SHARING YOUR COMMUNITY PLAN

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Summary

This fact sheet provides information about what it means to share a Community Plan, why it is important to share, who a Community Plan should be shared with, how to share it, and when to share it.

Keywords:

community engagement, reporting back, Elders / knowledge keepers, youth, planning team

What Does it Mean to Share a Community Plan?

Once your Community Plan is finished, your community should be able to see and understand the final product. Many Community Plans have many goals and objectives. These should be the focus when you share your plan with community members.

Figure 1 | Community meeting.
Adapted from (Armstrong, George. "FEMA CR provides disaster information at community meeting." Digital image. Wikimedia Commons. August 27, 2008. Accessed February 5 2017. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FEMA_-_37821_-_FEMA_CR_provides_disaster_information_at_community_meeting.jpg.)

Why is it Important to Share the Community Plan?

A Community Plan is created by your community, for your community. It is important to openly share a Community Plan for many of the same reasons that community engagement is so important in the creation of a Community Plan. The reasons for wanting to share a product can be thought of in three main ways:[1]

- Sharing for awareness: making people aware of the work that has been done.
- Sharing for understanding: giving people a better understanding of the work that has been done.
- Sharing for action: giving the community the right tools to carry out the goals of the plan by first sharing the plan itself.

One of the main benefits of a Community Plan is to empower community members. This can help them be more self-sufficient and be able to respond to change.[2] Your communication strategy shares the plan's main points. This raises awareness in the community about its direction for the future. Then everyone can work together to achieve the vision for the future.

> "You have to have the [Plan] at your finger-tips – to get refocused and remind people that we have done a plan. To remind people that we have looked at this and have a common goal and vision. People have to know that we will have a chance to speak again. The [Plan] is not a finished project. We need to feed it bread and water."[14]
>
> – Unknown, Cook 2009, p.97

Who Should a Community Plan be Shared With?

Creating a Community Plan is generally a very inclusive process. Often, this helps create a sense of community ownership over the final product. This spirit of ownership should continue as your share the final product with the whole community. Make sure to share the plan's important points with family heads, Elders, youths, community groups, band administration, Chief, and Council.[3,4,5] You can do this using different methods, depending on your audience.
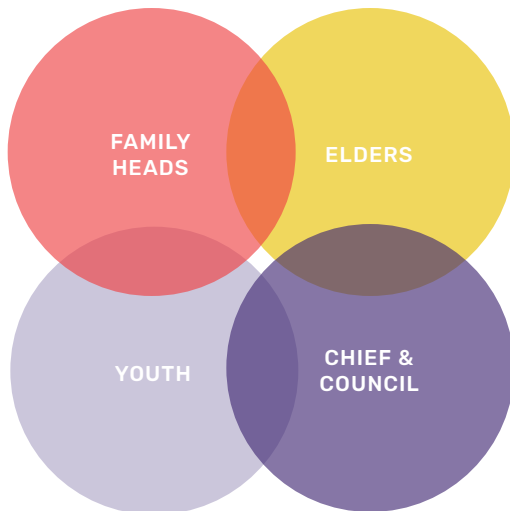
Figure 2 | *Groups of people to include when sharing the plan.*

"Building inclusion during the CCP process is fundamental to success."[15]

– Cook 2009, p.31

How Can a Community Plan be Shared?

When you share your Community Plan, it marks the transition from planning to implementation. At this point, the main responsibility for the plan shifts from the community to leadership and management.[6] The first step to share a Community Plan should be to "develop your key messages" and decide what is most important to share with the community.[7] Figure 3 shows the important parts of the plan to be shared with your community.

As illustrated in the diagram, decide on your key messages first by meeting with community leadership, management groups, Chief, and Council. Main elements include goals, cultural and economic benefits, and governance.[8]

