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Sovereignty, Good Governance and First Nations Human Resources: Capacity Challenges

SOVEREIGNTY, GOOD GOVERNANCE AND FIRST NATIONS HUMAN RESOURCESS: CAPACITY CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

From eternity the Creator has laid the foundations of the heavens and the earth. Within this order the Creator has established a purpose for all material, intellectual and spiritual phenomena in the universe. In the time when human beings were first introduced to the animal people on earth the Creator gave the humans the laws that they would guide themselves by. This was to be their sovereignty and life was good.

With the arrival of the Europeans this way of life would be fundamentally changed forever. The first change saw the development of economic, social and political alliances between the First Nations and the Europeans providing new opportunities for both societies. The second fundamental change came with the imposition of British and French colonialism and their desire to occupy First Nations' land. The Treaty making process and the destruction of the First Nations economies led to European colonial actions against the First Nations people and their lands. The third fundamental change came with the introduction of the newly formed Canadian government's inimical Indian Policy. It was this policy of assimilation that created the Indian reserves, introduced the residential schools and legislated the Indian Act – all precursors for the conditions First Nations find themselves in today.

First Nations people are in the process of rebuilding their systems of governance, including their social, political and economic institutions. They fully understand that they are guided by the responsibilities gifted to them by the Creator. The rebuilding of their communities is driven by their necessity to fulfill their divine obligations as stewards of the land, as relatives and as international citizens.

For First Nations people the reestablishment of social governance is an endeavor in finding a balance between First Nations' culture, custom, tradition and protocol and Canadian social, economic, political and social systems. In a manner of speaking it is the process of "getting the best of both worlds" – whereby the developments create a synergy between First Nations cultural traditions and European Canadian systems. For First Nations communities – and their governments – It is important that the dynamics of finding this balance continue, and once established and implemented it is eventually revisited. Through this process First Nations people will ensure that the rebuilding of their governance (nation-building) ensures their process of self-determination and is better equipped to leverage life in the larger Canadian society.

This paper will focus on the human resources challenges that face First Nations communities and their governments in rebuilding their capacity for good governance and in meeting their sovereign obligations. The vision that First Nations people see where they are self-sufficient, autonomous and significant contributors to society requires a paradigm shift for the federal government in its Indian policy. Capacity building for First Nations governments, institutions, economic development and sovereignty are pillars within a new Indian policy – a policy focused on providing First Nations people the opportunity to build better governance, ensure their sovereign recognition and where people are empowered so they can live lives of service, contribution and integrity.

It must be noted that this paper, in its discussion of capacity building raises many unanswered questions. As an overview of the context and processes of change towards rebuilding First Nations governance I have identified ideas, concepts and processes that need further exploration.

REBUILDING FIRST NATIONS GOVERNANCE

The patriation of the Constitution in 1982 marked an important milestone for First Nations people in their quest to rebuild their governments and their societies. The inherent and treaty rights of First Nation and Aboriginal people had been entrenched in the constitution of Canada. However, in the work of defining those rights and ultimately the framework of Indian government and its place in Canadian federalism there is much to be done. The failed constitutional talks in the 1980's and the Federal Government's disregard for commission reports that recommended a new order of Indian government in Canada made the road to self-determination for First Nations people even longer.

First Nations people and their governments continue to position their developments within their sovereignty and jurisdiction. However, sovereignty is not absolute it is conditional – with rights come responsibility. Sovereignty is not something that is static. It's a concept that is used to promote the interests of First Nations people. Their sovereignty grants First Nations the jurisdiction over their lives without interference by other governments. But it is also contingent on the fulfillment of certain fundamental obligations of First Nations governments to both its own citizens and to the international community. Capacity development – and capacity building – are focused on meeting sacred, customary and legal responsibilities associated with their sovereignty.

Human life, human freedom and human dignity represent higher values than state sovereignty. After all, the movement towards rebuilding Indian governments, and ultimately self-determination is seen as a means to change the desperate socio-economic conditions of First Nations people. However, in order to develop capacity there needs to be an assessment of the framework in which a sovereign First Nation government can implement an effective and efficient system of governance that includes input from all of it members

and stakeholders. This new framework must be centered on the First Nations people, their government's sovereign obligations, their responsibility to the international community, and most importantly in respect to the Creator's laws.

FIRST NATIONS SELF-GOVERNMENT

For many First Nations and Aboriginal people, it was a victory – the existing Aboriginal and treaty rights were entrenched in the Canadian Constitution Act in 1982. No longer did they have to prove to the rest of the world that they had rights. Self-government was a relatively new term coined around this time. It marked the beginning of deliberate steps to move out of the grip of the federal government towards self-autonomy and a new "third order:" government within the Canadian federalist system.

