

A Guide to
Community-
Based
Monitoring for
Northern
Communities

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Northern Minerals Program
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**A Guide to Community-Based Monitoring
for
Northern Communities**

by

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in collaboration with

Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation

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FOREWORD

The Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC) embarked upon a research and advocacy initiative in 1995 known as the Northern Minerals Program (NMP). This series of Working Papers sets out the results of the research that was undertaken as part of this program. We are grateful to the following foundations for providing financial assistance in one form or another over the duration of the NMP.

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CARC has examined mineral development across the North for many years. Most of this work focussed on environmental and socio-economic impacts and benefits, and conformity with law and policy. The NMP envisioned a more proactive approach to linking sustainability and mining across the North. In particular, the NMP has taken aim at the manner in which current policies, regulation and monitoring practices reflect the principles of sustainability. As well, CARC examined the challenges and opportunities that 'impact and benefits agreements' bring to Aboriginal governments.

The following is a list of the NMP Working Papers (an order form for these publications is found at the end of each paper).

1. "Mine Reclamation Planning in the Canadian North" by Brian Bowman and Doug Baker.
2. "Aboriginal Title and Free Entry Mining Regimes in Northern Canada" by Nigel Bankes and Cheryl Sharvit.
3. "Reforming the Mining Law of the Northwest Territories" by Barry Barton.
4. "Thinking About Benefits Agreements: An Analytical Framework" by Janet Keeping.
5. "A Guide to Community-Based Monitoring for Northern Communities" by Brenda Parlee.
6. "The Free Entry Mineral Allocation System in Canada's North: Economics and Alternatives" by Malcolm Taggart.
7. "Aboriginal Peoples and Impact and Benefit Agreements: Report of A National Workshop" by Kevin O'Reilly and Erin Eacott.

These papers are 'works in progress'; much of the research continues. While we believe that the findings offer important opportunities for reform, the views and opinions presented are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of CARC.

CARC will continue to press for changes to mining practice and policy. The findings and recommendations in these papers will be used by CARC to build an agenda for major reforms to northern mining law, better environmental management of mineral development, and fairer relationships amongst northern communities, governments and the mineral industry.

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Dedication

This Guide is dedicated to the Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation.

Acknowledgments

The Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, the West Kitikmeot / Slave Study Society, the Northern Scientific Training Program (Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development) and the Department of Languages Culture and Education (Government of the Northwest Territories) all provided funding for the *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* that became my Master's Thesis. This paper grew out of that work and was undertaken to give other communities guidance in carrying out similar monitoring programs. A version of this *Guide* was also submitted in fulfillment of a course requirement for the Environment and Resource Studies Program at the University of Waterloo.

Special thanks to Chief Florence Catholique, Grand Chief Felix Lockhart, the Lutsel K'e Wildlife, Lands and Environment Committee, Lawrence Catholique, Dr. Robbie Keith and Dr. Susan Wismer for their support and guidance during the project. My sincerest appreciation goes also to Dr. Mary-Louise McAllister who assisted me in completing this *Guide*.

Background

Aboriginal groups across Northern Canada are expressing both apprehension and hope about mineral resource development. Although concerned about the potential negative impacts of such development, many are hopeful that they can achieve real and lasting benefits.¹

Mining in Aboriginal Homelands²

| Issues | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| Regulatory Regime | |
| Notification, consultation and consent for exploration and development. | Research into the free entry system and the issues of notification, consultation and consent. |
| Need to regulate the impacts of exploration. | Undertake comparative analysis of impacts across the north, analysis of regulations in the Slave Geological Province. |
| Regulations based on Traditional Knowledge. | Document Traditional Knowledge and use to create regulatory requirements. |
| Negotiated Agreements | |
| Negotiating Impact and Benefit Agreements. | Exchange experiences on agreements; develop principles and guidelines. |
| Knowledge and Information | |
| Conduct regional baseline studies. | Design a knowledge / information policy and regulations using traditional knowledge / science. |
| More information for communities on mining. | Settle land claims; empower communities. |
| Understanding of corporations and government about the values, traditions and customs, wildlife management strategies, and knowledge underpinning Aboriginal societies. | Develop cross-cultural awareness programs. |
| Northern Assessment and Planning | |
| Protection of societies, integration of cultures / economies such that resource development decisions reflect local customs, traditions / values. | Examine economic, cultural and social issues. |
| Protection of environments, land, wildlife, habitat, communities, cultures, harvesting areas, significant regions / processes and sacred places | Examine environmentally significant areas and protected areas; examine comparative regional approaches to protection and management through sustainable use of renewable resources. |
| Reform of Environmental Assessment (EA). | Reform EA based on principles of sustainability. |
| Need for resource and land use planning regimes. | Resolution of trans-boundary issues; land claims. |
| Diversification of economies to include tourism. | Examination of how mining affects other economies. |

Figure 1 – Mining in Aboriginal Homelands: Issues and Opportunities

Among the many issues and opportunities found in Figure 1, there are opportunities for Aboriginal communities to build their capacity to participate in the planning and management of mineral resource developments and its effects.

This *Guide to Community-Based Monitoring* is one tool for building community capacity.

¹ Keith, R. F. "Mining in Aboriginal Homelands," In *Northern Perspectives*. CARC, 1996.

² Keith, R. F. 1996.

It was written specifically for local people who are interested in documenting the potential effects of mineral resource development on their community's health.

In each of the five sections, the *Guide* provides ideas and recommendations from the *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* that took place in Lutsel K'e in 1996. It also gives step-by-step instructions to assist in:

- Defining Monitoring;
- Developing Indicators of Community Health;
- Using the Indicators;
- Monitoring.

By monitoring the potential effects of mineral resource development on community health, northern communities may be better able to maximize benefits and minimize negative effects.

To the Community Researcher: How to Use This Guide

The guide is written specifically for you, the community researcher, and a local committee interested in developing and carrying out a monitoring program. By following along with this step-by-step guide you, the community researcher, will be able to develop a monitoring process that is appropriate and useful in your own community.

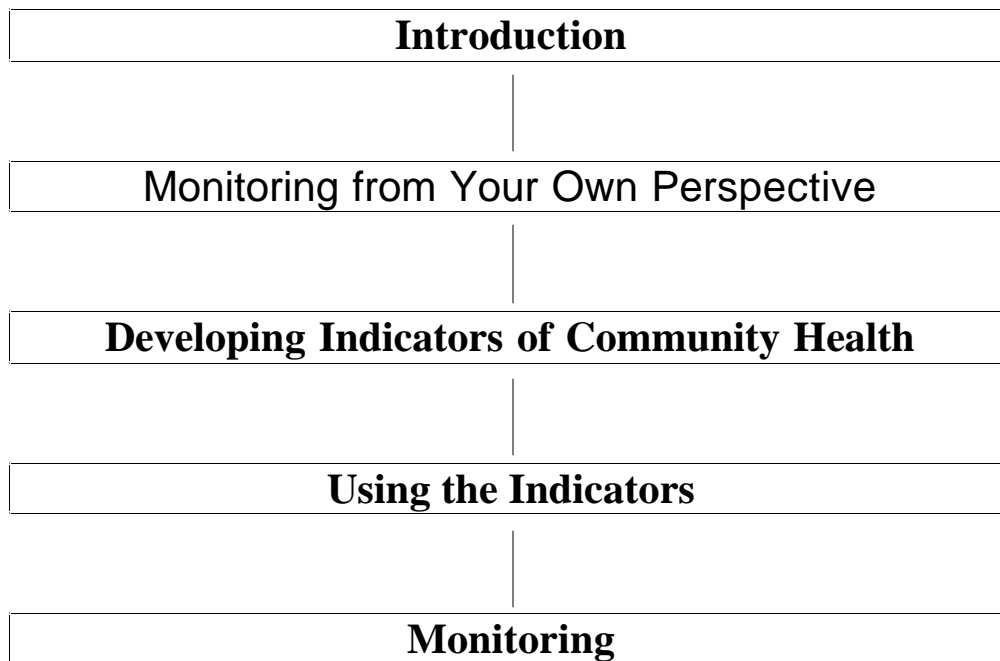


Figure 2 - Reference for How to Use this Guide

Section 1 - Introduction

Introduction to Monitoring

An elder sits down at the table, stirs his tea and waits. He takes a sip from the teacup, then sits back a moment. Then he begins to speak. He tells us about how he lived his life on the land, about his year at the Residential School and his first trip to Yellowknife. He shares his ideas and concerns about what is happening in his community today and on the land. He tells us these things about the past and the present so that his children can make wise decisions for future generations.

