

Aboriginal Voices on Housing (AVOHN)

Canadian Association on Ending Homelessness Conference 2017

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Canada

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Homelessness Partnering Strategy

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Project in Brief

**More than 44% of
the people who
experience
homelessness in
Red Deer are
Aboriginal**

History

- Aboriginal people make up less than 5% of the total population.
- Efforts by the Aboriginal community to address its own issues in culturally appropriate and innovative ways have not received resources
- The Aboriginal Voices on Housing Network (AVOHN) was launched to develop the skills, knowledge, and partnerships necessary to address Aboriginal housing in Red Deer with the Aboriginal community taking the lead.



Project in Brief

The Aboriginal Voices on Housing Network project is a structured and disciplined attempt to bring cross-sector housing organizations together in the City of Red Deer to focus on decreasing the level and severity of homelessness experienced by Aboriginal people and to address the systemic barriers that continue to make Aboriginal people vulnerable

Objectives and Outputs

- Gap Analysis/ Research Report
- On-going monitoring of housing stock
- Monthly stakeholder's Community Engagement Meetings
- Aboriginal Housing Strategy
- Aboriginal Housing Protocol
- Culturally Appropriate Assessment Tool
- Building Collective Impact to address housing for Aboriginal people in Red Deer

Project in Brief



Urban Aboriginal
Voices Society



Gap Analysis Finding & Recommendations

- ▶ Three month study, literature review, research and report
- ▶ 475 minutes of taped interviews & 51 surveys
- ▶ Community, front line workers and stakeholders
- ▶ Three types of recommendations
 - Short term
 - Mid-term
 - Long term

Gap Analysis Finding & Recommendations Short Term

- Racism
- Aboriginal entry points to access housing
- Aboriginal City of Red Deer Web portal: programming and services
- City Identity papers
- Housing Ombudsperson
- CMHC – Housing policy changes – culturally appropriate applications, smudging, family relationships, identification


Gap Analysis Finding & Recommendations Mid-Term

- 10 year Funding Strategy to support long term housing plan
- Volunteerism Program – earn points for house repairs or education costs
- Communication Plan to update Red Deer population regularly on housing strategy completions
- Mapping strategy – building neighborhoods

Gap Analysis Finding & Recommendations Mid-Term

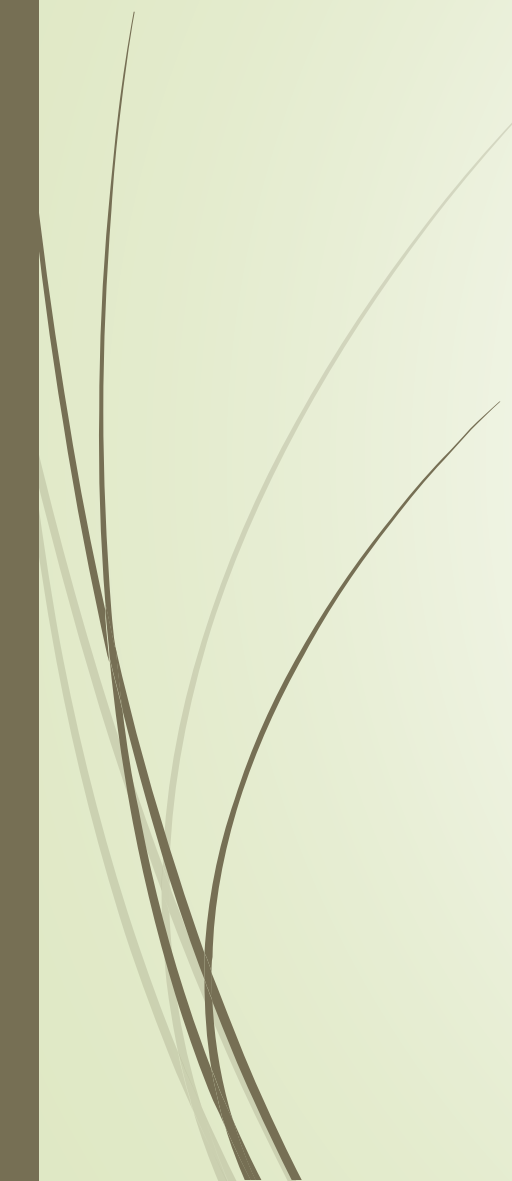
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- Cultural supports for housing
 - Home improvement program
 - Old houses restoration purchases
 - Rent Bank Development
 - Elderly Housing Initiatives

