a survey based on these things.

Preliminary findings and analysis would be done and shared with First Nations Leadership, and all levels of governments.

“Step Three” was explained as finalizing the indicators and survey, and conducting the survey on a sample of the total population of Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg. It was explained to the participants that, for instance, respondents would be asked questions like, “are you currently employed” to which the respondents would answer “yes” or “no”. The researcher then made up a number of “yes” and “no” responses, and explained that if this question was asked at one point in time, and compared to answers to the same question in future surveys with the same respondents, we would be able to tell if this element of the life situation of respondents (urban Dakota and Dene) is improving or not.

Continued participation of key urban Dakota and Dene participants will complete this step. Participants will work with experienced and knowledgeable First Nations people in further developing the indicators and resulting survey, and conducting and analyzing surveys.

“Step Four” of this process entails sharing results with decision-makers, including First Nations leaders and other civic, provincial, and federal government officials, technicians, and service providers to tell the story of the lives of urban Dakota and Dene people.

The following table outlines the two phases and four steps involved in completion of this project.

PHASE I		
	Step 1: Identification & Development of Urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators.	August – December 2004
	Step 2: Identification of Measurements of QOL & Survey Development	
PHASE II		
	Step 3: Survey Finalization, Conduct Survey, & Analyze Results	Spring 2005
	Step 4: Share Findings with First Nations Leaders and officials from all levels of governments.	Summer-Fall 2005

This particular phase, Phase I, of the overall project involves steps one and two, with each group working independently of each other, and then coming together at the end of step two of the project for the feast.

Discussion Format

As meetings continued with these two first steps, an evolving series of activities that led to the development of “draft one” of both urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators. These activities include:

- Introduction and Overview of Project, and Identification and Discussion of Dakota and Dene Values
- Expansion of Values
- Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Dakota and Dene QOL Indicators
- Large Group Consensus of QOL Indicators
- Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Measurements of QOL Indicators
- Large Group Consensus of Measurements of QOL Indicators
- Compilation of Questionnaire and Pre-Test
- Traditional Feast with Both Dakota and Dene Participants

It was decided that the discussion formats of participant identification and development of indicators be much like “visiting” and “appreciative inquiry”. Both of these are rooted in indigenous ways of locating and sharing knowledge. The former is defined by WUNSKA, The National Aboriginal Social Work and Social Services Education Network, as “a semi-structured interview process whereby semi-structured, open-ended questions are asked.”

The latter approach, “appreciative inquiry”, has been utilized by the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) in their work with the Ojibway people of Skownan First Nation in Manitoba. This method is described as “empowering local people in building a shared vision based on community strengths” (IISD, 2001). It was inspired by traditional Lakota visiting, focusing on essentials.

These discussions as “visiting” resonated with the participants. They often said, “we Dakota/Dene need to keep on getting together like this”, or, “after this is over, we should keep this going and set up a Dakota/Dene social group”. During breaks, people would update each other about mutual Dakota/Dene friends or family members, and recent events in home (First Nations) communities.

Project Discussions and Developments

“Activity (i) Introduction and Overview of Project, and Identification and Discussion of Dakota and Dene Values” took place in a similar fashion and amount of time between the two groups. Initial meetings of the Dakota occurred on August 31st and September 15th, while the Dene met for the first time on September 23, followed by a meeting on October 26th.

Before commencing discussion meetings, consent forms were reviewed and signed. (See *Appendix A: Project Consent Form*) There were no refusals. Introductions were made, including what reserve community or band they were a member of. This manner of identification sparked conversations about who was related to whom. Participants stated they felt good about making these connections, because they bring about feelings of recognition and acceptance, which is something that does not happen as much any more, both as time has gone on, and because of limited opportunity in the city.

Introductions were followed by a project overview provided by the researcher. Flip charts were useful in explaining the project, as participants responded well to something they could see. I asked the participants what was important in making their lives good. Both groups responded that “employment” was important. Using this example as an indicator, I walked the participants, both visually and verbally, through the overall process of this development. I stated that “step one” would entail just what we did in taking the example of “employment” – identifying what makes the lives of urban Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg good or bad.

“Step two” would involve discussion how we can measure “employment”, or what kind of questions could we ask to find out how urban Dakota and Dene people are doing with respect to “employment”, and develop a survey based on those questions, and pre-test it to determine if it gives us the information we want.

The next step, “step three”, would involve getting a sample, or a certain amount of Dakota and Dene people that would be an acceptable representation of the whole population, and survey them. Analysis of the answers and data resulting from this survey would occur, and hence, we would have a good idea about how all Dakota and Dene people in Winnipeg are doing with respect to employment.

“Step four” would be to share these findings with First Nations leaders and officials from all levels of government in hopes of impacting policy and program development and service delivery in a positive way that would improve the lives of urban Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg.

The overall project was also explained as an opportunity for these two First Nations cultural groups to tell their own story about how they see and experience the life in Winnipeg from their own cultural perspective. This was more understandable for the participants.

As the researcher, my cultural identity and affiliation impacted the project in two identifiable ways- the ability to gain trust of the participants and the scope of knowledge they shared with me. Being a Lakota almost instantly gave me credibility and won me trust with the Dakota group. This was not a surprise to me, because we are the same people with the same values and beliefs, and only speak different dialects.

Alternatively, the Dene group challenged me a bit more and questioned why I chose to work with them, what my motivations were. First, I explained that my position as a Lakota gave me the perspective of being of a minority First Nations cultural group in Manitoba, like the Dene people. Second, I acknowledged that no Dene person was on staff at the organization I work for. This was an initial and continued concern of the Dene participants that I felt would affect my ability to gain their trust. Therefore, there was a need to acknowledge this concern immediately and in an honest way. Third, I also let them know that I knew little of their culture and history. I did share what I knew about Dene people, which included acknowledgement of their resilience in surviving the enormous historical trauma of relocation, and that I knew of their connection/relation to the Dine (Navajo) people in southwestern United States. As the findings of this project will illustrate, Dene recognition is very important to this group.

Therefore, while it was important to demonstrate how the work generated from this project was going to be used and how it would benefit the participants, the Dene group required more constant assurance. This seemed an important point in not only keeping the attention of all participants, but also in getting them to come back for every meeting.

It was anticipated that time would be needed for participants to gain understanding of what this project was about, as “quality of life indicators” is, for many, a foreign term. Accordingly, the first two meetings of each of the groups focused on bringing more clarification to this concept and its potential and relevancy for these two groups.

After it appeared the participants were clear about the purpose and use of the project, we proceeded to activity (ii) of the project – discussions focused on cultural values of each group and proceeded through the last activity. The unfolding developments of each group will be presented in turn.

Dakota Participant Group

(i) Expansion of Values

In the early activities of the group discussions, clearly, my cultural identity and affiliation impacted the project as to the scope of cultural knowledge that was shared with me by each group. The Dakota group did not engage in a substantial discussion on Dakota culture and values because they thought, as a Lakota person, I already knew the culture, and so, they did not feel they had to say much. I was recognized as and accepted as understanding past history and our culture. In comparison, my lack of cultural knowledge for the Dene resulted in comparatively more comprehensive and descriptive account of Dene history and culture. Discussion on Dakota cultural values took place during September 15th and October 13th meetings.

The participants stated that to be Dakota means to have a unique language and value system. The Dakota language creates a sense of identity (i.e. knowing where you come from) and belonging (i.e. knowing who your relatives are). The importance of knowing who you are related to comes from the value that Dakota people place on kinship, embodied in the concept of *tiospaye* (extended family). This system brings relations in the extended family closer together, creating a wide network of protectors and providers. For instance, a child's mother's sisters are that child's mothers also. This is why Dakota people, as well as other First Nations, ask who your parents are. With this information, they are able to make a connection with and to you. The older participants stated only a couple of generations back everyone used to know who they were related to, but now this has changed. People do not readily know who they are related to anymore. The impact of the residential school era and reserve-urban mobility were given as some of the reasons for this change.

One participant stated she did not really feel she knew what it means to be Dakota. I responded that there must be a part of her that feels and believes she is Dakota, otherwise she would not have responded to the call for Dakota participants in the project. A youth participant stated he did not feel different as a Dakota person, adding that he was of Dakota and Cree descent.