Listening to an elder's story is one way to learn about the past, present and future. Monitoring is similar to an elder's story. It can also provide information about the past and the present that can help us make decisions about the future.

There are, however, other kinds of monitoring being done in the north by different agencies and organizations. The Federal Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) and the Government of the Northwest Territories Department of Wildlife, Resources and Economic Development (GNWT-DWRED) for example, carry out compliance monitoring to ensure that environmental regulations are being respected. Other departments, such as the Environment Canada, do experimental monitoring. The Northern Contaminants Program (NCP) and the Mackenzie Valley Basin Impact Study (MVBIS) are two such examples. These kind of projects provide new information about how complex issues such as long range contaminants and climate change are affecting the northern ecosystem and northern peoples.

Resource development companies are also involved in monitoring. Project monitoring or effects monitoring, assists industry managers in understanding how their project is affecting the local environment. Management Plan monitoring can indicate whether management plans are working. In some cases, monitoring is tied into a flexible kind of management strategy called Adaptive Management.

Community involvement in these kinds of formal monitoring programs is not very common in the north particularly those related to the management of mineral development. But monitoring is very important for many northern communities who are concerned about the negative impacts and potential benefits of resource development in their region.

The model for Community-Based Monitoring outlined in this guide suggests how communities can build knowledge about the effects of resource development on the land, water, wildlife and on their community. With this knowledge, community leaders may be better able to balance what they see as benefits of development with the needs, concerns and goals of the community.

Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project Lutsel K'e, Northwest Territories

Monitoring began in Lutsel K'e as a result of concerns raised during the Environmental Assessment Hearings on the BHP Diamond Mine. Many people in Lutsel K'e were concerned about the potential effects of mining on the community. The goal of the *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* was to establish a community-controlled way to develop indicators and monitor changes in the community's health.

In April of 1996, Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation and Brenda Parlee (Project Director) received funding through the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee and the West Kitikmeot Slave Study Society. The *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* began 3 months later. The project was primarily focused on "community health". The Lutsel K'e Dene recognize that health is affected by many different political, social, cultural, economic and environmental influences. All these influences were considered in the monitoring project.

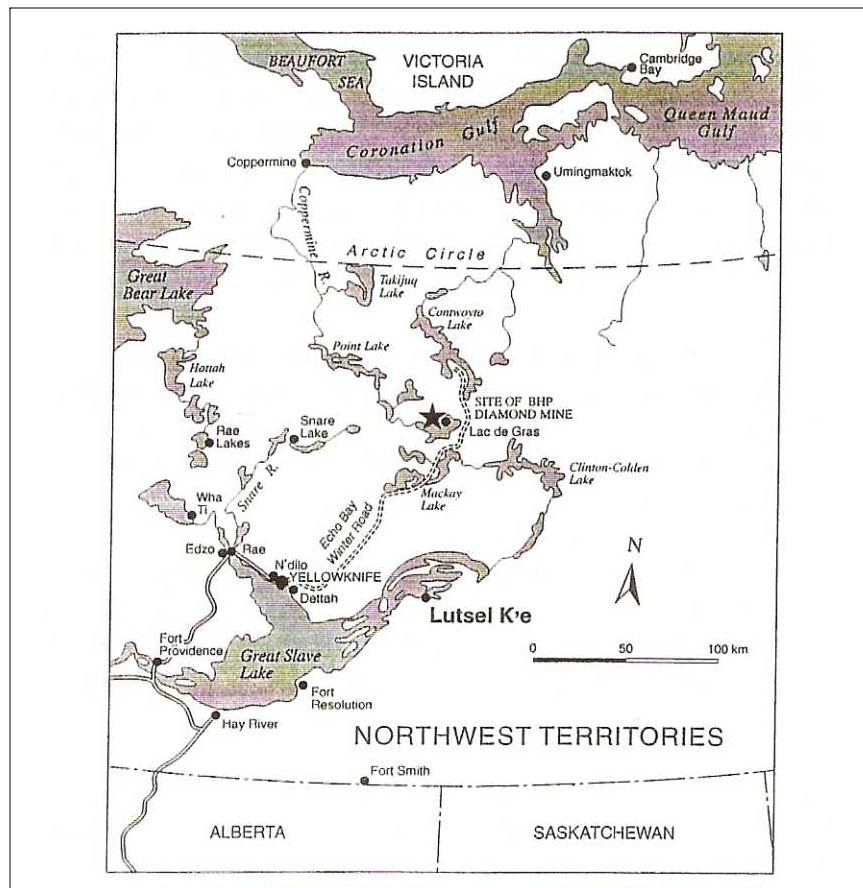


Figure 3 - Lutsel K'e (Map)

The Lutsel K'e Wildlife, Lands and Environment Committee provided important direction to the project. In particular they emphasized that the project should include; training of a local person, coordination with the local leadership and broad community participation. These became our principles for research and were used as guides by the Project Director through all phases of the project.

The Project was organized around three basic questions:

- Phase 1 - What is monitoring?**
- Phase 2 - What should the community monitor?**
- Phase 3 - How should the community monitor?**

Phase 1 – What is Monitoring?

To get ideas about the word “monitoring” from the perspective of people in Lutsel K'e, we held a public meeting and discussed different meanings and interpretations. We also worked informally with the Chipewyan Language Instructors to find appropriate Chipewyan terminology. An Elders' Terminology Workshop was later held to verify the terminology used during the project.

Phase 2 – What to Monitor?

The Wildlife, Lands and Environment Committee decided that the decision about what to monitor, should be left up to people in the community. They directed the Project Director and the Community Researcher to do home-visits with each household in the community. This was a useful approach for gathering ideas about what to monitor. Home-visits were also a good way to inform people in the community who did not know very much about the project. The information that was gathered was organized into themes by the Community Researcher and the Project Director. Later more specific ideas were organized into a set of indicators of community health.

Phase 3 – How to Monitor?

The objective of phase three was to develop a process of monitoring. The Project Director and Community Researcher brainstormed about the kinds of elements that should be included in the monitoring process. They considered the principles for research set out by the Wildlife, Lands and Environment Committee as well as the skills of the Community Researcher. The four elements of the monitoring process that they decided upon included: collecting information; summarizing information; evaluating information; and reporting. This process was later verified during a public meeting in Lutsel K'e.

Lessons learned from this *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* in Lutsel K'e are found in this guide.

Who is Involved in Community-Based Monitoring?

Community Researcher (You)

You are one of the most important people in this project. This guide is written for you. As the community researcher, you will develop and carry out the monitoring process. Your roles and responsibilities are outlined on the pages of this guide. But you should not work alone. You and your community should develop an advisory committee to direct you through the process.

Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee should be established to assist you in this process. You could work with an existing committee or your local Council could appoint a new group of local people to work with you. The people on your committee may change later depending on what you decide to monitor.

Community Members

Community participation is an important part of any community-based process. By involving youth, elders, adults, local groups and resource people in your project, collecting information will not only be easier but is likely to be more valuable from the community's perspective. The more people who are able to contribute to the monitoring effort, the more successful it is likely to be.

Figure 4 - Who is Involved in Community-Based Monitoring?