Gap Analysis Finding & Recommendations Long Term

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- Aboriginal home ownership programs
 - Job employment strategy
 - Education programming (rentsmart or principles of Aboriginal Home Ownership)
 - Annual Data collection with Aboriginal population



Our Emerging Collective Impact Model



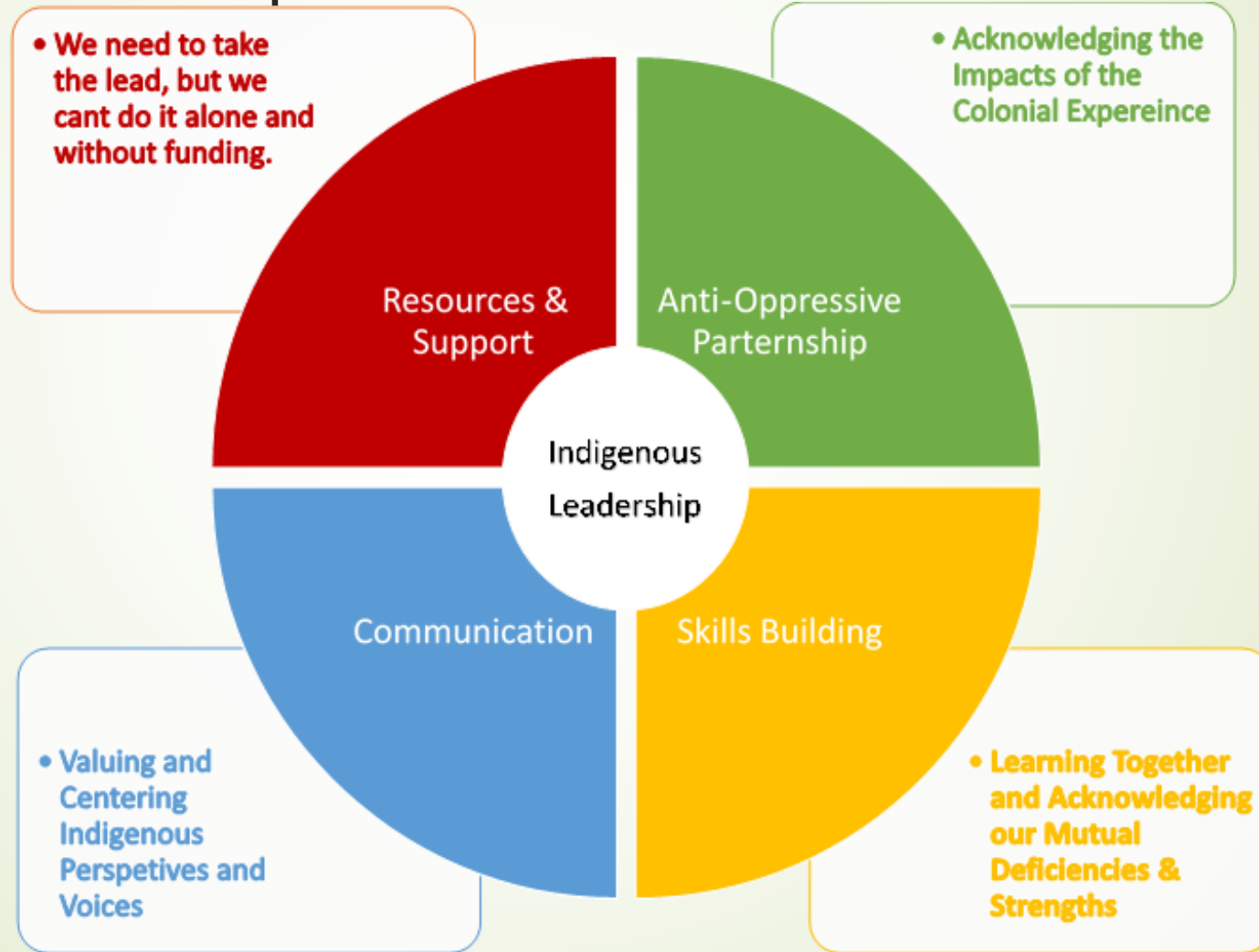
The power of collective impact lies in the heightened vigilance that comes from multiple organizations looking for resources and innovations through the same lens, the rapid learning that comes from continuous feedback loops, and the immediacy of action that comes from a unified and simultaneous response among all participants.