Traditional Dakota values that were identified in initial discussions included respect, honesty, generosity, and trust. Participants identified barriers to living these values. One barrier identified is crime, which "makes it hard to trust." This led to another barrier, cultural differences. For example, if a Dakota person extended this value of trust towards a person who did not share this cultural value, the Dakota person is in a vulnerable position and can be taken advantage of. Not surprising, one participant stated the difficulty in maintaining traditional cultural values was that urban Dakota are not always in contact with other Dakota. Thus, there is a sense that Dakota values can only be extended to other Dakota and practiced in the company of other Dakota. The media and/or popular culture is another barrier to living cultural values and identity, especially in the case of Dakota youth. It was stated the attitudes and behaviors portrayed in music videos and sung about in rap music replace Dakota values. Rap music and videos are often criticized for its violence and for demeaning women. This is contrary to traditional Dakota values of living in harmony and viewing women as sacred.

On October 13th, the Dakota group began identifying indicators regarding what makes life good or bad for Dakota people living in Winnipeg, while also continuing discussions on cultural values. These discussions were less structured than subsequent discussions, because they were an attempt to ease participants into the concept of quality of life while also respecting indigenous ways of locating and transmitting knowledge, namely, through this indigenous methodology of "visiting".

Dakota participants continued to expand on cultural values, again identifying the “extended family”, a sense of “belonging”, “cultural identity and recognition”, and culture, in general, as important in making life good. All of these things are interconnected. Their decision to participate in this project was because it was an opportunity to meet other Dakota living in the City. They expressed that they always felt there was something missing in their daily lives because they did not get to meet with other Dakota and speak the language.

One participant shared that she was raised by foster parents, but was taught her birth family tree, which “made me feel like I knew where I belong”. Unfortunately, participants commented that this knowledge is not passed on as much anymore. It is slipping away as people move to urban or other areas. Instead of seeking relatives, younger generations are warned about who to “watch out for”.

(ii) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Dakota QOL Indicators

By the end of the October 13th discussion, Dakota participants were organized into small groups of two or three to identify preliminary QOL indicators. The use of small groups was an attempt to ease participants’ comfort in speaking. It was also an attempt to ensure everyone contributed to the discussions, because when we discussed things in the larger group, it was usually only a few who would do all the talking, and they were usually older.

There were two questions posed to these smaller groups. The first was, “identify five things that are important to you in making your life good living as a Dakota living in Winnipeg, and explain why or how they make life good or bad”. Participants were given about a half of an hour to discuss this, and then each group shared responses:

- “Having a job.
- Having an education.
- Having good relations with family and friends.
- Having support from my family and friends.
- Knowing my culture.
- Having cultural pride.
- Having my culture recognized and respected.
- Engaging in cultural activities.
- Having a suitable and affordable home in a safe and friendly neighborhood.”

The second question was, “identify five things that make life hard or challenging for you as a Dakota living in Winnipeg, and explain who or how these things make life hard or challenging.” Responses included:

- “Difficulty in finding suitable and affordable housing that can accommodate all of my needs.
- A lack of cultural activities, especially, Dakota-specific activities.
- Negative social situations, especially, alcohol and drugs.
- Lack of employment.
- Difficulty if finding employment.
- Prejudice and stereotypes of other people.”

Some explanations of these choices are as follows:

- “Cultural activities are important because they give people a sense of identity, belonging and pride.”
- “Education gives you a say in your future, or what you would like to be.”
- “A job helps you to take better care of yourself, and feel good about being able to pay your bills.”
- “Family makes your life complete, and makes you a stronger individual.”
- “Stereotypical attitudes result in lowering the self-esteem of an individual.”
- “Being in this room surrounded by all these wonderful Dakota people makes my life good!”

(iii) Large Group Consensus of Dakota QOL Indicators

On October 27th, the Dakota group had identified themes for their quality of indicators by consensus including:

- Family and Friends
- Education and Training
- Living Situations and Experiences
- Dakota Culture
- Employment

(iv) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Measurements of Dakota QOL indicators

In the second half of the discussion on the 27th, the group began “Small Group Discussions and preliminary identification of Dakota QOL indicators”. Again participants were organized into small groups of 2-3 people to undertake this task. They would write questions on a post-it and attach it to the respective theme written on flip chart paper and hung at various points throughout our meeting room. This continued during the November 2nd meeting.

(v) Large Group Consensus of Measurements of Dakota QOL Indicators

The Researcher then compiled all questions and presented to the group at the November 24th, meeting, when participants engaged in “activity (vi), Large Group Consensus of Measurements of Dakota QOL Indicators”.

(vi) Compilation of Questionnaire and Pre-Test

Between this time and the next meeting, the Researcher compiled the questions, making “*Draft One*” *Urban Dakota Quality of Life Indicators Survey*. (See *Appendix B*.) This was administered to the participants at a November 24th meeting, where participants also provided feedback on the draft survey.

This Draft survey was then administered to the Dakota participants at the following meeting. It took on average of 15 minutes to complete. Feedback from participants on this draft survey included:

- “There was an omission of answer choices to question regarding current enrollment in school or training program.
- Need to include more answer choices to “biggest obstacles keeping you from going to school or getting training”.
- Explain and/or give examples of “cultural knowledge”.
- Need to state the ownership status (e.g. own, rent, etc.) of current residence.
- Add “what is your current source of income” to capture those who receive employment insurance, social assistance, disability, etc.”

Participants stated that a survey longer than this would not be acceptable. They felt that the survey should stay in questionnaire format, rather, than say, interview format, because they felt the latter would be too time consuming.

At the end of this meeting, the group decided to attend a sweat lodge ceremony held by Dakota Elder Calvin Pompana at the White Buffalo Society Lodge. After many scheduling conflicts, we were able to attend the sweat on December 5th. About half of the Dakota participants attended; most had not attended a sweat before. At this time, we made a tobacco offering to Elder Pompana and to the spirits, and asked for continued strength, good health, and guidance for ourselves, our families, our people and other First Nations people, including the Dene. We then shared a meal and returned to the city. This was a powerful experience that only added to the cultural significance of the project and also motivated us to continue with this development in the future.

Dene Participant Group

(i) Expansion of Values

The Dene met for the first time on September 23rd, when a project overview was provided to them and discussion held about cultural values and “what it means to be Dene.” Both topics were also part of the following meetings on October 26th and November 1st. I received a lot of cultural knowledge from this group, as they knew I was not Dene, and therefore, required education.

The group’s first comment was that to be Dene is to be unique. They are known as the Caribou People because the caribou provided physical and spiritual sustenance. This also meant the Dene were traditionally nomadic until they were “made to stay put”. Some of the older participants stated they grew up in institutions, including residential schools, which had a big impact on their language retention and transmission. Some talked about the Sayisi Dene relocation to Churchill, which took place from 1956 through 1966. This was followed by a comment about the love of the land, especially, the northern lands, which are still considered Dene territory and a source of strength for the Dene. The majority of participants were Sayisi Dene.

Most of this information came from the eldest of the group, who also shared Dene ceremonies, including how the head of the caribou was eaten by the males who had killed it. The group discussed protocol, such as how a person was not to speak to an Elder until the Elder spoke to them, and how the Elders were to be fed first. These cultural protocols were signs of respect.

This Elder spoke about how “Dene people do not carry these values anymore”, and how “some Elders and youth have become complacent and have adopted different attitudes”. It was also mentioned how there is a disconnection between urban Dene people and those on-reserve, and between urban Dene people and on-reserve leadership. The Elder, as well as the other participants, were frustrated by benefits and rights that seem to be only extended and available for Dene people living on-reserve, including funding for education and training. Some participants also mentioned the social stigma they experience either when they visit the communities or attempt to move home (on-reserve). One participant commented that, “when we go back to the community [on-reserve], we are told, ‘you don’t belong here’, and then, we wonder where do we belong?”

Participants were then questioned about how Dene people should live today. The first response was that there is a gap in the transmission of culture because of that generation that was forced to go to residential schools. Participants identified a number of things to address this gap and start to live the Dene way again. Dene parenting skills need to be taught, and along with that, revitalizing the culture and strengthening cultural pride.

