

Climate Change Planning Tools for First Nations

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1 2 3 4 5 6



Guidebook 6 Monitoring Progress and Change

Climate Change Planning Tools for First Nations Guidebook List

Starting the Planning Process	Guidebook	1
Climate Change Impacts in the Community	Guidebook	2
Vulnerability and Community Sustainability	Guidebook	3
Identifying Solutions	Guidebook	4
Taking Adaptive Action	Guidebook	5
Monitoring Progress and Change	Guidebook	6

These Guidebooks were created by the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources in partnership with Sioux Valley Dakota Nation in Manitoba and Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation, Deschambault Lake Community, in Saskatchewan.

Please contact earth@yourcier.org for any questions or comments on these Guidebooks.

The objectives of these resources are to provide user-friendly and culturally appropriate climate change and adaptation guidebooks to help First Nations through planning to avoid, minimize or adapt to impacts caused by climate change. The Guidebooks outline a planning process and framework for decision making that allows wide application, local adaptation and on-going modifications.

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Contents

6.1 Monitoring Progress and Change 1

6.2 Evaluating Actions 1

6.3 Monitoring the Plan 5

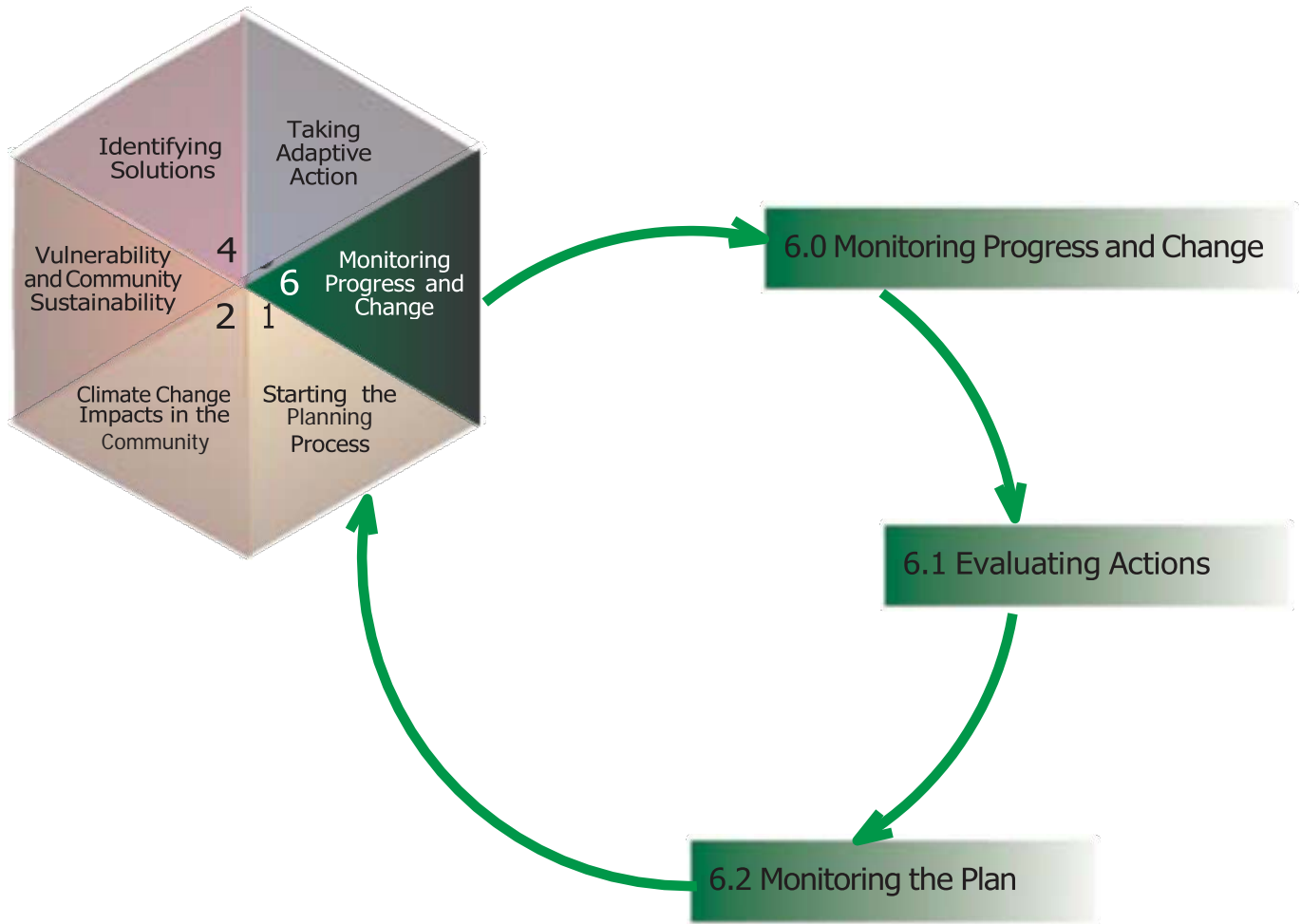
Community Experiences:

Community Participation is Key 5

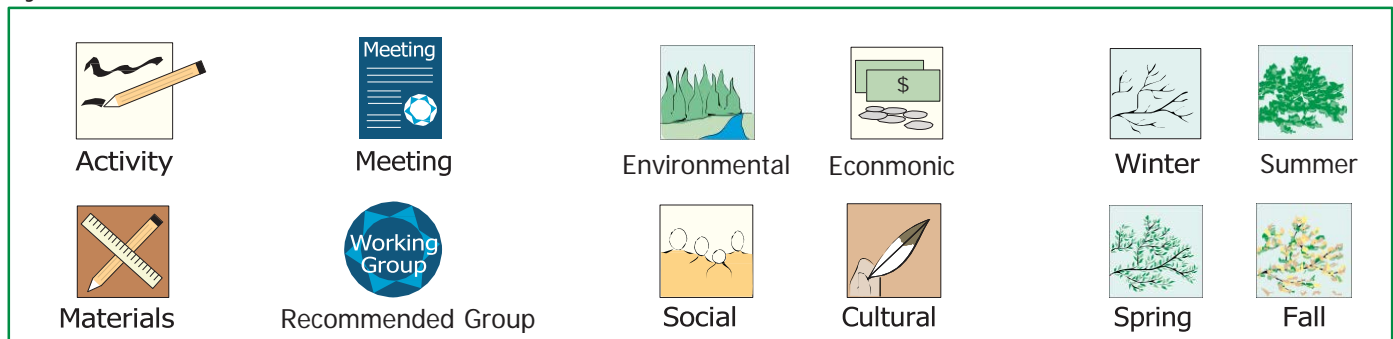
Adjusting Your Plan 6

Understanding the Planning Process

The Guidebooks include activities and information to work through the planning process. Each book leads into the next steps in the process.



Symbols used in the Guidebooks



6.0 Monitoring Progress and Change

Keeping Track of Our Success, of Climate Change, and Adapting Our Plans

How do you know if the First Nation's plans are moving the community in the right direction? Without monitoring the success of your initiatives, staying on top of the impacts of climate change you are experiencing, and keeping a finger on the pulse of the community's development and needs it is difficult to be sure if the plan and its actions are delivering the results that were planned. This is why it is important to have a formal monitoring process - to keep track of progress and adapt where necessary.

6.1 Evaluating Actions

Are the action items, whether there are projects, policies, or other initiatives, moving the First Nation in the right direction? It is important to monitor the progress and success of these actions that come under your climate change plan to make sure they are being implemented successfully (e.g. effectively, efficiently, on time, etc.) and also to make sure they are achieving the results that were intended. Sometimes projects and policies also have unintended results (either positive or negative) and it is important to identify these as well to understand the full effects of the actions that are part of your climate change community plan.

To make the evaluation of your actions as easy as possible, the team working on each project, policy, or initiative needs to keep good records and notes. For example, if issues or concerns arise, if plans change due to new financial or human resources, or if the scope of the project changes (increases or decreases), someone on the team needs to



document this information. It is also a good idea for the project/policy team to write down their reflections on these changes so there is some personal and richer information recorded about the progress or challenges. This is good for overall project management, and also facilitates the evaluation.

To evaluate actions under your plan it is best to create a separate evaluation or monitoring team that include a cross-section of people in the community for each particular project, policy, or initiative. You may want to use a more participatory form of evaluation by including some members of the action project team in your monitoring team. This can still provide an objective and independent evaluation because these members are not the only ones evaluating 'their' projects but are working together with other members of the First Nation to provide insight on the project (that only people involved would know) and carefully look at success and challenges.

Set up a



For each project, the evaluation or monitoring team should:

- Meet with people working on the projects, people affected by the projects (e.g. if it's a project to provide recreational opportunities to youth, the team needs to talk to the youth), look at the original plans for the projects/policies, look at meeting notes, financial records, and other documents to develop a good understanding of the projects.
- Try to evaluate the progress of the plan's actions every 6 months (to catch problems and issues early and make adjustments, as well as enhance what is working, and at the end of the project to develop a list of lessons learned that can be applied to future actions and help to make them even more successful).
- Use the tables that were created by the Working Group in Guidebook 5 that outline an implementation framework for each action to start evaluating these new projects or policies.
- Think about the evaluation questions that relate to each of these areas and add additional questions to this suggested list:

Actions	Roles and Responsibilities	Milestones	Preliminary Budgets	Detailed Timelines	Measure of Success	Other Planning Needs
	Are the people identified able to meet their responsibilities?	Are the milestones met on time?	Is the budget for disbursements sufficient?	Is the project currently on time?	Have these measures of success been achieved?	How is the action effecting each of the 4 areas of sustainability?
	Are the roles assigned appropriate or are new / different ones needed?	Are the results / products at each milestone as planned?	Is the budget for people's time (internal and external) sufficient?	Will the project continue to meet deadlines?		