The following year everyone watched with great anticipation as the first of four constitutional conferences were held to begin the work of defining what the inherent and treaty rights of Aboriginal people are. The first conference saw minor amendments to the constitution that included rights that arose from land claims and a commitment to include Aboriginal people in conferences that addressed those rights. In the constitutional conferences that followed, Aboriginal self-government was the dominant issue. First Nations people and their leadership maintained that the right to self-government was an inalienable right given by the Creator. As a result this right flowed from their inherent and unextinguished Aboriginal sovereignty.

The concept of changing the political landscape in Canada, to include an empowered Indian government, is not a new one. There have been a number of studies and initiatives, most notably the Special Committee on Indian Self-Government, also known as the Penner Report and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) that have recommended the recognition of nationhood for First Nations people and the development of a process by which they can identify their own framework for exercising self-government. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, for example overt in recommending that a new relationship between the First Nations and other governments was necessary in order to have the First Nations inherent right to self-government recognized.

> *It is clear to the Commission that if Aboriginal peoples are to exercise their self-governing powers within the context of Canada's federal system, then federal and provincial governments must make room for this to happen. Instead of being divided between two orders of government, government powers will have to be divided among three orders. This is a major change, and one that will require goodwill, flexibility, co-operation, imagination and courage on the part of all concerned.*
> *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996)*

SOVEREIGNTY

While there is no set definition of sovereignty the concept is often described as a series of claims about the nature and scope of state authority – tending to focus on its legal content. Traditionally, as stated by the World Court, the doctrine of state sovereignty has meant that the state "is subject to no other state, and has full and exclusive powers within its jurisdiction." However, over time the concept has evolved from the divine right of kings to the limited form of sovereignty that we see today.

It is important to emphasize that the First Nations' view of sovereignty is far different from that that has evolved from European kings in that in the First Nations' view sovereignty is not "man-made". First Nations have always maintained that their sovereignty - to use a foreign concept – comes from the laws and responsibilities that have been set out for them by the Creator. Their relationship to the land, to the animals and to each other has been clearly defined and is taught to this day by the elders of these communities. In this context the rebuilding of First Nations governance will probably focus on compliance to the sovereign standards and laws as set out by the Creator.

EXERCISING ABORIGINAL SOVEREIGNTY

The Assembly of First Nations in its 2004 report [Recognition and Implementation of First Nations Governments] identified the notion of practical sovereignty. This ideal represented a limited version of the classical definition of sovereignty that would provide genuine powers over matters of substance for First Nations people. Underpinning this concept is the understanding that First Nations people through self-determination will create the opportunities for themselves to be self-sustaining and that their success will benefit not just their local communities but have a far reaching affect on the regional, provincial, national and international communities as well.

One of the challenges to First Nations' sovereignty arises when they have too little of it. Around the world, many governments lack the legitimacy and capacity to translate their nominal sovereignty into effective governance. The sovereignty gap for First Nations will only ensure a "status quo". Only through the exercise of their sovereign responsibilities will First Nations governments create sustainable development and poverty reduction within their communities. A strengthened system of First Nations governance is at the center of this development – it is also the most effective and economical way to create this change. Sovereignty without the capacity for governance will have very little impact on the socio-economic lives of First Nations people and the greater community. It is one thing to have sovereign powers and responsibilities and another to exercise them to positively impact the lives of people. The Harvard Project's research findings were very clear. Indian tribes out performed other tribes when; (1) they were able exercise their tribal sovereignty; (2) they had capable institutions backing their sovereignty; and (3) their institutions fit with their cultural objectives. The Project's research demonstrates that First Nations sovereignty, practical or otherwise, must be one of the cornerstones in a renewed relationship between First Nations and other governments in Canada.

Many First Nations communities are faced with the challenges of meeting their sovereign obligations. This includes their responsibilities to the land the animals and each other as set out by the Creator and the responsibilities of their governments toward good governance and responsibilities as an international citizen. Resource development becomes one of the major obstacles in the rebuilding of first Nations governments – especially human resources. How can a community meet their sacred obligations and fulfill their sovereign obligations without a capable, qualified and experienced collective of individuals.

GOVERNMENT VERSUS GOVERNANCE

Often we use the term governance to be synonymous with government when in fact the two concepts have very different meanings. Government is generally defined as the use of political, economic and administrative authority and resources to manage a nation's affairs. On the basis of this, good government could be taken to refer to the efficient and effective management of public resources and problems in

dealing with the critical needs of the society. Good government and sound public sector management constitute the major mechanisms of social transformation and the cornerstone of successful economies. Government in its modern form is an institution (or a set of institutions) somewhat removed from the people that they serve.