When asked about how to accomplish these last two things, participants responded, “listening to Elders’ stories” to bring about healing and facilitate regaining and revitalizing our Dene values and traditions. Also, participants commented on the need to meet the basic needs of the people, including housing, food, and clothing. It was stated that in order for healing, or *sawananeedee*, to occur, these basic needs must be met - “we can try to heal, but we won’t get too far if, at the same time, we have to deal with hardships including not having a place to live or food to eat.” Participants stated that it is important to communicate with each other and to build up a sense of community within Winnipeg.

There were also very specific endeavors the participants identified to encourage living the Dene way and building up the urban Dene people. These included reaching out to the youth and giving them the opportunity to go to culture camps. These camps would be held out on the land and the youth would be taught how to trap and canoe along with other Dene ways and values. The “language needs to be brought back, and should be introduced into the schools”. The facilitators of these endeavors, including teachers, “should be ourselves and not outsiders”. Other ideas on building up cultural pride and bringing back the culture included establishing a Dene social group and a meeting place where the language could be taught and spoken.

Cultural recognition is also very important to urban Dene people as they endeavor to live the Dene way in the City. A number of the participants disliked how Dene programming or the Dene language was not spoken on Native Communications Incorporated FM (NCI FM), which is the largest province-wide Aboriginal radio station. They also disliked the fact that there are little or no Dene people working at First Nations organizations like Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) and Manitoba Keewatinook Ininew Okimowin (MKIO), or Aboriginal organizations.

Other things that make life hard in the city is a lack of support services, including a transition centre. One participant shared how a relative had come from a northern Dene community to attend university in Winnipeg. She graduated at the top of her class and showed a lot of promise for post-secondary, but was not adapting well to the city. This participant had to show the student how the bus system works, where to go to buy food, etc. After two weeks, this young woman dropped out of university and returned to her home community. The participant felt some responsibility in not being able to teach this young woman enough about living in the city to keep her here and keep her in university. However, the participant also recognized that she could not be the only support for this young woman and others in similar situations. There needs to be a whole network of supports to ensure successful urban transition.

(ii) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Dene QOL Indicators

During the second half of the November 1st initial small group meeting, discussions on what makes life good or bad for Dene people living in Winnipeg took place. The first was “name five things that are important to making your life good as a Dene person living in Winnipeg, and explain why they are important.” Groups of two to three people were organized. The following were identified:

- “Having Dene people working in Native organizations like AMC.
- Having a Dene person working for our students to attend school in the City.
- Having a place in the city where Dene people can meet, mingle, and teach/speak the language.
- Having our Dene Chief and Councillors meet urban Dene people and explain what is going on.
- Having a sense of belonging when leave the reserve.
- Having a nice home.
- Education
- Health including exercise and good doctors.
- Friendly and accepting people
- Powwows and other cultural activities
- Safe and friendly neighborhood
- Convenience and access to support and social services
- Employment and training
- Recognition of diversity of people
- Keeping away from drugs and alcohol.”

The second question in this exercise was to “identify five things that make life hard or tough for you as a Dene person living in Winnipeg, and explain”. The following were identified:

- “Criticism and prejudice – from own people, including those on-reserve, and from mainstream.
- Lack of education – many of us lack a high school diploma which is needed for many jobs.
- Dene people are not included in organizations.
- Not having an Elder to talk to about problems you face on a daily basis.
- Hard to get information on what training and jobs are available.
- Hard time dealing with problems, and even harder to find people you can talk with to help with these problems and who also understand who you are as a Dene person.
- Poverty
- Easy access to drugs and alcohol.

- Sense of isolation and lack of Dene recognition.
- No justice for past wrongs that affect Dene people today.
- Fear of incarceration
- Police do not take you seriously.
- Social services are slow to act.
- Medical services take too long in getting your medication to you.
- Need more and improved social services and policies for the Elders, e.g. have to prove need for homemaker services, but Elders have good days and bad days.”

(iii) Large Group Consensus of Dene QOL Indicators

Given the number of these responses, it was agreed by consensus at a November 9th meeting that main themes would be identified to form indicators. It was also agreed that these responses could be developed into measures of indicators to ensure they were captured and integrated.

1. Belonging
2. Representation
3. Cultural Activities
4. Support Services
5. Education/Training
6. Employment
7. Health
8. Home
9. Justice Issues

(iv) Small Group Discussions and Preliminary Identification of Measurements of Dene QOL Indicators

Thus, at the end of the November 9th meeting, small groups again were formed to identify ways to measure these indicators. The question posed to assist participants in developing measurements was, “if we wanted to know how Dene people living in Winnipeg are doing with respect to all of these things (belonging, representation, etc., or those things we identified so far) what sort of questions would we ask?”

After pondering this question, participants felt the need to re-identify or reclassify their indicators. For instance, instead of “home”, participants felt changing this theme to “housing/living situations and experiences” would better capture: (a) not only if a person had a home, but whether they were satisfied with its conditions; (b) whether a person even had a home or was homeless; and, (c) the experience of people trying to secure a home. Participants stated the latter was important in capturing because many of them felt they were discriminated against when they tried to find a place to live or were currently experiencing this situation.

After this change was made, participants got back into their groups of 2-3 people and began to write questions that they would ask a person to get at their experience and situation regarding all of those themes identified. The small group rather than large group approach was taken to ensure a variety of questions or ways of measuring these themes or indicators. This approach was also used with the Dakota group.

(v) Large Group Consensus of Measurements of Dene QOL Indicators

After every group had worked its way through identifying questions or ways of measuring, the Researcher reviewed all questions according to themes, and presented a draft survey to the participants on November 30th. (See *Appendix C: "Draft One" Urban Dene Quality of Life Survey*.) At this meeting there was consensus that these were acceptable indicators, and the survey was administered.

(vi) Compilation of Questionnaire and Pre-Test

Participants worked through the survey on their own at this time. It took them an average of a half of an hour to complete. After everyone had completed the survey, I asked for feedback, including what they thought of taking a half hour to complete. Many stated they would not mind having to fill out a survey of this length because they felt most Dene people would be happy and excited in the opportunity to tell of their experience of life in Winnipeg and as a Dene person. Another common comment was that it was definitely different to write the questions, and then have to answer them, which gave them insight into possible changes and additions to the survey. These included:

- Not assuming every Dene person living in Winnipeg has moved here from somewhere else, and therefore, include responses for those who were born here and have always lived here.
- Improve wording and answer selection regarding current housing situation to include those who are homeless or are "hidden homeless" (those who would otherwise be homeless if it were not for family and friends).
- Clarify and/or explain "health services".
- Improve wording and answer selection regarding translation services when receiving medical services.
- Include a question about quality of health services and/or satisfaction.
- Broaden current employment situation/status to include those who are receiving welfare, employment insurance, are students receiving bursaries, etc.
- Improve question regarding barriers to employment.
- Clarify and/or explain "social services".

Traditional Feast with All Participants

This project ended with a feast which brought together both the Dakota and Dene groups. For many First Nations cultures, a feast is held as a celebration and acknowledges the knowledge gained through participants sharing their experiences with me. Therefore, it is a sign of respect manifested in a cultural way.

Participants were also given a gift instead of an honorarium as this gathering was held during the Christmas season. While an honorarium was more appropriate for discussion meetings, it was felt a personal gift selected by the Researcher, who got to know each participant through their stories, would be more appropriate. This dynamic illustrates one of the many differences between Indigenous and Western ways of doing research. As a Lakota, as an Indigenous person, I was seeking to encourage knowledge sharing through participants' own unique perspectives and insights with each other, other cultures, and the larger community. My role was to listen, to ask questions when appropriate, and to facilitate the process of the Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg telling their stories. I was privileged with the knowledge imparted to me by the urban Dakota and Dene, not the other way around. In recognition of, and out of respect for this arrangement, a feast and gifts were definitely appropriate and required.

The feast was held at the Circle of Life Thunderbird House in downtown Winnipeg on December 14, 2004. This is considered a sacred site for urban First Nations and other Aboriginal people to gather and hold ceremonies, including the sweatlodge, practice drumming and singing, and engage in other cultural events. This was a chance for both groups to meet each other and share their experience in the project. Dakota and Dene Elders were invited, as well as AMC Grand Chief Dennis White Bird. Earlier in the day, a participant called to inform me that Chief Charlie Tom, Sayisi Dene First Nation, would be able to attend the feast as well.