What Kind of Work is Involved in Community-Based Monitoring?

A Way of Collecting Information

Indicators for Monitoring

Indicators are signs or symbols of change. Indicators can help show how the health of your community or the environment around you is changing over time. Some indicators, such as employment statistics, can show the changes or the effects of a big development project on your community. If your indicators are recognized in the planning and management of such a development project, monitoring can be a very effective tool for understanding and addressing those effects.

Consistent Data Gathering

How you collect the information, when, where and from whom all must be recorded in a way that you and others can understand. You can use a tape recorder, a video camera, a computer database or a pen and paper to record information. Being consistent in the way you gather information is very important in monitoring. As your monitoring program develops you will be analyzing and comparing the information you have collected. If all the information is collected in the same way, analysis and comparison will be easier.

Summarizing and Evaluating the Information You Have Collected

Collecting information is only one part of monitoring. You need to organize it in a way that you and other people in the community can understand. You can do this by creating summaries of the comments and stories you have collected. Evaluating or making sense of the information is also important. In this *Guide*, you and your Advisory Committee will be able to find out “What the information means?”

Meaningful Communication and Reporting

How you present your results is also very important. If the people in the community, including your leaders, do not know the results of your project, the information you have collected will not be useful. Newsletters, displays, community workshops, or formal reports are all ways of communicating with your community. Be creative in how you communicate the information and ensure that it is meaningful to people in the community.

Figure 5 - What Kind of Work is Involved in Community-Based Monitoring?

***Section 2 -
Monitoring from
Your Own Perspective***

Monitoring from Your Own Perspective

Lessons from Lutsel K'e

One critical first step in developing a “Community-Based Monitoring” process is to find out if other people in your community are interested in monitoring and to find out what “monitoring” means to them.

In Lutsel K'e this was done by focusing on the word “monitoring” and its meaning in the Chipewyan language. The Project Director and Community Researcher did some preliminary brainstorming in English, and then discussed the ideas with elders during a public meeting. They also worked informally with local Chipewyan Language Instructors to develop Chipewyan terminology and then translated those into English. Some of the Chipewyan terminology is found below.

Chipewyan Terminology for Monitoring

Net'î horédhâ honeltÿn benerédí dhi bek'orejâ t'así Æedø núdhier já ?iãá
háyorñla náts'edé sí.
(Watching, listening, learning and understanding about changes in the community.)

Yunedhe t'asi selæi
(Looking into and improving the future.)

Dÿne ch'a nie unizí chu dô chu eãeãte æile
(The Dene way of life in the past compared to today)

Figure 6 - Chipewyan Terminology for “Monitoring”

The concept “*watching, listening, learning and understanding about changes in the Dene way of life*” was finally adopted because it appeared to most accurately describe the reality of the project and as a concept was most meaningful because of its concrete Chipewyan translation.

Section 2 - Step 1

Why Monitor?

It is important to find out if other people in your community think monitoring is important and why. You may want to hold a public meeting to discuss or sketch out ideas for monitoring with your community. Once you have decided why monitoring is important to your community, consider who might be involved. The following questions might help you.

- How will you collect information?

- What kind of information would and could you collect?
- How will you summarize and evaluate the information?
- Who will summarize and evaluate the information?
- To whom are you going to report? How will they use the information?

You may want to create a list of key people who could form an Advisory Committee or could otherwise assist you with the project.

Section 2 - Step 2

The Word “Monitoring” in Your Language

You have figured out why you and your community want to monitor. The next step is to decide on an approach to monitoring. An easy way to do that is to think about the word “monitoring” and what it means to you and your community.

a) Public Meeting

Consider holding a public meeting to introduce the project and get some ideas about monitoring. That meeting may focus only on terminology or may focus on broader issues and approaches to monitoring. If your first meeting is fairly general, you may need a second, or even a third meeting to follow-up on the discussion. Be sure and write down all possible ideas.

b) Brainstorming with Local Language Instructors

After your public meeting, you should have some ideas about monitoring from your community. You may want to work with local literacy instructors to develop terminology in the local language and to accurately translate your ideas into English. This was a very important part of the project in Lutsel K'e because it gave us the opportunity to understand “monitoring” from the community’s perspective.

c) Elders’ Terminology Workshop

To ensure that the terminology you have chosen or developed for the word “monitoring” is accurate hold a verification workshop. The elders are often the experts in the local language so including them is very important. Plan to have a language instructor at this workshop also. They can assist in accurately writing and recording the elders’ words.

*Section 3 -
Developing Indicators of
Community Health*

Developing Indicators of Community Health

Lessons from Lutsel K'e

In Section 2, you worked to define “monitoring” from your community’s perspective. In this section you will be developing a definition, themes and indicators of community health that you can use in monitoring. You can work with your Advisory Committee through this step or try involving others in the community through:

- Workshops;
- Home-visits (Interviews); and
- Public Meetings.

In Lutsel K'e, we defined community health and developed themes and indicators through home-visits. If in your opinion, home-visits are not a good way of collecting information in your community, you could identify issues or concerns through workshops or during local committee meetings. If you have difficulty in a workshop setting, do a number of home-visits and then return to a workshop with the results of your visits. This may be enough to get the ball rolling.

Depending on how many people you visit or attend your workshop you may end up with more issues than you could possibly consider monitoring. Start with what appears to be most important. You can always come back to this step again later and consider other issues.

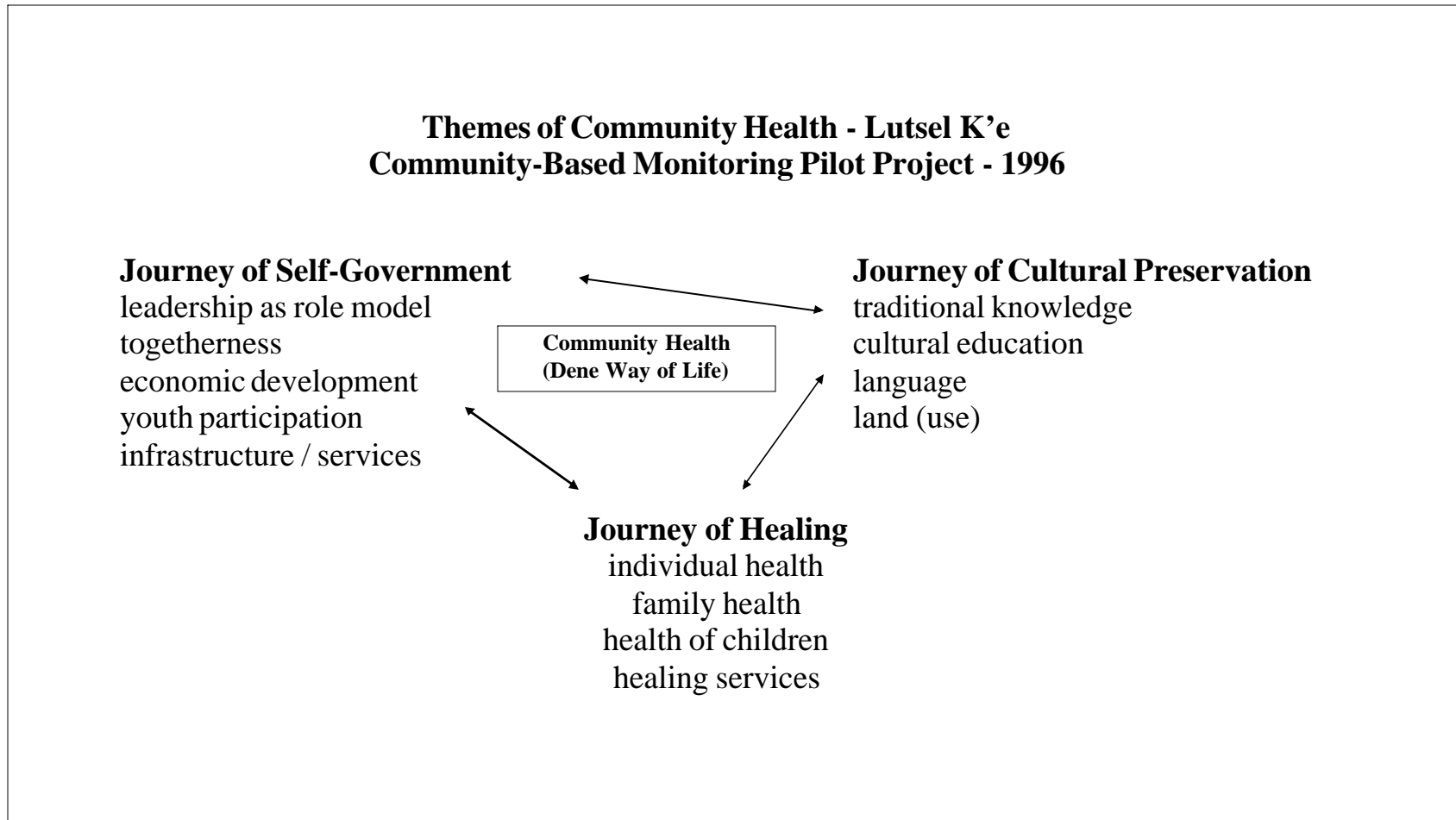
Step one and two in this section suggest how you can develop your own interpretation of community health as a journey as well as develop a range of indicators or **signs of change**. Indicators that reflect positive change may be the most appropriate for monitoring in your community.