Governance on the other hand is a complex system of institutions and social actors. According to Stoker, governance is viewed as an intergovernmental relationship between the state, the market and civil society. Stoker further clarifies the term by offering five propositions of governance: (Stoker, 1998):

1) Governance is a complex set of institutions – that includes government
2) Governance recognizes that the boundaries and responsibilities are blurred when addressing social and economic issues
3) Governance identifies power dependence between institutions
4) Governance is about autonomous self-governing actors and,
5) Governance views government as utilizing its resources – not to get things done – but to guide and steer action

The prevailing view is that governance is inevitably an interactive process. It suggests that no one actor possess the knowledge and capacity to tackle problems unilaterally. Furthermore, inherent in this understanding is the responsibility other societal actors (i.e., elders, families, learned societies, etc.) have in situations where government hasn't the jurisdiction, capability or interest in addressing social issues. The requirement of collaboration then becomes the most critical element in a system of governance.

First Nations view governance from a much broader and complex set of guidelines. The concept of government - which in many First Nations' languages is interpreted as "a way of life" refers to a much more connected set of societal actors and processes. Unlike the classical view discussed earlier First Nations government is not simply an elected set of decision makers but an integrated system of living in manner that respects the community's sacred obligations to the Creator, including their relationships with the land, the animals and each other.

IMPACT OF LOW GOVERNANCE CAPACITY

The "Indian Policy" of the federal government saw to displace traditional forms of First Nations' governance in order to ensure a firm hold on the Indians and their lands. As a result the social, political and economic institutions of First Nations peoples do not exist in the way that they once did where they functioned to maintain a harmonious balance between civil society and the state; humanity and the environment; the spirit world and mother earth; and each other.

The displacement of traditional systems of governance has created many depended First Nations communities. The current relationship with the federal government and a misaligned funding regime leaves First Nations with very limited resources and significant restrictions that constrain a First Nations perspective on rebuilding their systems of governance. Without the capacity for governance - by all - the impossible task of maintaining good government and community development falls into the poorly resourced solitary hands of elected Indian government officials.

Far too often we hear the voice of mainstream media bellowing their continuous criticism of First Nations governments; allegations of misspending; mismanagement; the lack of accountability; the deplorable conditions within First Nations communities; and the always unfortunate loss of young life as a result of suicide. Without a significant shift towards empowering First Nations communities to take matters into their own hands, and the capabilities of addressing them, many of the symptoms we hear about in the media will persist. Besides the social pathologies faced by First Nations communities it is easy to see the impacts of poor capacity for governance. Research has shown that a low capacity for governance within a society is often characterized by:

Lack of guiding policies and procedures	Ineffective representation, poor communication
Lack of power and influence on key development areas	Unresolved conflicts of interest
	Failure to achieve policy aims
Poor planning, development and service delivery	Contested community engagement

Without the capacity to empower and engage their community members, First Nations leaders will continue to perplexed by their unattainable mandates. First Nations communities will continue to struggle with their unequal realities and third world conditions and we will continue to hear about it in the medias.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) identifies the eight major characteristics of good governance as being; accountable; transparent; efficient and effective; responsive; equitable and inclusive; consensus oriented; participatory; and the rule of law (figure 1.). They have further identified four cornerstones of capacity development as; institutional development; policy-making; human resources and technological development; and the strengthening of administrative and managerial capabilities.
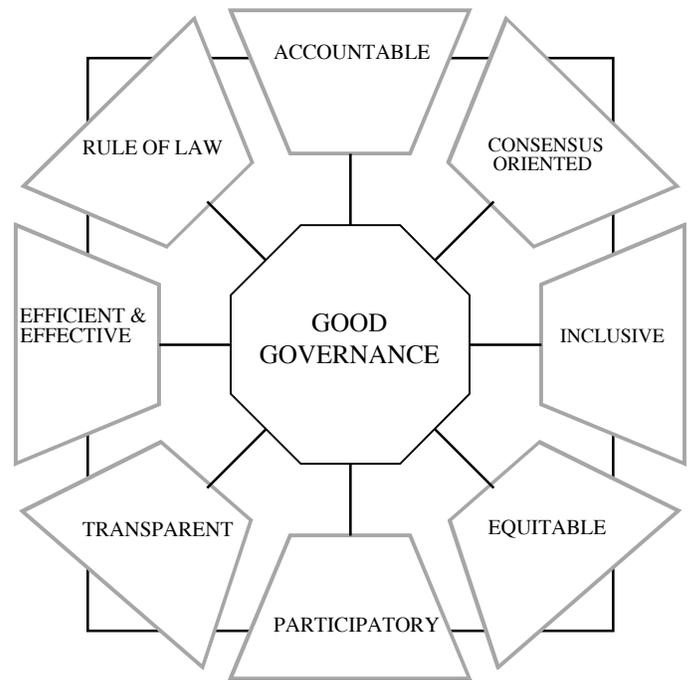