After the meal was served, I reiterated the purpose of the project, thanked the participants for their time and trust, and spoke briefly about the next steps of the project, and then introduced Grand Chief White Bird. Grand Chief talked about his experience and the challenges he faced when he first came to Winnipeg, and pledged increased recognition and support of urban Dakota and Dene peoples. Chief Tom's attendance, although unexpected, was truly serendipitous. He spoke of how he would attend meetings of different First Nations leadership and representatives and would not be provided with translation services or discussions in the Dene language. He went on to say he and other Dene people eventually met Dakota people who encountered the same challenge at these meetings. These two groups soon began to work together to ensure they understood what was being said in Ojibway and Cree and translated into their own languages of Dakota and Dene. Chief Tom also mentioned that his child

was Dakota and Dene, and that he knew of many Dakota and Dene people who became partners and had children together.

As our gathering was coming to a close, I spoke with one Dakota participant who spoke with Chief Tom and discovered that she was related to him through marriage – her cousin had partnered with one of Chief Tom’s relatives. On this evening, the Dakota and Dene people were connected.

Findings

Urban Dakota

Participant responses regarding where their family members live varied. However, there were slightly more people who answered that “a lot” of their family lives in Winnipeg, and “most” live on-reserve. This was followed by “a few” live in Winnipeg and “most” live on-reserve. One person answered that “some” live in Winnipeg and “some” on-reserve.

The activities participants engage in with their family in Winnipeg also varies, but are common to all participants, including: visiting and eating together, especially for birthdays and holidays; shopping; and, playing cards or bingo. All have a strong and good relationship with these family members, and usually they do not speak the Dakota language with each other.

Participants stated they engage family on-reserve in activities similar to those they engage in with family living in Winnipeg. However, the only difference is cultural activities, like powwows, which are more apt to take place on-reserve.

There were equal responses of “a little”, “some” and “a lot” to the question of how much time they spend with friends, who are most likely to be of other First Nations cultural groups. Participants usually go to social gatherings, shopping, bingo, or just “hang out” with these friends.

Most Dakota participants have some high school education, and equal numbers are currently in school as not in school. Of those who are in school, most are receiving enough financial, emotional and academic support. These participants are not receiving funding from common sources.

Participants either have little or some cultural knowledge, taught mostly by family, friends, and Elders. Most know little Dakota (language), while a few know a lot and a couple know none. Of those who can speak the language, they speak it on either a daily or weekly basis, and most dream in the Dakota language.

Most participants have been living in Winnipeg all of their life, while a couple have lived here over 25 years, and another two have lived here for 1-5 years. Equal numbers live in houses as apartments, and there seem to be no overcrowding situations. Most of the participants live with relatives.

The majority of the participants are not employed, mostly because they are in school. Of those who are employed most are on contract and have a lot of satisfaction with their jobs. Time at current employment ranged from under a year, to 3-4 years to 17 years. Most feel they are valued as an employee and believe there is an opportunity for advancement at their jobs. Of those who answered the question about whether they feel it is hard to find a job, most stated no, but two stated yes.

On the whole, the urban Dakota participants are more connected with each other and their home communities than Dene participants. The Dakota participants long for more Dakota-specific activities in the city, including cultural activities. They have been able to access education and job opportunities they sought in moving to the city. The urban Dakota participants seem to have taken care of their basic needs. They know who they are and where they come from.

Urban Dene

Most Dene people who have moved to Winnipeg from elsewhere did so because of lack of housing, employment, and education and/or training opportunities, in addition to high cost of living. "Other" reasons include: lack of infrastructure, including proper sewage and sewer, on-reserve; dissatisfaction with on-reserve leadership; family feuds on-reserve; and, to join a partner.

Most Dene participants expressed they had needed help in finding housing when they first moved to the city, and those that do not own or have a residence now still require this type of help. Most participants feel that Dene would be best in helping because:

- They might know the language and offer translation services to those who do not know English well.
- They know what it is like being Dene in the city, and may know the process of finding a place to live and overcoming obstacles.
- They will most likely offer emotional support in a more personal and cultural way.

Most participants stated that they felt they had been discriminated against when looking for a place to live in Winnipeg.

Most Dene participants live in rented apartments, which they do not consider to be affordable. Half receive assistance in paying rent and half do not. Also, half consider their neighborhood to be friendly while half do not. However, most consider their neighborhood to be unsafe. All aspire to own their own homes. An equal number of participants rated their health status as "bad", "ok", and "good", with most, even those rating their health as "bad", stated they do get exercise. There was not a prominent health priority identified.

Regarding health services, most participants indicated that they felt the services are accessible in Winnipeg. Most participants indicated waiting either an average of less than an hour, or three to four hours to see a doctor. Those who responded that they experienced short wait times noted that they usually see their own family physician. A source of frustration in terms of waiting exists for those with special health needs, including disabilities (e.g. hearing problems requiring aids) and those elders with chronic or degenerative diseases; they had to wait a few months to receive either medication or health aids. Another source of frustration for nearly all participants was the wait time to access counseling services from, for instance, Addictions Foundation of Manitoba. All participants stated that they usually invoke their treaty right to health through First Nations Inuit Health Branch to pay for the medical services they receive.

Almost all participants stated that they felt their interests and concerns as Dene people living in Winnipeg are not being addressed by all levels of government, nor by First Nations governments and organizations, and Aboriginal organizations. Most have not received updates from their Chief and Councillors while they have been living in Winnipeg. Furthermore, they feel these leaders do not extend the same level of support to them as to those who live on-reserve.

Therefore, Dene participants' sense of belonging to their own home communities is comparatively lower than their sense of belonging to the city. This is interesting considering that nearly all participants stated that they do not receive any support to make them feel they belong in the city, and that they also feel there is a lack of recognition of Dene culture and people in Winnipeg. Quite simply, one could conclude that these urban Dene people do not feel they belong anywhere.

However, based on clear consensus of the participants, urban Dene have a higher expectation of accountability and responsibility from their First Nation Leadership than from other governments. For instance, in discussing lack of supports, participants discussed lack of supports from their First Nation and from First Nations organizations like AMC and did not even mention lack of supports from other levels of governments or political entities. This focus and connection to First Nations and First Nations organizations is also apparent in the questions developed to measure Dene sense of belonging. For instance, instead of measuring the level of support that mainstream and Dene people receive from municipal, provincial, and federal governments, the reference point was First Nations governments and the extension of support to urban and reserve citizens.

This point is supported by participants' responses to "what can be done to increase your sense of belonging as a Dene person living in Winnipeg?":

- "Establish a Dene organization and drop-in Center in Winnipeg."
- "Have our own people work for us and deliver programs that are relevant to me as a Dene person."

Other comments included recognition by other First Nations cultural groups and First Nations organizations. There seems to be no apparent connection to other levels of government and their role in improving the sense of belonging of Dene people living in Winnipeg.

Most participants indicated their highest level of education was some high school. However, all stated that education and training is important to them. Of those currently not going to school or getting training, most want to increase their level of education or get more training. However, of these respondents, most do not feel they have enough information to get enrolled in school or a training program. Some ways that were identified as best in getting this information to them included:

- “Urban citizens outreach by Band leadership, sharing what skill sets are needed on-reserve [to tailor education/training path].
- Urban Dene Centre or organization.
- An Urban Dene mailing list or web page.
- Notices in Aboriginal newspapers and on NCI FM radio station.”

Those who are currently going to school or receiving training stated that they are not receiving sufficient funding, and that it was difficult to even get the funding they currently have. Also, most participants noted they are not receiving the support needed to deal with problems or challenges in school or in their training programs. Suggestions for improved supports for students and trainees were again directed at First Nations governments and organizations. Regarding the former, participants stated the need for on-reserve residency requirements to be changed to allow for supports, including financial, emotional, and academic, to be extended to urban citizens. Regarding the latter, participants suggested First Nations organizations provide a guidance counselor for urban First Nations citizens.

Most of the Dene participants are currently not employed, because they are attending school or training programs, have health problems, are retired, or do not have a fixed address (employer requirement). Also, participants feel that they do not receive enough information on employment opportunities, and state that those ways suggested for getting information to them on education and training also be used in this instance as well.