Section 3 - Step 1

Definition and Journeys of Community Health

Community health was the focus of study for the *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* in Lutsel K'e. To make the concept of “community health” more meaningful for people there, it was translated from Chipewyan as the “Dene Way of Life” (See Figure 7). You may want to interpret community health differently using your own ideas or by translating it from your own local language. Include them in Figure 8 for future reference.

Using this definition, consider how your community’s health might change over time. It may be useful to think about these changes in terms of journeys. Are there some important journeys you and your community are experiencing? Can you decide on three journeys that are very important? In Lutsel K'e, the three most important journeys were those of **self-government, healing and cultural preservation** (See Figure 7).



**Figure 7 - Definition and Themes of Community Health - Lutsel K'e
Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project - 1996**

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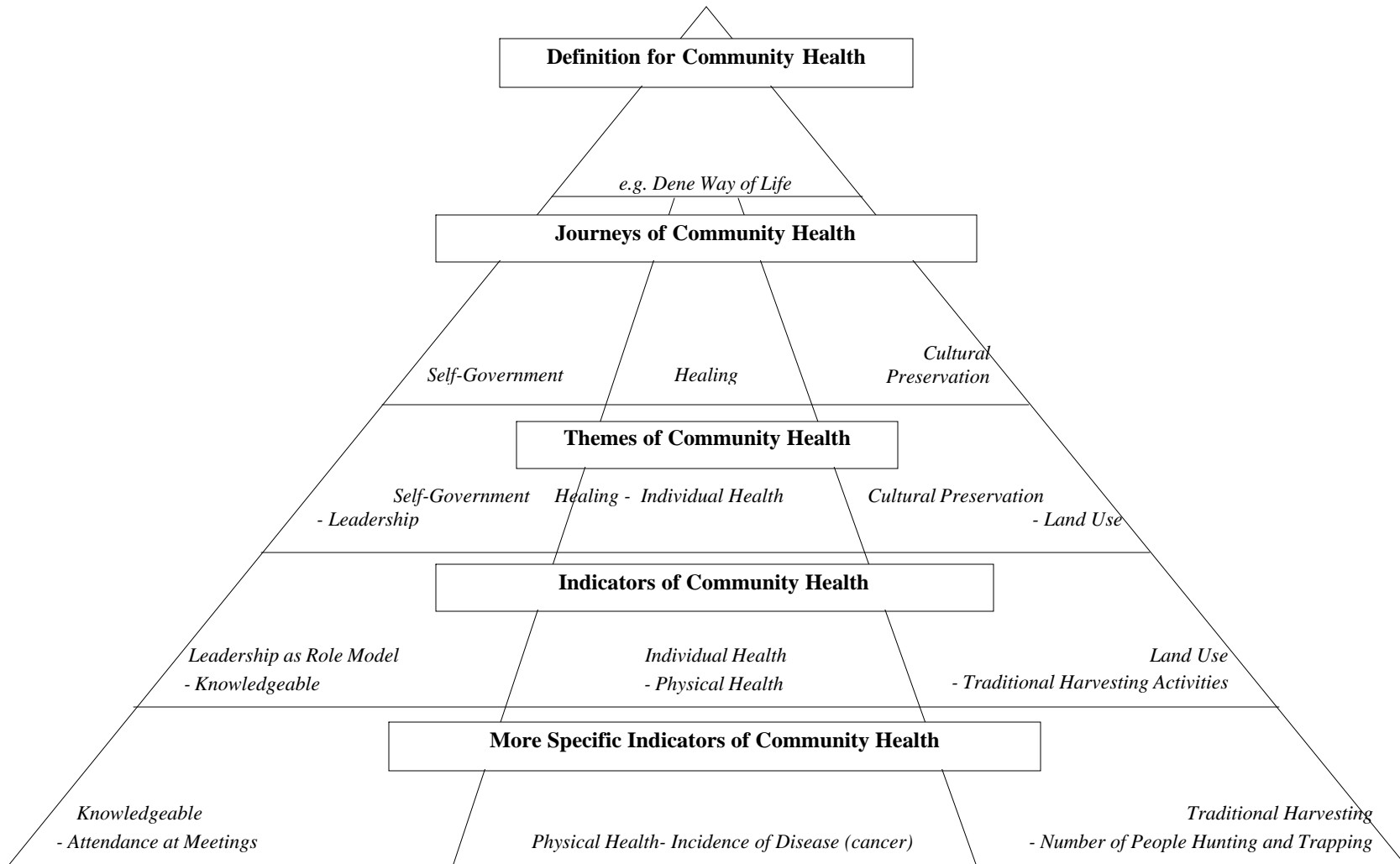


Figure 8 - Sample Sheet - Definition, Themes and Indicators of Your Community’s Health

To get some ideas, meet with your Advisory Committee and talk to people in your community. Community input at this stage is important if the indicators and the process of monitoring you develop is to be meaningful to them.

Once you have decided upon a definition and on the journeys of community health you feel are important, record them in Figure 8 for future reference.

Section 3 - Step 2

Indicators of Community Health

The next step is to define the indicators or **signs of change** that would indicate change in your journeys of community health. Signs of change would be things that people could see, hear, feel or experience in their daily lives. In Lutsel K'e, indicators or signs of change were developed for the three journeys mentioned above, self-government, healing and cultural preservation as shown in Figure 9.

If you talk to elders, youth, and other people in your community, you are likely to gather many different kinds of indicators. Some of these indicators might reflect negative changes in the journeys of community health. Other indicators might reflect more positive changes. Selecting indicators that reflect positive change provides you opportunities to highlight the strengths and assets of your community rather than its weakness.

If you haven't already done so, share your ideas with other people in the community. Sharing your ideas with others is an important way of including more people in the process.