Figure 1 – Elements of Good Governance

The success in building governance will then require a critical review, realignment and the creation of new institutions by First Nations communities and their partners. In addition a strategic and deliberate effort must focus on the development of skills, technology and policy that support the elements of good governance.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in its consultation with Aboriginal communities identified nine important aspects of traditional governance in its 1996 report. To a certain extent the principles associated with the elements that are identified by RCAP overlap with the elements of good governance identified by the OECD. RCAP goes beyond the concepts of inclusion, participatory governance and consensus decision-making to include the restoration of traditional institutions; the recognition of individual autonomy and responsibility; and the teachings associated with the land and the elders.

The essence of the First Nations traditional governance model is in the compilation of First Nations, culture, values, protocols, laws, and the requirement of the full participation from all of its members. The characteristics of good governance identified by the OECD are inherent within the traditional models used by Aboriginal peoples. When you bring these two concepts together good governance in an Aboriginal context would have the following principles:

Participation –where all men, women, youth, elders and their families have a voice and a role in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their interests, and where their participation is a responsibility to the others. This participation requires meaningful opportunity for expression and its protection through political and social laws.

Rule of law - Legal frameworks would be centered on the natural laws of the Creator (e.g., family, good relations, nature, spiritual, etc.). All laws created by man will be fair and enforced impartially, particularly the laws on human rights. These laws would supersede federal and provincial laws.

Transparency - is built on the free flow of information and community consultation. Processes, institutions and information are directly accessible to those concerned, and enough information is provided. As well to be most effective acts of transparency need to be feasible, clear and deliberate.

Responsiveness - Institutions and processes try to serve all of the band's membership. Public and social institutions have to remain flexible in how they meet the needs of society.

Consensus orientation - Good governance mediates differing interests to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interests of the group on policies and procedures.

Equity – will ensure that all members of the community have opportunities to improve and maintain their well-being. It will be guided by ensuring that there is a recognition and value for the different experiences and contributions that can be made by everyone in the community and the removal of barriers that prevent fair and equitable treatment and access.

Effectiveness and efficiency - Processes and institutions produce results that meet needs while making the best use of resources. The focus is on quality service and monitoring to ensure the highest standard including ensuring that the service is provided in a timely and cost efficient manner.

Accountability - in a system of governance where government is only one of the societal actors requires multi-directional accountability – where everyone is accountable to everyone (i.e., individuals, organizations, institutions, government, families, etc). The focus has to be on outputs and results while providing community members opportunity for redress and understanding.

Restoring Traditional Institutions – Rebuilding institutions that are consistent with First Nations values, culture and custom and that bring people into closer contact with tradition. These institutions will invoke participatory democracy – not parliamentary democracy and uphold natural and community law.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Even if First Nations governments are supported with substantially increased funding, their development efforts will fail without adequate capacity. However, capacity development is not a narrowly defined term. It involves much more than enhancing the knowledge and skills of individuals. Capacity development in its broadest sense involves transformation and change. The United Nations Development Program defines capacity development as:

Capacity Development is the process by which individuals, organizations, institutions
and societies develop abilities (individually and collectively) to perform functions, solve
problems and set and achieve objectives.

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United Nations (1997)

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The principles underlying this development according to the United Nations are that it is 1) a continuous process of learning and change; 2) it emphasizes better use and empowerment of individuals and organizations; and 3) it requires a systematic approach in devising capacity development strategies. Taken in this respect effective capacity development can be viewed as laying the foundations for civil society which is a requirement for good governance and sustainable development. Capacity is the combination of people, institutions, resources, organizational abilities, authority, and practices that enable First Nations communities to reach their own goals. Capacity development is about change – when effective capacity development happens it is transformative and forms the basis for self-determination. . Figure 2 illustrates the scope of capacity development.
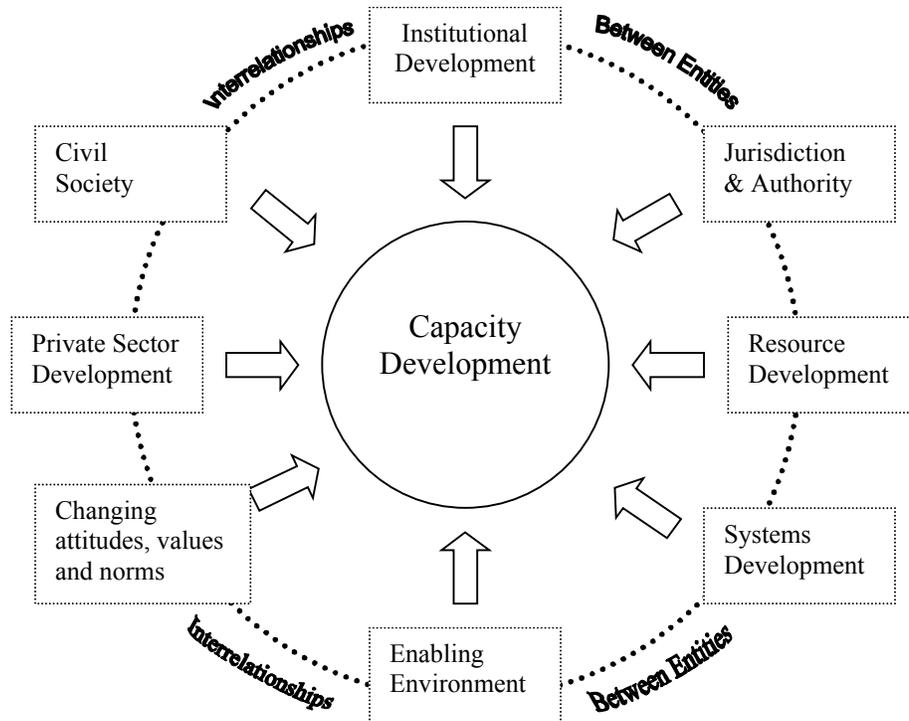