An equal number of Dene participants responded that they had knowledge about Dene cultural activities. Of these that have knowledge, most learned from parents and Elders, other learned from friends, while a couple learned by observations, including when living on the reserve. Most stated that they do not participate in any of these activities. Of those who had responded that they do not have knowledge of cultural activities, most indicate they would prefer to learn first from Elders, next, from other Dene people, and lastly, from anyone willing to

teach. There were a range of settings in which they would like this learning to occur, including a traditional setting, on Dene land up north, and “in a place of our own” [in the city].

Most of the participants stated that they could speak Dene, and that most of these spoke Dene all of the time, even on a daily basis. Throughout the project, most did not attempt to speak their own language even though they were consistently encouraged. Because the Dene-speaking Facilitator and Translator withdrew before the project even began, I asked the participants if they would like to take on one or both of these roles. I offered to train and be a support to them should they have decided to be the Facilitator and/or translator, but no one offered to take on these roles.

Of those who stated that they do not know the language, all would like to learn. They would prefer to be taught by Elders, friends, and family, and anyone who knows it and has patience, experience, and love for the culture. Most would like to learn in a classroom setting and through cultural activities.

Most Dene participants indicated that they feel their cultural needs and interests are not being met by their First Nation, by First Nations and Aboriginal organizations in the city, by the City of Winnipeg, or by provincial and federal governments. Suggestions to these entities were made to improve their ability to meet these needs. Again, the Dene focused on their own governments and institutions.

Suggestions to their First Nations:

- “Be impartial.
- Include us since we are on the Band list for voting and funding.
- Acknowledge those people who live outside the reserve.
- Include us, especially, when giving out information.
- Meet with off-reserve people.
- Work with First Nations organizations to meet the needs of those of us living in Winnipeg.
- Hold meetings with us at least every 2-3 months.”

Suggestions for First Nations organizations:

- “Understand that Dene people are different from other First Nations people living in Winnipeg.
- Hire Dene people.
- Explain what is going on in the organization.
- Social and other events need to include Dene people.
- Need to work with our Bands to meet our needs.”

There were only a couple of suggestions for the remaining entities. It was suggested that Aboriginal organizations put Dene culture in their programming, hire more Dene, and help to increase awareness of the people and culture in the city. One participant proposed that the City of Winnipeg provide a building for delivery of Dene programs, and that the Province and the Federal government provide funding.

When asked what Dene people, themselves, can do to meet their cultural needs, most said either meet on a regular basis (much like meeting for this project) or start up their own Dene project or meeting place, “where we can be Dene and not someone else’s idea of what Dene is,” and find funding for this project. Another response was to “get Dene Elders to teach Dene culture”.

Responses in this section further highlight the fact that Dene people living in Winnipeg have higher expectations of their First Nations and First Nations organizations in assisting them in making their lives good in Winnipeg. Furthermore, what is also highlighted is that Dene people living in Winnipeg want to do things for themselves, in their own way.

Most of the participants feel the Sayisi Dene relocation era of 1956-1966 impacts their lives today. This was explained in the following ways:

- “It changed the whole community.
- It resulted in a loss of culture.
- We lost our way in life.
- We lost Elders that would be teaching us things today.
- My mother had to give me up for adoption, and I feel I missed learning parenting skills from her. The Roman Catholic faith has done cultural damage.
- I lost the opportunity to learn how to have and maintain a good relationship with my partner.
- It resulted in family violence, addiction, and low success rates.”

Clearly, Dene people living in Winnipeg continue to feel the effects of the Dene Relocation, especially, because of its interruption in transmission of culture and cultural knowledge.

Participants expressed that they feel the justice system in Winnipeg is not appropriate and effective for Dene people, because:

- “It does not recognize the uniqueness of Dene and other First Nations, including conceptions of justice, such as involving the community.
- Dene and other First Nations people are not always represented fairly.
- It takes too long for trial dates. One person waited three years for her trial date to come, and to have the opportunity to ‘beat’ her charges. During this time, she was unable to get work because of her record. “

However, they stated their legal needs were met adequately by a lawyer or other legal advocates.

Most participants seek social services and support equally from family, friends, Provincial social services, city programs, and Aboriginal organizations. One participant noted she received her support from “prayers and sweats.” Social services and supports that participants feel are lacking include: housing, education, family counseling, and a Dene drop-in centre. Most participants feel these supports should be delivered, first of all, by Dene people in a culturally-appropriate and –specific way, either by their First Nation or an association of urban Dene people. Furthermore, services should not be delivered according to provincial or federal guidelines or rules. A second choice for service delivery agency was First Nations or Aboriginal organizations. The preferred location of service delivery is downtown Winnipeg.

Overall, urban Dene people are striving everyday to meet their basic needs, are recovering from recent trauma of relocation, and subsequent displacement to Winnipeg. They know who they are, yet because they feel that their culture and they, as unique people, are not recognized and valued, they question their place in an urban context.

Analysis

Need for Separate and Distinct QOL Indicators

There are cross-cutting themes amongst both urban Dakota and Dene QOL indicators:

Urban Dakota QOL Indicators	Urban Dene QOL Indicators
Culture	Culture
Education and Training	Education and Training
Living Situations and Experiences	Living Situations and Experiences
Family and Friends	Health Issues and Priorities
Employment	Dene Interests and Concerns
	Sense of Belonging
	Justice System and Issues
	Social Services

However, there are important and significant differences to warrant the need to maintain separate sets of quality of life indicators. To illustrate this need, three possible scenarios for quality of life indicators for these groups will be discussed here.

A researcher might try to combine all indicators from each group to make a total of 10 indicators (eight Dene indicators plus five Dakota indicators, of which, three

are common to equal ten total indicators). The first issue with this possibility is that the Dakota and Dene do not put equal weight or importance on all of these indicators. Those indicators that each do not deem important would not be significant and meaningful in demonstrating whether their lives are improving or not. For example, accessibility is more important and relevant to a disabled person than an able-bodied person. If both shared a set of indicators, which included, for example, accessibility, it would be much more meaningful to the disabled person.

The same rationale applies in the instance of Dakota and Dene QOL indicators. Merely combining indicators does not mean all indicators are meaningful and relevant in capturing the quality of life of the Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg.

A second issue with this approach, which is because these indicators, even those that are common to both groups, are measured differently, the stories and experiences of these two groups will not be told accurately and in a meaningful way. Just as the first problem illustrated the importance and significance of having meaningful and relevant indicators, it is equally important and significant to have meaningful and relevant measures of indicators.

A researcher might seek to impose the set of indicators of one group upon another group. This approach has an obvious flaw – it will result in an inaccurate account of the lives and experiences of one group. If Dakota indicators were imposed upon the Dene, the great disconnection and lack of a sense of belonging that was documented and identified through these project discussions would not be captured. These are two very significant and unique indicators for the Dene. Alternatively, for example, if the Dene indicators were imposed upon the Dakota, the core Dakota concept of kinship, as captured through the Family and Friends indicator, would be missing.

Another researcher might try to impose these indicators, either the Dakota or Dene QOL indicators separately or in combination, upon other First Nations cultural groups. However, like those reasons stated in the first and second approach discussed, they would neither be appropriate nor meaningful. For instance, just as Dakota and Dene participants in this project expressed different experiences and perceptions of the world, most likely would the Cree, Ojibway, and OjiCree. This is due to the uniqueness of each of those cultures and their histories, and the impact of these things on their current reality.

The fourth, and preferred, research approach is to maintain separate quality of life indicators that respect and capture the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the Dakota and Dene peoples.

Well-Being and Cultural Connectedness

According to the draft quality of life survey developed and completed by the Dakota in this project, they are doing well, except in one area. With respect to “Family and Friends”, “Living Situations and Experiences”, and “Employment”, urban Dakota are doing quite well. Although some are doing well with respect to “Education”, the respondents identified a need to increase levels in this area as most only have some high school education.

The most outstanding area of need identified by the Dakota participants is culture, including cultural knowledge and language, in the city. The findings documented that most knew little of the Dakota language and some have either a little or some cultural knowledge, while all Dakota participants identified this as important to their quality of life. Therefore, participants expressed the need for more cultural activities, like powwows and other cultural social events, even those that are Dakota-specific, to facilitate this learning, growth and connection to each other and the Dakota culture.