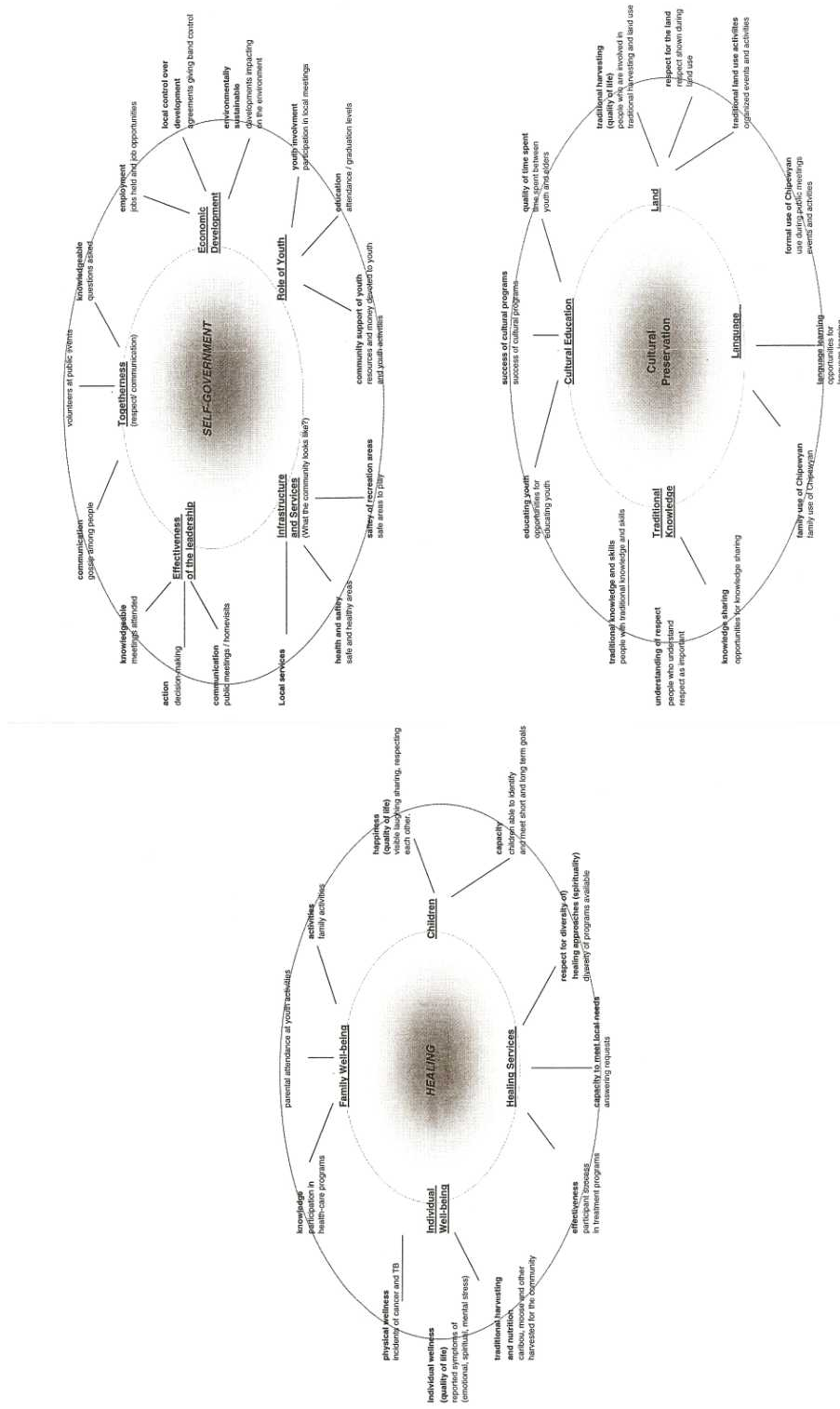


Figure 9 – Indicators of Community Health – Lutsel K’e

Section 4 – Using the Indicators

Using the Indicators

Lessons from Lutsel K'e

This section is based on secondary research about indicators and how they might be used to show changes that may occur as a result of mineral resource development (see the Supporting Literature pp. 39-52). As with the other sections, you can use these ideas as a guide or develop your own approach to using the indicators you developed in Section 3.

Step 1

Developing Indicators that Reflect Local Knowledge

From your work in Section 3, you should have a basic list of indicators that reflect how you and your community see, hear, feel and experience change in your community's health. But not all the indicators on your list will be useful for monitoring. Before you create your final list of indicators, here are a few ideas to help you decide which indicators might be useful in monitoring.

a) Is it relevant to your community?

You probably have more indicators now than you could possibly monitor. Consider which ones most appropriately reflect your community's health.

b) Where does the indicator come from?

Indicators, like stories, have the capacity to reflect the culture and values within a community. They also can reflect different knowledge systems within that community. People with differing knowledge systems, are likely to have different views on the benefits of employment or the value various family health programs or the importance of traditional food. In Lutsel K'e, we recognized that the indicators we developed reflect three different but inter-related knowledge systems.

Traditional Knowledge Indicators reflect the knowledge and experiences of elders and previous generations of Lutsel K'e Dene. For example, according to some elders' perspectives on community health, a healthy child is one who works for and listens to their elders. Others in the community may not hold the same view.

Western Science Indicators reflect knowledge gained through non-Dene institutions such as the Health Centre or the non-Dene school system. For example, some people use criteria from the field of clinical psychology to describe the health of a child.

Community-Based Indicators reflect knowledge gained through everyday experiences. From their own experience, someone might suggest a healthy child is one who spends more time playing out of doors than watching television.

There are other criteria that you should consider in choosing your indicators.

- a) How easily will you be able to gather information about the indicator?
- b) How much will it cost to gather the information?
- c) What indicators does the community feel are most appropriate for measuring change?

Section 4 - Step 2

Linking the Indicators Together

Another way to decide which indicators to monitor, is to examine how the indicators relate to one another. Every relationship should have its own rationale or story. These rationales can be as detailed as a paragraph or as simple as one sentence. In some cases the relationships will be based on facts, others will only be hypothetical.

In the example below, the *number of agreements which give the Band control over resource development* (1) is related to the *number of people involved in traditional harvesting* (2). This relationship reflects the hypothesis that local control over resources and resource development can lead to an increase in the use of those resources and vice versa. The example below also suggests a strong relationship between the *number of people involved in traditional harvesting* (2) and the *amount of traditional food eaten in the community* (3). This relationship may be seen as more fact than hypothesis since traditional harvesting has traditionally been the key to how much traditional food is eaten.

In this example (Figure 10), there is no direct relationship between the *number of agreements which give the Band control over resource development* (1) and the *amount of traditional food that is eaten in the community* (3).

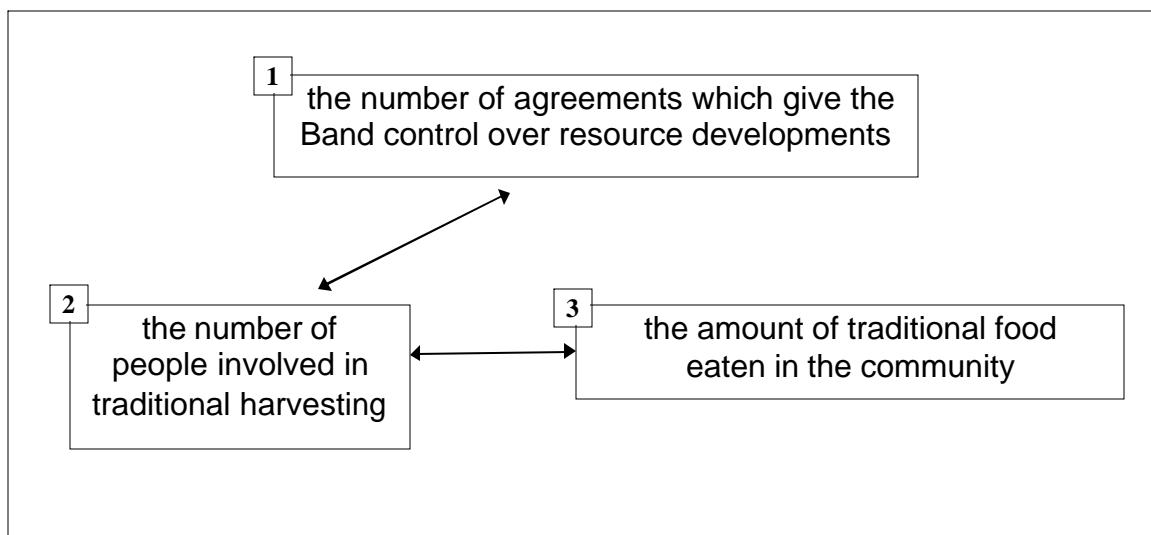


Figure 10 - Relationships between Some Indicators

As you begin to monitoring, you may find that the indicators you are using are not specific enough or that the hypothetical relationships you drew between the indicators require some changes.