Figure 2 – Scope of Capacity Development

Enabling Environment – influences the behaviour of organizations and individuals in large part by incentives. The traditional institutions, organizations, people and private sector would be

viewed as being in an open-system where they are in constant interaction with each other. It is this interaction and the context which provides the incentives stimulating the entities to behave in certain ways. Some incentives encourage productivity and growth, others promote culture, language retention or access to custom (such as elders and ceremony), while others foster passivity.

Community Development – refers to the community's ability to identify, mobilize and address social and other issues. A community's capacity is directly linked to its ability to act effectively, influence change, and to engage its public sector and elected representatives. Community capacity allows for civil society to step in when governments haven't the capability, jurisdiction or interest in addressing community issues.

Resources Development – refers to the quality and state of resources available to a community in meeting their developmental goals. These resources include human, financial, technological, cultural, social, and natural – to name a few. The community will also have a variety of developmental goals for each resource. For example the development of human resources may have competency goals associated with the attainment of knowledge, skills, attitude, and aspirations.

Systems Development – refers to the development of a group of interdependent and interrelated social organizations, including civil groups, government organizations and the private sector, such as the justice system or a health system. System capacity is the ability for a community to plan, monitor and address public issues.

Effective capacity development can be recognized by a number of defining characteristics. First, capacity development is not only the development of one organization, or the enabling of citizens groups, nor is it a one time event, rather it is a continuous process of identification, planning and development at all levels in society – from the individual to the organization to the corporation. Second, capacity development also relates to tangible and intangible factors. Tangible factors within the First Nations context address the physical assets, resources, delivery of quality programs, human resources (including traditional human resources such as elders, healers etc). Intangible factors address such things as a society's capabilities, potential, experiences, confidence, credibility, and trust. Third, capacity development must be grounded in partnership and must always be context specific. Going beyond appreciative inquiry where development is "hands-on community driven, capacity development includes all stakeholders. Further, the effectiveness of capacity development rests on it being firmly rooted in the socio-cultural context of First Nations people and their situations.

BARRIERS TO CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

First Nations communities face substantial barriers in their quest for capacity development and self-determination – not to mention sustaining it. The prevailing Indian policy of the federal government is a constant and obstinate barrier to First Nations sovereignty building. Other external barriers result from the economic, political and social environments. Still others arise out of internal conditions of the First Nation community. The distinction between the external and internal causal effects is for the most part analytic - in reality they all have an impact and they are all interrelated and influence each other.

One such barrier in the transition to building sovereign governance for First Nations people is the funding regime of the federal government. The majority of funding agreements between First Nations and the federal government are inadequate, inefficient and not in alignment with capacity development for good governance and sovereignty. Much of the funding targeted as development funding is stop-start, scattered across numerous departments in different program budgets, and lacks transparency and downward accountability. The development funding that is attainable is mired in reporting that does not provide adequate information on performance, is not used to determine funding levels and is not consistent with the communities priorities (Auditor General of Canada, 2002). Furthermore, this type of funding is always limited and the Department of Indian Affairs allocation process encourages contentious conflict between regions and bands.

The funding short falls are further compounded by the federal and provincial government policies that do not recognize the sovereign responsibilities of the First Nations governments. As a result the jurisdictional parameters of First Nations governments are seen as being delegated and are confined to a very small jurisdictional range on the reserve. Taken in the greater context of sovereignty and governance building this narrow approach of development and jurisdiction is divorced from the broader enabling environment within a community of families with strengthened institutions (such as clan systems, education, ceremonies etc.) and empowered individuals.