According to the Dene quality of life survey developed and completed by project participants, they are not doing very well in nearly all areas they identified as important and significant. There is an overwhelming sense of disconnection, and an enormous amount of frustration with the lack of recognition of Dene people, culture, and issues and concerns, and the lack of sense of belonging anywhere. Sources cited by the participants for the two former problems are the First Nations governments and First Nations organizations. Participants look to these entities to improve their quality of life, rather than to municipal, provincial, and federal governments. In addition, urban Dene participants look to themselves, as individuals and as a community, to improve their situation.

Observations of Usefulness for Policy and Program Development

The findings reflect the foundation of First Nations government – the connectedness of the people and the rights and responsibilities that pertain, no matter where First Nations people live. This project may inform the many ongoing and upcoming initiatives aimed at urban First Nations and Aboriginal people including policy and program development and service delivery. The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs is working to establish an urban First Nations transition centre aimed at facilitating a successful transition for First Nations people moving from the reserve to Winnipeg. These findings indicate that culture, and culture-specific activities, are very important for happy and successful living for Dakota and Dene people in Winnipeg. Therefore, cultural considerations need to be in the forefront of designing the urban First Nations transition centre being established by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and in developing its programs. This may include consulting urban Dakota and Dene people to create these programs or hiring these people to undertake this task.

The Dakota and Dene participants expressed they preferred services be delivered by Dakota and Dene people, by their First Nation government, or by First Nations organizations. Participants stated that they look to these entities for assistance. Therefore, these entities need to be supported to do this.

Regarding policy, the Dene for example, stated they felt social services policies need to be culturally-appropriate, and that provincial and federal policies should not be imposed upon them. Dene participants have indicated that current policies are failing them as they are struggling on a daily basis to meet their basic needs.

These are a few ways in which this project and initial findings and observations may assist First Nations, Crown and municipal governments and organizations in developing effective and appropriate policies and programs and delivering services aimed at improving the lives of Dakota and Dene people living in Winnipeg.

Consideration of Methodology

The impact of my cultural identity and affiliation seemed to limit the knowledge Dakota participants shared with me, which, in turn, resulted in less detailed Dakota findings. Work to overcome this issue will occur in Phase II of the project, during implementation of QOL indicators.

Evaluation

A unique feature of this project was its evaluation by participants. It was important for these participants to have their say regarding the progress of the project. Both groups completed the same evaluation form. (See *Appendix D: Project Evaluation Form*).

Urban Dakota

A total of nine Dakota participants completed the evaluation. Most (7) were satisfied with their participation in the project, one person was somewhat satisfied, while another was very satisfied with their participation. The person who responded “somewhat satisfied” stated, “It was hard to answer questions from a ‘Dakota’ point of view or hard to think in a ‘Dakota’ point of view. There should have been more people involved.”

Most (6) participants were satisfied with other participants’ participation, 1 was very satisfied, 1 was somewhat satisfied, and 1 was unsatisfied. These latter two participants commented that:

- “I believe there could have been more input because as it was explained that this was everybody’s opportunity to have a say, but I felt some held back.

- Less shyness and more input.”

Most (5) participants were satisfied with the Researcher’s performance, while four were very satisfied.

The following are comments regarding what participants liked the most about the project:

- “Learning new things about being Dakota.
- That we can go to a sweat [lodge ceremony], and talk about being Dakota.
- Interesting topics.
- Being amongst Dakota people.
- The whole project was very interesting and was new to me. I’ve learned a lot just by listening.
- Talk about and thinking about my Dakota self and how to better the people.
- It was an opportunity to meet others and share ideas. I believe I have made some new friends.
- Assertion of culture.”

The following are comments regarding what participants liked the least about the project:

- “Talking out loud when I first started going to meetings.
- There was nothing I disliked about the project.
- There was nothing I can think of that was not interesting.
- Should have had more people in the group.
- I thought as a group we were kind of slow to get going. Eventually we came together, but I think we could have accomplished more.
- More time needed.”

Most (7) participants felt project objectives were met, while 2 did not answer.

Other comments included:

- “I would like to participate in future endeavors concerning the Dakota people living in Winnipeg. *Pidamayakeya!* (Thank you)
- We should learn how to speak Dakota.
- I think some individuals were perhaps a bit shy and this held us up.
- Needed a better range of people and more people.
- Excellent job from the researcher and other participants. Everything and everybody was well spoken and made a lot of sense.
- Would like the project to continue.”

Urban Dene

Eight Dene participants completed the form. Most (4) were satisfied with their participation, 2 were very satisfied, 1 was somewhat satisfied, and 1 was dissatisfied. There were no comments on this issue.

Most (4) were also satisfied with the participation of the other participants, 2 were very unsatisfied, 1 was unsatisfied, and 1 was somewhat satisfied. Comments on this issue included:

- “We should have all started together and all attended every meeting.
- They [other participants] should have had more input into it.
- Some participants did not participate much.”

Most Dene participants were satisfied with the researcher’s performance, 3 were very satisfied, and 1 was very unsatisfied. There were no comments on this issue.

The following are what the participants liked most:

- “Talking about issues and working together. I found that the majority of us had similar struggles and if we could support each other, maybe it would be easier.
- Getting together with the Dene people and talking about the things we talked about.
- Meeting with people who I don’t see very often, like reconnecting.
- That we, as Dene people, for once are thought of, and it was good for us to get together and share some ideas.
- I liked that we all got together as Dene, and were able to communicate with each other.
- I like the fact that I got to state my thoughts, ideas, and participate in the project.
- The fact that as meetings continued, I began to realize that maybe something positive will develop for Dene people in the city.”

The following are what participants liked the least about the project:

- “Not enough people knew about the project.
- That none of us who participated in the project facilitated or translated.
- The whole project was worthwhile but too short! More time was needed to fully understand.
- This project was too short in my opinion.
- There was nothing I like the least. The entire meetings were all positive.”

Most (6) Dene participants felt we achieved our project objective, and two did not answer. Comments on this issue included:

- “Some issues like alcohol and drug abuse and the Dene Village (site of second Sayisi Dene relocation near Churchill) were avoided although it has a major impact on us.
- I still feel that more time was needed, otherwise, it was very good. “

Those who didn't answer this question commented, “[I won't know if this project achieved its objectives] until something has come of it or has been accomplished.”

Other comments included:

- “I wish I was here for every meeting.
- We should have this more often.
- We as Dene accomplished something that is really worthwhile. “

Recommendations

Phase II of this project to further refine urban Dakota and Dene quality of life indicators and refine and carry out the survey developed in Phase I must be supported. Continued participation of some Dakota and Dene participants of Phase I and engagement of First Nations technicians knowledgeable in this area will be required.

This project demonstrated the vitality and sustainability of First Nations-developed research principles of ownership, access, control, and possession (OCAP) as the guiding principles of identification, data compilation, and assessment of urban Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators. This must continue.

Finally, this project demonstrated the effectiveness and practical necessity of combining Indigenous research protocols and methods with academic approaches to attain research goals and results meaningful to the people involved and affected.

Conclusion

The Dakota and Dene participants discovered that the quality of life indicators they developed can facilitate meaningful and accurate assessment of their lives when their unique and distinct cultures are respected and are key to these developments. The Dakota and Dene participants came to understand and trust that their own QOL indicators can inform decision-makers of policy and services. They expressed their common desire to proceed with effective tools to inform their own First Nations governments and institutions, as well as mainstream

municipal, provincial, and federal governments and the private sector. Furthermore, the participants of this project concluded that this research approach is an important process to ensure they lead productive, successful and happy lives. The AMC and the participants look forward to beginning Phase II very soon.