You can see how the indicators have changed in Figure 11. A new relationship has developed between *the number of agreements which give the Band control over resource developments* (1) and the *amount of traditional food eaten in the community* (3). This relationship may reflect an increase in agreements that specifically provide the community with more traditional food. For example, some big game hunting (trophy) lodges have agreements to provide meat to local communities but do not provide opportunities for harvesting.

The *number of people involved in traditional harvesting* (2) and the *amount of traditional food eaten in the community* (3) have also been made more specific in this example. By making the indicators more specific, you can show more subtle but important changes. Think about how your indicators in Figure 8 can be made more specific and record them there.

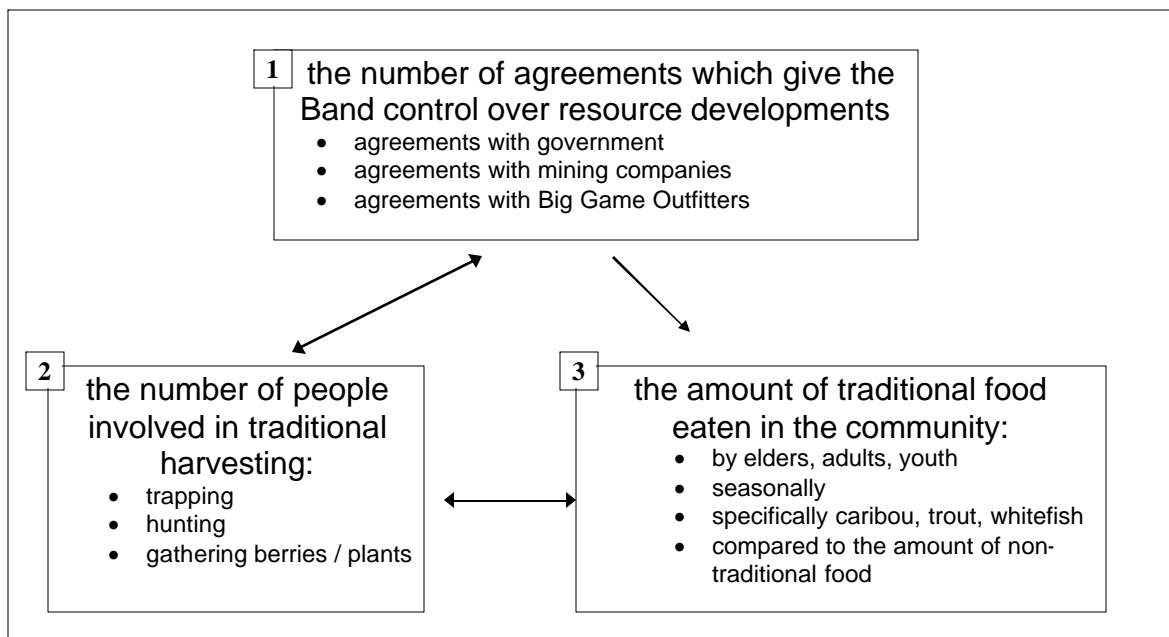


Figure 11 - Relationships between More Specific Indicators

Section 4 - Step 3

Mapping the Effects of Mineral Resource Development

You can also decide which indicators to monitor based on your knowledge of resource developments and the kind of influence that they are likely to have over your community.

In Lutsel K'e, we looked at some of the documents and reports that came out of the Environmental Assessment of the BHP Diamond Mine. From those reports we identified various influences which were grouped as:

- Employment Opportunities;
- Impact and Benefit Agreements;
- Capital and Labour Expenditures; and
- Mine Construction and Operation.

Figure 12 provides an example of an “effects map” which uses indicators to trace the impact of these **employment** (increased individual income) on community health. Similar to the relationships between indicators, the “effects maps” can be hypothetical or reflect well-known cause and effect relationships. It is also important that you develop a rationale or a story for each “effect” you are defining.

In the “effects map” in Figure 12, the impact of employment on community health is tracked using the same three indicators.

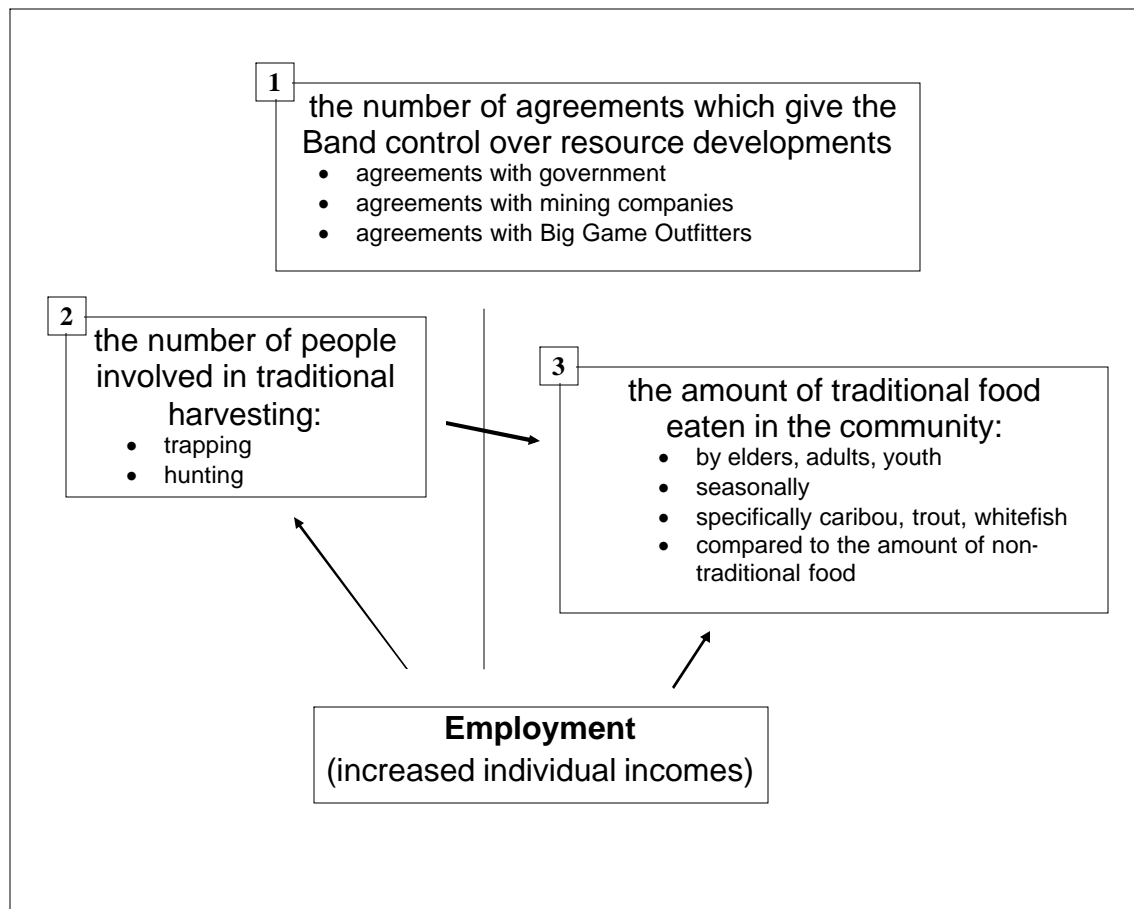


Figure 12 - “Effects Map” Using Some Indicators

This “effects map” suggests that employment (increased individual income) will have an effect on the number of people using the land for trapping and hunting. This may be a positive relationship or a negative one. Those people employed with the mine may use their increased income to buy equipment for hunting and trapping. On the other hand, an increase in employment may mean a decrease in the number of people who are able to spend time hunting and trapping.