These external causal factors interact with a number of other barriers arising from within the community. The lack of a culturally appropriate First Nations governance framework and the distinct absence of a qualified labour force are paramount challenges. Many First Nations communities and their organizations lack the human capital that usually underwrites successful economic, community and social development strategies. Still the dire health problems faced by many First Nations communities are destroying Indigenous social and cultural capital at an alarming rate. Community intervention, through social institutions and people isn't possible without the capacity development support.

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Central to the vision of capacity building is the development of adequate governing arrangements. Effective governance and an efficient public administration are among the most important elements in supporting and advancing a First Nations community's development agenda. However, stronger public administration systems need to be firmly tied to and directed by the social and political institutions of First Nations people. Operating outside of this requirement will result in the administration of programs and services that are misguided and will have a limited if any impact on positive change.

Besides ensuring effective government First Nations communities must provide an environment that encourages business and economic development. Strengthening the pubic sector and providing an environment that contributes to its growth is critical. This will ultimately assist in addressing a number of issues such as poverty, enhancing citizen participation, promoting sustainable development and protecting the environment, to name a few.

Capacity development rests in a context of identifying community priorities, strategies and objectives as well as the ability to respond to and manage change in an interdependent world. Figure 3 illustrates the context for the capacity development process.
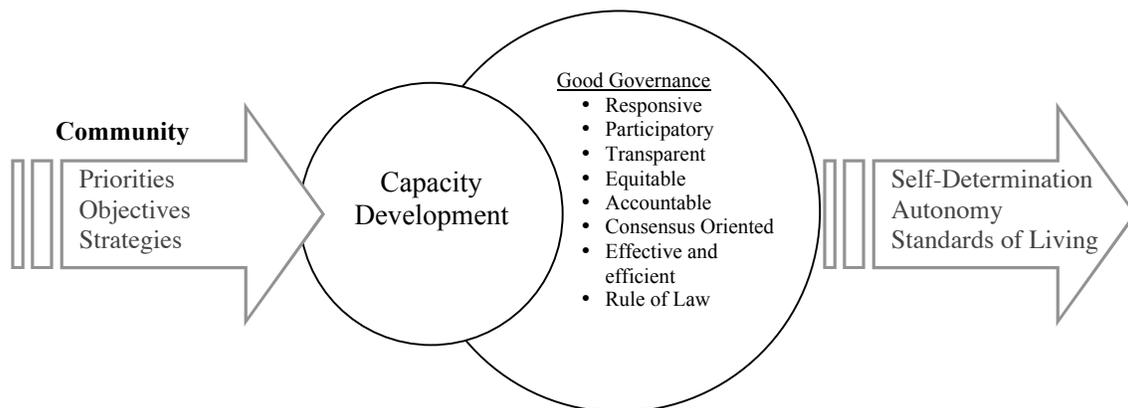

Figure 3 – Context for Capacity Development

The transition to new approaches will be difficult. The federal government will feel a loss of control and accountability. First Nations will take their time developing their management, decision-making and governance capabilities. The collective input is vital to sustainability – in this regard the process of making the right decision becomes more important than making the right decision. In the long-term First Nations

people in an enabling environment will ultimately build better governments, institutions, and they will empower their societies to effectively address the deplorable and disadvantage positions they find themselves in. However, the new approaches in rebuilding have to be indeed new approaches. In my opinion, the success of the new approaches must begin with and hold as a priority the following objectives:

Funding Regimes - a funding regime that focused on fiscal arrangements, such as transfer payments will provide a broader approach for First Nations and an ability to address self-determination priorities. The funding regime will also provide flexibility in that the capacity development is consistent with community needs and priorities.

Relationship with Government – needs to ensure the recognition of First Nations sovereignty and their government's responsibilities to their membership. The relationship must place First Nations governments back on equal footing – through legislative change – to a truly government to government relationship and the creation of the rightful place of First Nations in Canada.

Development Objectives – need to change. If First Nations are to have a well-functioning public sector there needs to be a paradigm shift in how to analyze and build capacity towards governance. Specifically, First Nation governments and their partners should move from the narrow focus on organizational, technocratic, and public management approaches to a broader perspective that incorporates the political dynamics, relationships and the institutional rules of the game within which First Nations' organizations operate.

New Approaches - undifferentiated, "best practice," cookie-cutter approaches are doomed to failure. Any efforts to strengthen administrative and accountability systems will have to fit community-specific constitutional structures and patterns of political, social, and economic interests. First Nations must control the development agenda and the process.