References

- Beavon, D. (2003) Presentation of *Application of the United Nations Human Development Index to Registered Indians in Canada* at the Aboriginal Strategies Conference, Edmonton, AB.
- Bussidor, Ila, et al. (1997) *Night Spirits: The Story of the Relocation of the Sayisi Dene*. Winnipeg, Manitoba: The University of Manitoba Press.
- Canadian Policy Research Networks. (2001) "Indicators of Quality of Life in Canada: A Citizens' Prototype: Summary of Results of Public Dialogue Sessions and Prototype of National Indicators." Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks.
- Human Resources Development Canada (1997) "How Do We Know that Time are Improving in Canada?". Available at: <http://www.sdc.gc.ca> .
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. (November 2004) "First Nation Community Profiles". Available at: <http://ww.inac.gc.ca> .
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. (2000) *Registered Indian Population Projections for Canada and Regions*. Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
- Institute of Urban Studies. (2003) *First Nations/Metis/Inuit Mobility Study*. Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg.
- International Institute of Sustainable Development. (2001) "Integrating Aboriginal Values into Land-Use and Resource Management, Final Report". Winnipeg: International Institute of Sustainable Development.
- Lavolette, G. (1991) *The Dakota Sioux in Canada*. Winnipeg: DLM Publications.
- Manitoba Bureau of Statistics. (1997) *Manitoba's Aboriginal Populations Projected 1991-2016*. Winnipeg: Manitoba Bureau of Statistics.
- Statistics Canada. (2001) "Aboriginal Population Profile – Winnipeg." Available at: <http://www12.statcan.ca> .
- United Nations. (2004) "Human Development Reports." Available at: <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/faq> .
- United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization. (2003) Available at: <http://portal.unesco.org/culture>
- WUNSKA Research Group (1997) "First Nations Youth Inquiry into Tobacco Use: Final Comprehensive Report to Health Canada, April 1997". Saskatoon: Saskatchewan Indian Federation College.

Appendix A: Project Consent Form

Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Indicators Research Project in Winnipeg

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

August – December 2004

- Research Consent Form -

You have been invited to participate in the *Dakota and Dene Quality of Life Project in Winnipeg* being conducted by the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC). The purpose of this project is to learn about what makes the lives of Dakota and Dene people in Winnipeg good or bad. This can help decision-makers develop more appropriate and effective policies, programs, and services for Dakota and Dene people in Winnipeg.

Fourteen Dakota and fourteen Dene people of various ages, genders, living situations, etc, who reside in Winnipeg will be invited to participate in this project. You were selected because you have one or all of these background characteristics.

The Dakota and Dene groups will meet separately once a month for five months, starting in August 2004 and ending in December 2004. Each group will decide when and where to meet. Each meeting will last for approximately 3 hours. Dakota and Dene people will lead the discussions, and translators will help those who are not fluent in the languages. Snacks will be provided, and you will be compensated \$30 per meeting for your time.

Confidentiality will be respected. No information that can reveal your identity will be released or published without your specific consent. Discussions will be tape recorded, but only to help the translators accurately translate what was said in Dakota and Dene into English. Once the translator has translated the tapes at the AMC office, the Lead Researcher will keep them in a locked location until the project is over. They will then be erased.

After each meeting, a summary report will be available for review and approval by the participants. This is to make sure that what was said is accurately captured in the report. When all meetings are completed, a final report will also be made available for review and approval. After this, both groups will meet together for a feast to celebrate the work they have all put in. This marks the end of your involvement in the project.

Some people find it uncomfortable to share their personal experiences with others. This is common. Elders will be on hand to give you support and you will not be pressured in sharing anything you do not want to share. If, for some reason, you become uncomfortable with the project, please speak with Keely, who will be at all the discussions, or call her at AMC, 956-0610. If you wish to speak with someone else, please call Tom Carter, Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, at 982-1148.

Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and participants may refuse to answer any questions. If you have any questions regarding the ethics of this research, you can speak with Keely, or you may contact Dr Laura Sokal, Chair of the University of Winnipeg Senate Committee on Ethics in Human Research and Scholarship, at 786-9915.

Lead Researcher Signature

Please check one:

I **do** agree to participate in the research project described above.

I **do not** agree to participate in the research project described above.

Participant Name (Please print)

Date

Signature

If you wish to receive a final report of the project, please provide us with your mailing address. If not, please do not write in your address.

Appendix B: "Draft One" Urban Dakota QOL Survey

**"Draft #1" Urban Dakota QOL Survey
November 24, 2004**

This first set of questions relates to your family and friends.

1. (a) How many of your family members live in Winnipeg? (circle one):

None A Few Some A lot Most

- (b) How much time do you spend with these family members?

None A little Some A lot Most

- (c) What sort of things do you do with these family members? (please write):
-

- (d) Do you have a strong and good relationship with these family members? (circle one):

Yes No Don't Know No Answer

- (e) Do you speak Dakota with these family members?

Never Sometimes Often All the time

2. How many of your family members live on-reserve or other places? (circle one):

None A few Some A lot Most

3. (a) How much time are you able to spend with your friends?

None A little Some A lot

- (b) What sort of things do you do with your friends? (please write):
-
-

- (c) Are your friends (circle one):

Mostly Dakota Mostly First Nations Mostly Other _____

These next questions relate to your experience of education and training in Winnipeg.

4. What is your current level of Education? (please check one):

Less than elementary
 Elementary
 Some High School
 High School Graduate
 Some University
 University Graduate
 Other (Please write)

5. (a) Are you currently in school or a training program?

(b) IF NOT, THEN

1. would you like to go to school or get training? (circle one):
YES NO DON'T KNOW

2. If yes, what are the biggest obstacles that are keeping you from going to school or getting training? (check all that apply):

Lack of funding

Lack of Child Care

Other (please write): _____

(d) IF YOU ARE, THEN

1. who is paying for your schooling or training program? (please write):

2. Are you receiving enough financial support? (circle one):
YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

3. Are you receiving enough emotional support?
YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

4. Are you receiving enough academic support?
YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

6. (a) How much cultural knowledge would you say you have? (circle one):
None Little Some A lot No Answer

(b) where did you learn, or, who taught you, this cultural knowledge? (check all that apply):

Elders

Family

Friends

School

Other (please write): _____

7. (a) How much Dakota (language) do you know?

None Little Some A lot No Answer

(b) If you know Dakota, who taught you to speak? (check all that apply):

Elders

Family

Friends

School

Other (please write): _____

This next set of questions are about your living situations and experiences in Winnipeg.

8. How long have you been living in Winnipeg? (check one):

- under 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- All my life
- Other (please write): _____

9. Do you currently live in a (check all that apply):

- an apartment Manitoba Housing
- a House DOTC Housing
- a rooming house Kinew Housing
- a duplex Other (please write): _____

10. Is the place you live:

(a) In a safe neighborhood?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

(b) In good condition?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

(c) Spacious (is not overcrowded)?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

(d) Has all facilities (e.g. washer dryer, proper heating, maintenance, etc.) you require?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

(e) affordable?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

11. (a) How many people live with you?

(b) are any of these people your relatives?

12. Is your living situation crowded?

The next set of questions relate to your experience and practice of Dakota culture while living in Winnipeg.

13. How many cultural events in Winnipeg have you been to in the last year?

14. How many cultural events/activities are you aware of that have taken place in the past year?

15. (a) Can you speak Dakota?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

(b) How much Dakota can you speak?

Check one: Little Some A lot

(c) How often do you speak Dakota? (Check one):

- At least once a day
- At least once a week
- At least once a year

(d) do you dream in Dakota? (circle one):

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

This last set of questions are about your experience with employment in Winnipeg.

16. (a) Are you currently employed?

YES NO NO ANSWER

(b) if so, how much satisfaction do you have for this job?

NONE LITTLE SOME A LOT NO ANSWER

(c) how long have you been at this job? (check one):

- Under a year
- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- Other (please write): _____

(e) do you feel you are valued as an employee?

YES NO NO ANSWER

(f) Is there opportunity for advancement in your job?

YES NO DON'T KNOW NO ANSWER

17. Is your current job: (check all that apply):

- part time permanent
- full time contract
- seasonal temporary

18. Is it hard to find a job? If yes, please explain: _____

This ends this survey. Thank you for your time.

Appendix C: "Draft One" Urban Dene QOL Survey

**"Draft" Dene QOL Survey
November 23, 2004**

The purpose of this survey is to find out about your experience as a Dene person living in Winnipeg. It will be used to find out how all Dene people living in the City are doing. This information will be used to advocate for improved, modified, and/or new, programs, policies, and services for Dene people living in Winnipeg.

This first set of questions are about your living situations and experiences in Winnipeg.