The amount of traditional food eaten in the community may also be affected by employment (increased individual income). This effect may be indirect or occur as a result of people spending more or less time hunting and trapping. This effect may also be direct. An increase in individual income and “purchasing power” may lead to an increase in the amount of non-Dene food consumed. In other words people with more money may buy more food at the store rather than spend time gathering food from the land. Because the amount of traditional food eaten in the community is subject to both direct and indirect effects of employment, it may be a very good indicator or sign of change in community health.

You will see that the “effects map” in Figure 12 suggests no relationship between employment and the number of agreements giving the Band control over resource development. As suggested earlier, relationships between indicators and “effects” may change over time and so should be re-examined from time to time.

You should also consider developing more than one “effects map” for each of the influences that will be introduced by the resource development project. You could also try and relate each of the “effects maps” to one another. Different maps will provide you with different perspectives. For a start, you might develop a map that paints a positive picture. Sometimes this is more difficult than taking a negative view. By developing both a negative and positive map of change in your community, you may be able to see both the opportunities and benefits and negative effects of resource developments such as the BHP Diamond Mine.

The next section talks about how you can work with your community to gather knowledge about each of the indicators in your effects map.

Section 5 - Monitoring

Monitoring

You have worked through the previous sections and you should now have:

- some terminology for monitoring;
- a set of indicators;
- a map of your community's health; and
- “effects maps” suggesting how your community's health might be affected by mineral resource development

Lessons from Lutsel K'e

Monitoring generally involves three tasks; data gathering, analysis, and reporting. In Lutsel K'e we called these tasks **information collection, summarizing and evaluation and reporting**. This section will help you think about each of those tasks and how you will carry them out.

The steps in this section should be followed over and over again or in a **cycle**. Every time you finish a cycle you will have gathered information about your indicators, summarized that information, met with your advisory committee to evaluate your summaries and produced a report for your community. In Lutsel K'e, the cycles run every four months. Each of the steps takes a little over one month to complete. You may want to consider one month for each of the four steps in your monitoring cycle. If you are monitoring many indicators (more than five), it may take you longer to complete each of these steps.

It is also important that you vary the indicators you are monitoring every couple of cycles. Monitoring the same indicators every cycle can become stressful on you and the people you are interviewing, particularly if you live in a small community. By gathering information about a range of indicators, you will be able to gain a broader understanding of community health issues.

Section 5 - Step 1 Collecting the Information

The easiest starting point for collecting information is to be organized as possible. It is also important that you plan to be consistent in the way you collect information. This will make analysis easier later on. Good data gathering should also be done consistently and collected according to the direction or rules of conduct established by your Advisory Committee, such as confidentiality. This is particularly important when collecting data that relates to sensitive issues of social health. In all cases the rights of the person relaying information must be respected. Trust between you as a data collector and members of the community who are providing information is essential if your monitoring project is to survive over the long haul.

What kind of timing is required?

In monitoring community health issues, seasons may play a role in the kind of information that is available. Are the indicators you are monitoring affected by the seasons or dependent on a seasonal activity? Sometimes the importance of the seasons may be obvious. For example, how much traditional food (caribou meat) is eaten in the community will be different in mid-summer than in mid-winter. Sometimes the importance of the seasons is less obvious. This is something you will have to consider. Even an indicator such as *the number of volunteers at public events* may be affected by the seasons. If you are trying to show changes from year to year, consistency in the time of year you collect information is very important.

How are you going to include the community in the data gathering?

In order to facilitate broad participation of the community in the monitoring process, data gathering or the collecting of information will be accomplished through homevisits. The home-visit approach in the 1996 pilot project was a very successful means of collecting information as well as useful in encouraging participation from community members who would not normally speak out during workshops or public meetings. Depending on the focus of your study, workshops may be a more effective means of involving people. If you decide on home-visits, it is recommended that you do not focus too heavily on questionnaires that leave little room for people to comment freely and openly.

Most people do not enjoy “yes”, “no” type of questions such as “Are you employed? Where are you employed? Do you like your job?”. These types of direct questions may be seen as offensive.

You are likely to get a much more positive response and probably more useful information if you take the time to talk to people. You may find the *Information Collection Sheet* in Figure 13, helpful in recording information from your interviews.

What age group are you gathering information from?

Youth, adults and elders are likely to have distinct perspectives on issues in the community. If you are doing home-visits, attempt to get equal input from all groups. If you are gathering data from a workshop or public meeting, keep a record of who attended the workshop and consider their age in evaluation and reporting.

Are you interviewing both men and mostly women?

In Lutsel K'e there tended to be a difference in the input that was gathered from men and women on issues of community health. On average men tended to be more concerned about issues of the leadership, economic development and unemployment whereas women tended to be more concerned with issues of education, child behavior, and individual mental, spiritual, emotional and physical wellness. Issues that were of equal importance to both men and women included sobriety, the health of the land, water and caribou as well as the preservation of Dene culture. This may be something to consider when you are collecting information.

Who are the people you are interviewing?

It is also useful to think about who you are interviewing or who is attending your workshop. Are you interviewing only people who speak your language? Were they born in the community? Did they grow up in the community? Do the people who attend your meetings tend to be more or less educated than others?

These issues are particularly important if you are researching socio-economic issues. Many existing efforts at monitoring rely on information from resource people in management positions. This is not to say that the information gathered from resource people is inaccurate or is not extremely valuable. The issue is whether you are meaningfully involving community members.

Tools you Need to Record Information

What kind of **equipment** are you going to use to record information? Do you know how to use your equipment? You may want to begin recording information using a well-ruled book and a pen. Later on you might consider purchasing a computer database that could help you organize your information, however, don't feel compelled to jump into too much technology right away. The experiences of other community-based projects shows that computers are useful tools but can also become obstacles (as well as heavy paper weights) to achieving your goals if you aren't properly trained. Try to simplify the process. As long as you are organized and consistent, the simplest and easiest method is often the best.

Recording qualitative information however, may require additional equipment. Tape recorders and video cameras are useful if you have to record long descriptions or stories.

How you **store and access your information** is also important. As mentioned earlier, technology is an issue, however, **ownership** over information, **confidentiality** of those providing information as well as the short and long term **security** of your data is also important.

It is highly recommended that you develop an agreement with the leadership in your community about how you are going to collect information, what it will be used for and who will have access to that information. Depending on your perspective, the most ethical position regarding ownership of information is that it belongs to the community that is providing you with data. Guaranteeing community ownership of information is one of the most important aspects of community based monitoring

PHOTOCOPY

Information Collection Sheet

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Indicator Name: | |
| 1. Interviewee #1 | Date: |
| Comments: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 2. Interviewee #2 | Date: |
| Comments: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 3. Interviewee #3 | Date: |
| Comments: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 4. Interviewee #4 | Date: |
| Comments: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| 5. Interviewee #5 | Date: |
| Comments: | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Figure 13 - Sample Information Collection Sheet

Section 5 - Step 2

Summarizing

How you summarize information will depend on the indicator you have selected. If the information you have gathered consists of very short comments, you could simply make a list. The Sample Sheet in Figure 14 may be helpful.

If the results of your interviews are more like little stories or narratives, you may need to take a different approach. You could incorporate major issues from each of the narratives into your own little story. This kind of story is sometimes called a “meta-narrative”. Whatever approach you decide upon, keep in mind the summaries should be simple and straightforward. Being creative can also make the process of summarizing more interesting for you and your readers.