Alignment of Federal Programming – The alignment of federal programming needs to work in concert with First Nations development priorities. Federal programs are almost entirely designed, created and implemented by the Department of Indian Affairs. The lack of meaningful consultation and input from First Nations will result in programming that is not in alignment with First Nation priorities and ultimately does not meet their needs.

Create Certainty - align capacity development strategies with community-specific realities. Building governance structures and processes that are both effective and accountable to their citizens is a long-term process. But small beginnings can set in motion progressively more profound consequences. Most communities do not have bureaucratic and institutional capabilities and comprehensive reforms may not be

the answer. It may be preferable to focus on more modest, viable initiatives, especially those for which results are observable. For example, if you can't fix the whole government, getting community schools to work may spearhead more reforms down the road.

Identify the Drivers for Change - Public administrations operate in complex and interdependent systems of bureaucratic, political, social, and economic interests, so that approaches to building governance capacity must take into account the underlying drivers of political and institutional change. Identifying champions, appreciative inquiry and private sector development are examples of drivers for change.

HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT – A FRAMEWORK

Probably the most important aspect of capacity development is that of human capital. Without the essential skill sets and experiences economic, social and political development is not sustainable for First Nations. Human resources cannot be replaced by other resources such as financial, physical, natural, or even technological. In fact success in the development of other resources is ultimately dependent on the success and access to human resources.

Many First Nations communities lack effective planning and training for sustainable human development. Furthermore, much of the funding available for this type of development are dependent on federal, provincial and territorial government programming that is significantly restricted in meeting the priorities of First Nations communities. The labour markets in many First Nations communities are non-existent - so there are not enough "real" jobs. As a result, many of the training efforts within First Nations communities result in an exodus of skilled workers to outside jobs or where people are recycled through endless training schemes.

Compounded by the debilitating lack of qualifications, skill sets, and experience the people who do return to the communities from outside training institutions lack the cultural, spiritual, and historical understanding of their First Nations communities. It is the view of many First Nations elders, political and organizational leaders that the development of First Nations people must occur within the social and cultural context of the First Nations communities. That is the teaching, training and development of people has to be "holistic". A holistic framework of development for the learner for example would occur over a lifetime; have many teachers; encompass cultural and spiritual teachings; include the social institutions such as family/clan systems; and ultimately the attainment of technical, conceptual, and Indigenous knowledge for example. This ideal suggests that if First Nations people, in particular the youth, are going to return to their communities and work that they should have a complete understanding of their culture, language, traditions and history. After all how can you know where to go if you don't know who you are and where you come from? Figure 4 is an example of a human resources development framework that

includes elements that a community may use in a holistic leaning model. More detailed examples of the elements contained in the framework can be seen in Appendix "A".
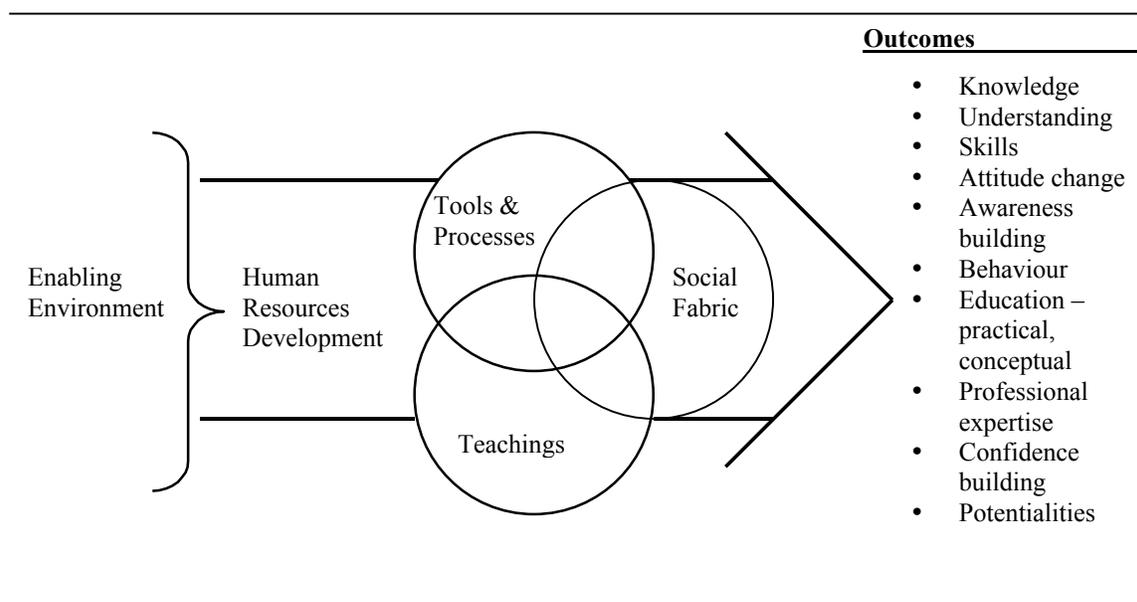