6.1.1 Evaluating Indicators

Choosing the right indicators, or measure of success, is an important part of evaluation. Sometimes people decide to look at indicators that seem to be related to the result that is being evaluated, but actually aren't. For example, if one of the objectives of the project is to increase community health and with workshop activities on nutrition and exercise, evaluating this objective by reporting on the number of people who attended the workshops won't give you information on whether or not people learned about healthy options and applied this learning to their daily lives. This doesn't mean that you don't want to record how many people participated in the workshops - but to understand and evaluate whether or not the workshops were effective activities you need to dig deeper. For example, the evaluation team could talk to the participants one or two months afterwards to see what they remember and what actions they have taken preparing meals and exercising.

Indicators can be qualitative, such as opinions and perceptions; or the opposite, quantitative, such as numbers, ratios, percentages or numerical.



Indicators that you use to measure success should be:

- Valid (is it in fact measuring the result)
- Reliable (consistent over time)
- Sensitive (to changes so that it is connected to the results)
- Simple (easy to collect and analyze)
- Useful (will it help us make decisions)
- Affordable (can the indicator be measured within the existing budget)

6.1.2 Adjusting Actions and Activities

During the 6 month evaluation it may become clear that an action is not meeting its objectives, is falling behind in time, or has spent more money than was planned for this point in the schedule. Don't get too worried - this is how monitoring actions and doing an evaluation during project or policy implementation can help achieve success!

Look at where the project activities have not gone as planned and work with the full project / policy team to make necessary adjustments. Look for opportunities to either extend the timelines for the project, to access additional funds or people to implement the action, or to change the scope of the action itself. At least one of these areas will likely need adjusting.

Use the evaluation findings from completed projects to adjust the activities and plans for future actions. Learn from challenges to minimize or prevent these from happening again. Learn from successes to incorporate these into future projects.

Be transparent and share information on the ongoing successes and challenges of actions taken as part of your climate change community plan with your First Nation.

Information could be shared at Council meetings, community meetings, on posters or bulletin boards, in newsletters - any way that gets the word out in your community.

6.2 Monitoring the Plan

In addition to monitoring and evaluating the individual actions that your First Nation is taking as part of its climate change community plan, you will also want to be monitoring the overall plan itself. Is the plan moving the community towards its vision? Is the plan addressing the climate change vulnerabilities as planned? Have the local impacts of climate change and resulting vulnerabilities occurred as expected, or are they different somehow?



6.2.1 Adjusting Your Plan

Meet with



It is a good idea to have periodic meetings with the Working Group (e.g. annually or every two years) to do a short review of the success of the plan and its impacts on the community. This will allow the First Nation to make adjustments along the way, without going through a formal review of the plan too frequently. For example, during these reviews you might find that actions planned for years 3 and 4 should happen earlier or later because priorities have shifted or capacity within the community has changed. Your plan is a living document and it's ok to make adjustments along the way that keep the community on track with its vision. It's quite possible that the plan will need adapting to local changes in the environment, the economy, or situations within the social and cultural realities of the First Nation. Although you don't want to make too many big changes to the plan on a regular basis there are often small adjustments that will help keep the First Nation on its path to sustainability. The key is finding the balance between no flexibility in the plan (that doesn't allow the community make improvements and adjustments) and too much flexibility (that results in so many adjustments that there seems to be no real plan at all). Involve the community in these steps where you can and where it is appropriate.

Adjusting Your Plan

Examples of changes related to community sustainability that may result in adjustments to your plan during an ongoing review:

Environment: climate change related drought is more severe than expected

Economy: past projects are successful and job creation becomes less urgent

Society: number of youth quitting school increases

Culture: language speakers return to the community and start teaching at the school

6.2.2 Revisiting Climate Change Community Planning

Once every six or seven years it is important to go through a planning process all over again. This doesn't mean going all the way back to redoing the vision, because this vision was created with many different community members and represents people's hopes and dreams for the First Nation 30 years or more from now. Keep this idea and image in your mind, and bring it back to the community's attention, as you engage in the planning process again so that it remains a focus.

As you redo the planning process you can revisit many of the activities suggested in Guidebooks 2 through 5. Look at the impacts of climate change to see if any local impacts and associated community vulnerabilities or weak points are new, have changed, or are more or less severe than was expected. This information will affect the planning process as it did during the first phase of planning by pointing you towards solutions that address the vulnerabilities affecting many areas of sustainability. Go through prioritizing and taking action activities again to set a path for the First Nation to address climate change and community planning needs for the next 5 or 6 years.

Make sure you involve your community members in this review process so that the ideas included in this 'new' plan reflect as many people in the community as possible, and to increase people's support and excitement for this next stage of the planning process. Again, look back to the activities you used in past Guidebooks for ideas on how to involve the leadership, a Working Group, Elders, the youth, and the broader community in brainstorming solutions to new issues, identifying priorities, and moving ideas into action. Together, the leadership and community members can set, and keep, the community on its path to success!

"Meet with these groups again as you revisit climate change community planning".



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