Section 5 - Step 3

Evaluation/Comparison

Understanding the Information You Have Collected

Summarizing the information is only one way of understanding the information you have collected. Evaluating the information you collect during the each cycle is also important, as is the **comparison** of the results of each cycle. Although you could do the evaluation and comparison by yourself, the input of your Advisory Committee is important. Different people may be able to recognize different kinds issues and may be able to add to everyone’s understanding of the **changes that are occurring from cycle to cycle**. The Advisory Committee can also be helpful in developing recommendations or plans of action to address any changes that are seen to be negative. Be sure to record their ideas and recommendations. See the Figure 15 for a sample of how these might be recorded.

As you get more involved in your monitoring process you may want to carry out some additional evaluation. Figure 16 contains some **questions** you could use for further evaluating the information that you have collected.³

3 Questions were developed using:

Boyle, M., J.J. Kay and B. Pond. “Attributes of A Monitoring Program,” In State of the Landscape Reporting: The Development of Indicators for the Provincial Policy Statement Under the Land Use Planning and Protection Act. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, 1996.

PHOTOCOPY

Summary of Information Collected

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments: | Interviewee |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | (e.g. #1, #2...) |
| 2. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments: | Interviewee |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | (e.g. #1, #2...) |
| 3. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments: | Interviewee |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | (e.g. #1, #2...) |
| 4. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments: | Interviewee |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | (e.g. #1, #2...) |
| 5. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments: | Interviewee |
| a) | |
| b) | |
| c) | |
| d) | |
| e) | (e.g. #1, #2...) |

Figure 14 – Sample Summary Sheet

Evaluation Summary - Comments / Recommendations

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments | Recommendations |
| a) | a) |
| b) | b) |
| c) | c) |
| d) | d) |
| e) | e) |
| 2. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments | Recommendations |
| a) | a) |
| b) | b) |
| c) | c) |
| e) | d) |
| 3) | e) |
| 3. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments | Recommendations |
| a) | a) |
| b) | b) |
| c) | c) |
| d) | d) |
| e) | e) |
| 4. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments | Recommendations |
| a) | a) |
| b) | b) |
| c) | c) |
| d) | d) |
| e) | e) |
| 5. Indicator | Date: |
| Summary of Comments | Recommendations |
| a) | a) |
| b) | b) |
| c) | c) |
| d) | d) |
| e) | e) |

**Figure 15 - Sample Evaluation Summary -
Comments and Recommendations**

Additional Questions for Evaluating your Information

- 1. Is the information relevant or useful? Will it help you make decisions?** If your monitoring project is supposed to work within the community, the information that you collect should reflect the issues and needs of the community. This means you should consider significant events in the community and consider how they affect the answers to your “Guiding Questions.” In Lutsel K’e for example, efforts were made to begin monitoring at the same time that mining activity accelerated in the region. Does the information help you to **anticipate change**? Do you see how change in one indicator or issue leads to change in another indicators?

The “effects map” that you developed in the previous section can be a very useful tool for anticipating change. As you find out information about one indicator, your effects map can help you learn how that change might affect other aspects of your community’s health.

- 2. Do you have a clear idea about what you are monitoring?** Monitoring is useful in that it provides us a clear understanding of the changes taking place in a community or a particular environment. Are you finding the information you need for each indicator? Do you need to change some of your indicators?
- 3. How wide a range of information are you collecting?** To best understand the changes in your community or the environment you are monitoring, you may need to use a wide range of indicators that reflect different aspects of your community’s health. If your range of indicators is too narrow, you may miss out on some changes that are occurring.

You may not be able to monitor this wide range by yourself. Instead, look for other programs (regional or territorial) and / or communities who are monitoring related indicators. For example, if you are trying to monitor the health of the caribou herd in your area, you may be using indicators around harvesting caribou in your community. Your efforts to understand the health of the caribou may be increased if you are able to talk to someone who is gathering information about the lichens that the caribou eat.

- 4. Do you know the organizations, government departments or corporations involved in what you are monitoring?** Sharing information may be difficult if you do not know the organizations, departments or agencies who are working on similar issues. It is therefore is useful for you and your Advisory Committee to get to know those people who can help you address your community’s concerns or issues. If you are monitoring *employment* in the community for example, which groups of people in your community and outside of it affect *employment*. Who are the local representatives responsible for employment? Which government departments are involved? Are there local or regional businesses involved?
- 5. Can you place a value on the change taking place? Is it positive or negative? Will it lead to other positive or negative changes?** Monitoring provides knowledge that will help you make decisions about issues in your community or your local environment. That knowledge is necessarily useful, however, until it is evaluated. It is the role of your Advisory Committee to evaluate the knowledge gained, and decide what it means. Is the change desired or undesired (good or bad)? Will it lead to other desired or undesired changes? What needs to be done, if anything? What can be done? Who needs to do it?

Figure 16 - Additional Questions for Evaluation

Section 5 - Step 4

Communicating / Reporting

The goal of reporting is to make the information you have gathered meaningful and useful to those who might use the information. The focus or audience for reporting in Lutsel K'e was the local Band Council and its representative committees. Reporting to the leadership is important because they are often key decision-makers. Individual community members are also decision-makers. They make choices on a daily basis that affect their own health and the health of their families. By reporting to both the leadership and individual community members doing both you can ensure that your community is informed about the issues you are monitoring.

Reporting should be based on the analysis and recommendations of your advisory committee. Rather than try and include all information about your indicators in one report, think about focusing on one or two issues per report. For example, if you are doing newsletters or displays, focusing on one theme, such as youth, will be more interesting and easier for people to understand.

You can include pictures, short explanations and quotes from people which focus on youth or one specific issue regarding youth.

Reporting to committees, holding public meetings or workshops are also a useful way of reporting. However, there are some things to keep in mind in reporting.

- Who is your audience?
- What is the specific issue you want to deal with in your report?
- What is the best way of presenting the information?
(Newsletters, Displays, Formal Reports, Public Meetings)
- Have you taken pictures to include in your reports?

Try and get feedback from people about your report before it is presented publicly. Gather ideas and make notes for yourself so you can improve on your reporting skills as you go along. You may try different approaches to reporting depending on the issue that you are dealing with.

Conclusion

You have now worked through the steps to Community-Based Monitoring.

You may feel you are ready to begin your own monitoring project. However, you may still have questions. If there were some sections you did not complete or understand fully, try working through them again with a friend or colleague. Keep in mind that the steps in this *Guide* are not written in stone. You probably have your own ideas about what will work for you and in your own community.

The ideas in this *Guide* are meant to assist northern communities in developing and carrying out their own monitoring programs. This *Guide* was based on the *Community-Based Monitoring Pilot Project* in Lutsel K'e, Northwest Territories. Lutsel K'e, like other northern communities in the region, is concerned about the potential effects of increasing resource development on the health of their community. Through efforts to monitor issues that affect the health of northern peoples, communities can become more involved in the assessment and management of such development and its effects.

Additional Information

Additional Resources for Monitoring

This Guide to Community Based Monitoring was developed because of community concerns about the potential effects of mineral resource development on community health

You and your community may have other concerns or interests in monitoring. This guide may provide some useful ideas but you may want to consider some other resources. Where you look for these resources will depend on the specific issues which concern you.

Monitoring that is connected to land use planning for example, can provide you with many useful ideas about the land and its changing value and importance to the community. You may see a link between this kind of monitoring and land claims negotiations, a Protected Areas Strategy or simply to sustainable development. In the Northwest Territories, there are a number of different Federal and Territorial departments as well as non-governmental organizations that can assist you with this kind of monitoring.

Maybe you are concerned about specific environmental issues such as contaminated water or fish in your area. There are a number of possibilities for monitoring environmental contaminants through the Federal Government. Organizations such as the Centre for Indigenous People, Nutrition and the Environment (CINE) may also provide resources and tools for monitoring food that comes from the land.

There are many organizations, government departments and resource people that can assist you in monitoring.

If you have any questions about this guide or require additional information contact:

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