Figure 4 Human Resources Development Framework for Capacity Development

In order for human resources to develop an enabling environment is essential. The environment refers to federal, provincial, territorial and First Nations government frameworks; Legal orders; policies; systems; structures; and infrastructures. Enabling refers to the creation of opportunity (training, jobs, sustainable livelihood) and assurance of people centered governance (rule of law, equitable) that supports the process of personal development (healing, eliminating poverty, access). The enabling environment will always be considered a work-in-process and gaps can always be identified and improvements made. Continuing to foster an environment that is encouraging, supportive and accessible is essential to the sustainable development of First Nations people.

The framework identifies the outcomes of human resources development goals within the capacity development process. These outcomes are what the community is seeking as their human resources objectives in their quest for capacity development - it is the "what" in the human resources development equation. This includes specific attainment of knowledge (logical, semantic, systemic, empirical) skills (critical thinking, problem solving, technical) and professional expertise (legal, management, cultural) in needed development areas such as health, governance, economic development, etc. The outcomes of human resources development may also be targeted at creating awareness, understanding or personal learning. And finally, the development of people may focus on needed attitude change, confidence

building or assisting people in attaining their potential – which is an essential aspect to nation building in itself.

The "how" of the human resources development equation is also varied and flexible in meeting the needs of individuals and the community. The tools and processes used in meeting the human resources development goals can include standard contemporary forms of human resources development (education, training and professional development), experiential learning (apprenticeships, job-shadowing, facilitation), cultural approaches (story-telling, oral history, informal), or by fostering learning through other ways (competency development, learning networks, self-directed).

The social fabric within many First Nations societies is their spirituality, connectedness to all living creation and the relationships held with others. These teachings are cognitive - they have explained natural phenomena, human conduct, everything. They give us a kind of meanings map of existence. They have been instrumental - by prayer, sacrifice and ceremony, they have been a way of getting things done by supernatural intervention. They have been legislative. Some of them have laid down rules of peaceful behaviour and moral conduct (usually with systems of reward or punishment). They have been expressive. They have 'held people together' around symbols and ceremonies. It is the makeup of how we define ourselves. It is the customary social and political institutions (family/clan, societies, give-away, potlatch), the teachers (elders, family, learned societies, ceremonies) and the teachings (values, law of good relations, medicine wheel, humility) that need to form the institutions of our learning and the foundations of our human resource development.

CONCLUSION

The road back to a better way of life for First Nations begins with their people. Education, training and skill development must begin and end in the community. The restoration of traditional institutions of learning, governance, family, community and spirituality is the "red road" to successful deliverance. The rebuilding needs to be community-driven but knowingly it cannot happen without partnerships. Canada has to be deliberate in renewing their relationship with First Nations governments so that a truly government-to-government agenda can be created that strategically targets First Nations sovereignty building.

Prior to contact with the Europeans the social fabric of First Nations people taught them to love mother earth and to live in harmony with all of creation - all of their traditional political, economic, and social institutions were part of this heritage and will be the basis on which the future will be constructed. The valleys, the plains, the mountains, the deserts, the oceans, the rivers, the caribou, the eagle, the salmon, the bear, the muskrat – all will be witness to their development. Their ancestors have shown them a place where they will live in harmony with the Creator's laws, live in peace with the newcomers and live life in a good way.

Appendix "A"

Elements of Human Resources Development Framework for Capacity Building

Enabling Environment	Ensure access to opportunities, services, assets, resources, markets
	Ensure people-centered governance: rule of law, human rights, democracy, partnership, civil society
	Ensure equitable social, economic, political orders and distribution systems; ensure sustainability across generations
	Community and individual healing from past government practices
	Creation of employment, sustainable livelihoods
	Jurisdictional devolution, relationship of laws and jurisdictional capacity
	Quality of life, deplorable health conditions, eliminating poverty
	Removal of barriers to First Nation participation in the wider society
Tools and Processes	Training, workshops, seminars
	Apprentice, coaching, mentoring, job shadowing
	Partnering (public and private sector)
	Career planning, professional and personal development
	Experience, participation, facilitation
	Story telling, oral history, informal
Teaching – Indigenous Knowledge and Thought	Law of the family
	Law of good relations
	Medicine wheel – mental, spiritual, physical, emotional\
	Humility/Respect, Kindness/Compassion
	Relationship to the Land
	Relationship to all creation
Teachers	Grandparents, family, parents
	Elders, leaders
	Mentors, teachers, coaches
Social Fabric	Family, clans, houses, councils
	Elders, ceremonies
	Custom, tradition
	Social institutions, learned societies
	Holistic learning, oral history

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