1. Why did you move away from the reserve? (check all that apply):

- Lack of Housing
- Lack of employment
- Lack of education and/or training opportunities
- Cost of Living too high
- Other (please write): _____

2. Thinking back to when you were first looking for a place to live in the City, did you need help finding a home?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

3. If you don't have your own home now, do you need help in finding a home?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

4. Do you feel that a Dene support group would be best in helping you find a home?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

Why or why not? (Please write explanation) _____

5. Thinking about those times when you were looking for a place to live, did you feel you had been discriminated against?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

6. Currently, do you live in a house or apartment?

Circle one: YES NO OTHER _____

7. Do you rent or own this house or apartment?

Circle one: YES NO OTHER _____

8. Can you afford your rent or mortgage?

Circle one: YES NO OTHER _____

9. Do you receive any help in paying your rent?

Circle one: YES NO OTHER _____

If so, from whom? (Please write) _____

10. If you are single, is there housing that sufficiently meets your needs?
Circle one: YES NO Not Applicable

11. Would you like to own your own home?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

12. Do you feel your neighborhood is friendly?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

13. Do you feel your neighborhood is safe?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

These next questions are about your health issues and priorities, and experiences of seeking health care services in Winnipeg.

14. What is your priority health issue? (please write): _____

15. How would you rate your health? (circle one):
Really Bad Bad Ok Good Excellent Don't know

16. Are you getting exercise?
Circle one: YES NO No Answer

If not, why not? (Please write): _____

17. In your experience, are health services in Winnipeg accessible?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

18. On average, how long do you have to wait to see the doctor when you go to either a clinic or a hospital? (check one):
___ Less than an hour
___ 1-2 hours
___ 3-4 hours
___ 5+ hours
___ Don't Know

19. If you need them, do you receive translation (Dene language) services when you receive medical services?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

20. On average, how long do you have to wait in order to get your medication? (check one):
___ About 1 Day
___ About 1 Week
___ About 1 Month
___ Other (please write)

21. Do you feel you have to wait too long to access services from health support services (for example, Addiction Foundation of Manitoba)?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

22. Who pays for you medical services? (please write): _____

These next questions are about whether you feel your interests and concerns as a Dene person living in Winnipeg are being addressed.

23. Do you feel your issues and concerns as a Dene person living in Winnipeg are adequately being addressed by (circle one for each):

- Your Band YES NO Don't Know
- First Nations Organizations YES NO Don't Know
(e.g. AMC, MKO, etc.)
- Aboriginal Organizations YES NO Don't Know
(e.g. Mothers of Red Nations, Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg)
- The City of Winnipeg YES NO Don't Know
- Province of Manitoba YES NO Don't Know
(e.g. Employment and Income Assistance, Housing, etc.)
- Government of Canada YES NO Don't Know
(e.g. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada)

24. Have you received updates or reports from you Band Chief and Council while you have been living in Winnipeg?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

25. Do you feel you receive the same level of support from your Chief and Council as the people living on reserve do?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

26. Do meet and visit with other Dene people living in Winnipeg?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

If so, how many times per week? (please write): _____

These next questions are about your sense of belonging in various situations and locations.

27. Although you live in the City, do you still have a sense of belonging to your reserve?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

28. Do you have a sense of belonging in the City?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

In no, why not? (please explain): _____

29. Do you receive any support to make you feel like you belong in the City?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

30. Do you feel there is a recognition of Dene people in Winnipeg?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

31. Do you feel there is recognition of Dene culture in Winnipeg?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

What can be done to increase your sense of belonging as a Dene person living in Winnipeg? (Please write): _____

The following questions are about education and training, and experiences with these things in Winnipeg.

32. Is education and/or training important to you?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

33. What level of education do you have?

- Less than elementary
- Elementary
- Some High School
- High School Graduate
- Some University
- University Graduate
- Other (Please write)

34. If you are currently not going to school or getting training:

a. Do you want to increase your level of education and/or training?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

What supports do you need to increase your level of education and/or training?
(Please write): _____

b. Do you feel you have enough information in order to get enrolled in school or in a training program?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

If not, what do you feel is the best way to get you this information? (please write):

35. If you are currently going to school or receiving training:

a. Where do you receive your funding from? (please write): _____

b. Is this enough funding?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

c. Was it difficult for you to receive funding?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

d. If you are, or have, faced problems or challenges in school or your training program, was there support there to help you?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

e. What sort of support do you need in order to be successful in school or in your training program? (Please write): _____

36. Are you currently employed?

Circle one: YES NO Other _____

If not, what is preventing you from being employed? (please write): _____

37. Do you feel you are receiving enough information on employment opportunities?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

If not, what are the best ways to get this information to you? (please write): _____

38. If you are currently working, do you enjoy your job?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

39. If you are currently working, how did you find your job? (Please write): _____

The following questions are about Dene culture.

40. Do you know any Dene cultural activities?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

41. Do you participate in any of these activities?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

If yes, how often? (Please write): _____

42. Who taught you these activities? (please write): _____

43. If you don't know too many Dene cultural activities, would you like to learn?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

(a) If so, from whom? (please write): _____

(b) If so, in what type of setting? (please write): _____

44. Can you speak Dene?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

(a) How much Dene can you speak?

Check one: ___ Little ___ Some ___ A lot

45. How often do you speak Dene? (Check one):

___ At least once a day

___ At least once a week

___ At least once a year

46. Would you like to learn the Dene language?

Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW

(a) If so, from whom? _____

(b) If so, in what type of setting? _____

47. Are your cultural needs and interests being met by (check all that apply):

___ Your Band

___ First Nations organizations in the City

___ Aboriginal Organizations in the City

___ The City of Winnipeg

___ Province of Manitoba

___ Government of Canada

48. If the needs are not being met by those above, what can these organizations do to meet the cultural needs of the Dene people living in Winnipeg?

(a) Your Band _____

(b) First Nations organizations in the City _____

(c) Aboriginal Organizations in the City _____

- (d) The City of Winnipeg _____
- (e) Province of Manitoba _____
- (f) Government of Canada _____

49. What can the Dene people living in Winnipeg, themselves, do to meet their cultural needs? (please write): _____

50. Do you feel the Dene relocation impacts your life today?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW
If so, in what way? (please explain): _____

The following questions pertain to your experience with the justice system and justice issues while living in Winnipeg.

51. Do you feel the justice system in Winnipeg is appropriate and effective for Dene people?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW
If not, what is a more appropriate and effective system? (please write): _____

52. If you have ever had to deal with the justice system in Winnipeg, were your legal needs adequately met by a lawyer or other legal advocate?
Circle one: YES NO DON'T KNOW
If not, how where your needs not met? (please explain): _____

This last set of questions relate to social services and your experiences seeking these supports.

53. When you need support, which of the following do you usually turn to? (check all that apply):
 Family
 Friends
 Provincial Social Services
 City Programs
 Aboriginal Organizations (MaMaWi, etc.)
 Other not listed here (please write _____)

54. What kind of social supports are needed? (please write): _____

55. Who should deliver these supports and why? (please write): _____

Where (what location, area, etc.) should these supports be delivered? (please write):

This is the end of this survey. Thank you for taking time to complete it.

Appendix D: Project Evaluation Form

Urban Dakota and Dene QOL Project- Evaluation Form

1. (a) What is your level of satisfaction with **your participation** in the project?
(check one):
 Very Unsatisfied
 Unsatisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

(b) **IF** you answered “somewhat satisfied”, “unsatisfied”, or “very unsatisfied”:
what could have been done to improve your participation in the project? (please
explain): _____
2. (a) What is your level of satisfaction with **other participants’ participation** in the
project? (check one):
 Very Unsatisfied
 Unsatisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

(b) **IF** you answered “somewhat satisfied”, “unsatisfied”, or “very unsatisfied”:
what could have been done to improve other participants’ participation? (please
explain): _____
3. (a) What is your level of satisfaction with **Keely’s performance** as Researcher
and Project Coordinator? (check one):
 Very Unsatisfied
 Unsatisfied
 Somewhat Satisfied
 Satisfied
 Very Satisfied

(b) **IF** you answered “somewhat satisfied”, “unsatisfied”, or “very unsatisfied”:
what could Keely have done to improve her performance Researcher and Project
Coordinator? (please explain): _____
4. What did you like **most** about this project? (Please explain in detail):
5. What did you like the **least** about this project? (Please explain in detail):
6. (a) Do you feel this project achieved its objective of identifying and developing
Urban Dakota QOL Indicators, including ways to measure these indicators?
(Circle one): Yes No No Answer
(b) *Why or why not?* (Please explain):
7. Other Comments:

Thank you for your time in completing this evaluation, and participating in this project!