Our Emerging Collective Impact Model

- ▶ The Five Conditions of Collective Impact
 - ▶ Common Agenda
 - ▶ Shared Measurement
 - ▶ Mutually Reinforcing Activities
 - ▶ Continuous Communication
 - ▶ Backbone Support

The Need to Centre Indigenous Leadership



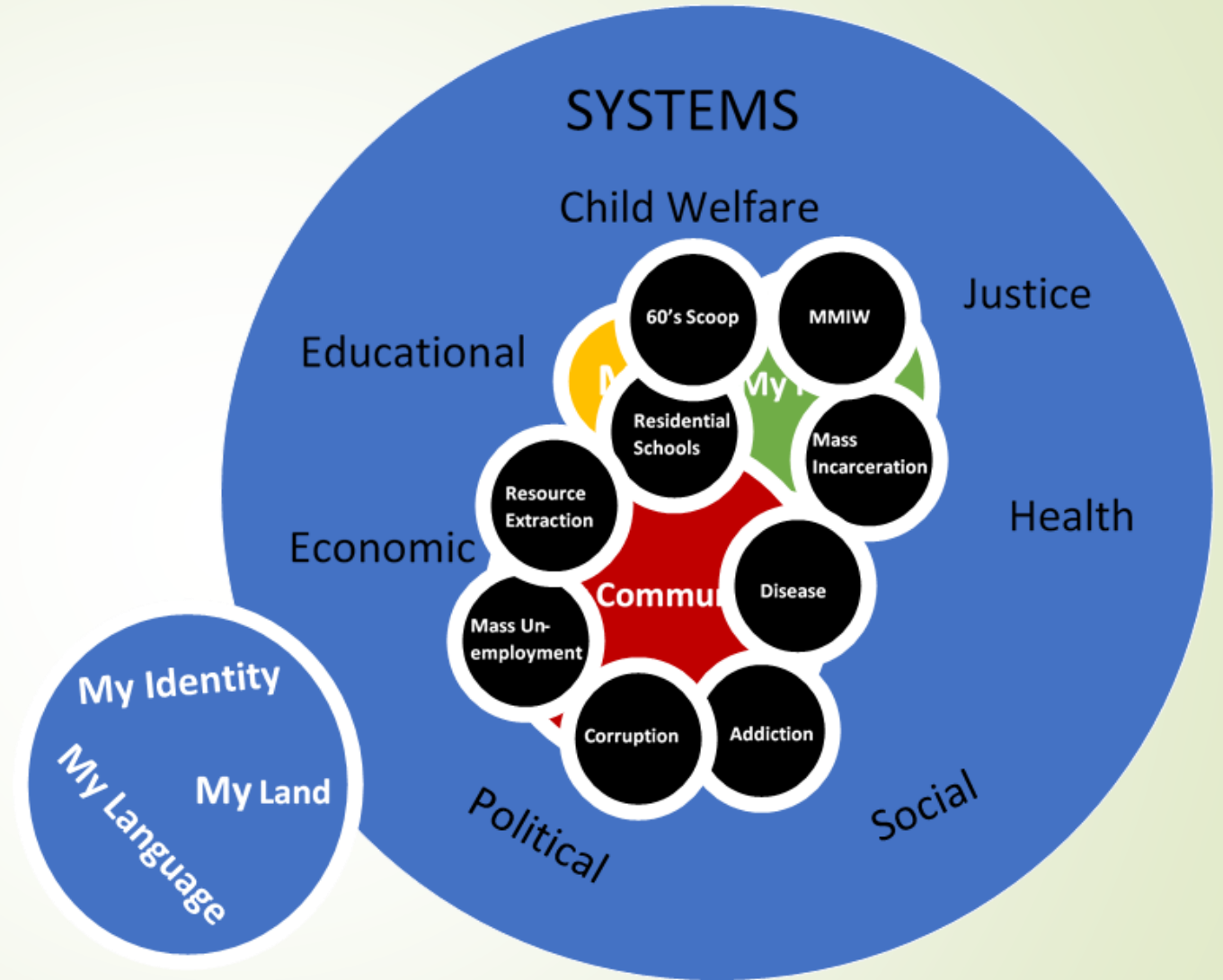
An Indigenous Understanding of Home

- ▶ How might this inform our approach to Indigenous Housing and Homelessness?
- ▶ Place, Space, Name, Connection
- ▶ A house is not a home
- ▶ Traditionally, housing was not a house, the Tipi was:
 - ▶ Shelter
 - ▶ Ceremonial space
 - ▶ Teaching tool
 - ▶ Connection to the land
 - ▶ Theatre
 - ▶ Reinforced the role of women



An Indigenous Understanding of Homelessness

- It isn't Just a Lack of Housing - It is the lack of an appropriate housing system
- Land First
- Language First
- Identity First
- Housing First?
- Restoration of our Space, Place, Name, and Connection



Reconciliation Framework for System Change