After the key messages and main elements have been decided, they can be shared with your community in a number of ways. Every community is unique and has its own
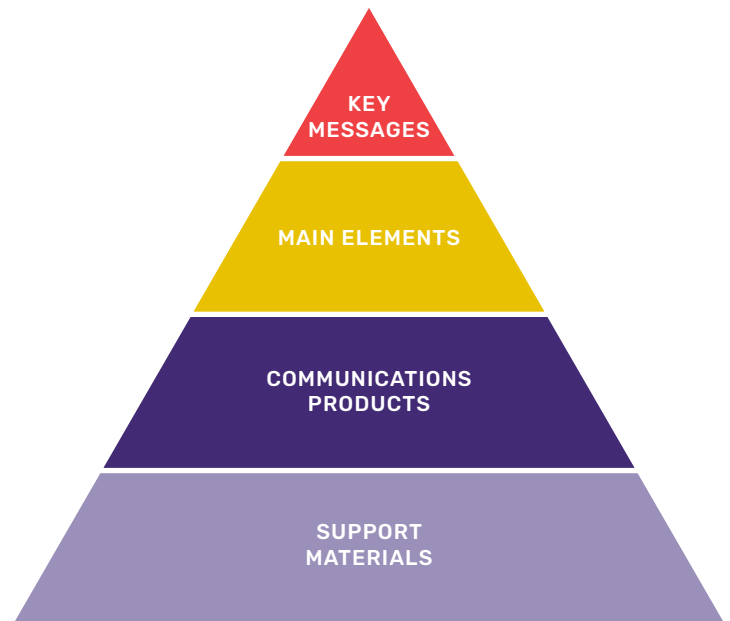
Figure 3 | *The product pyramid helps organize your message.*
Adapted from (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada / Indigenous Services Canada. "Product Pyramid" Digital image. *Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada*. 2015. Accessed October 21, 2016. http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-BC/STAGING/texte-text/fnct_e_1100100021861_eng.pdf. p. 26.) *Used with permission.*

unique set of challenges, opportunities and resources. For this reason, choose communication methods that work best for your community.[9] Some of these methods may be similar to the ones used for creating the Community Plan. Make sure the focus is to share information rather than to get new ideas.

Choose a method that worked well in the past. Communications Plans also provide some key points for how the messages should be communicated:[10]
- Simple, clear, and interesting.
- Easy to read and understand.
- Positive, truthful, and accurate.
- Focused on a specific challenge.
- Focused for a specific audience

When Should a Community Plan be Shared?

Communication should be consistent when creating and implementing the Community Plan.[11] The Community Plan should be shared with community members as soon as possible after it is finished. This will build trust and maintain high levels of community engagement.[12] The flow of information created by communication efforts is important to empower community members and keep them up to date with the implementation of the Community Plan.[13]

"Planning is a continuous process – it never really ends."[16]

– Unknown, Cook 2009, p.1

Further Reading

Gaining Momentum: Sharing 96 Best Practices of First Nations Comprehensive Community Planning

This toolkit provides well organized, easily understandable outlines for best practices in First Nations Comprehensive Community Planning. The 96 best practices are categorized depending on which stage of Comprehensive Community Planning they fit into. Each best practice is listed in simple manner that outlines what the best practice is, how to apply it, its benefits, and implications for future action.

http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/downloads/comprehensive-community-planning-long-version.pdf

First Nations Communications Toolkit by Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada

The First Nations Communications Toolkit was developed by Aboriginal and Northern Affairs Canada (now Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada). The Communications Planning section could be paired with this fact sheet to assist with message development and selecting a tactic for dissemination.

http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100021860/1100100021862

Endnotes

1   Sally Harmsworth and Sarah Turpin, "Creating and Effective Dissemination Strategy: An Expanded Interactive Workbook for Educational Development Projects," *Innovation Teams*, 2000, Accessed October 22, 2016, http://www.innovations.ac.uk/btg/resources/publications/dissemination.pdf
2   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, "CCP Handbook: Comprehensive Community Planning for First Nations in British Columbia, Second Edition," *Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada*, 2010, Accessed October 20, 2016, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1377629855838/1377632394645#pre, p.3.
3   Pikangikum First Nation, "Working it out together: Pikangikum First Nation's Community Health Needs Assessment," *Beringia Community Planning Inc.*, 2013, Accessed October 24, 2016, https://www.cip-icu.ca/Files/Awards/Planning-Excellence/Working-it-out-together-Pikangikum- First-Nation-en.aspx.
4   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2010.
5   Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources, "Communications Strategy Template," *Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources*, 2008, Accessed October 24, 2016, http://www.yourcier.org/uploads/2/5/6/1/25611440/ccp_training_session_3_-_communication_strategy_template.pdf.
6   Jeff Cook, "Gaining Momentum: Sharing 96 Best Practices of First Nations Comprehensive Community Planning," *New Ralationship Trust,* 2009, Accessed October 21, 2016, http://www.newrelationshiptrust.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/comprehensive-community-planning-long-version.pdf.
7   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, "First Nations Communications Toolkit," *Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada*, 2015 Accessed October 21, 2016, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-BC/STAGING/texte-text/fnct_e_1100100021861_eng.pdf.
8   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2015.
9   Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2015.
10 Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2010.
11 Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, 2010.
12 Cook, 2009.
13 Cook, 2009, p. 73.
14 Cook, 2009, p. 97.
15 Cook, 2009, p. 31.
16 Javier Mignone, Wanda Phllips-Beck and Darrell Phillips, "Moving Towards a Stronger Future: An Aboriginal Resource Guide for Community Development," *Public Safety Canada*, 2015, Accessed October 23, 2016, https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/rsrcs/pblctns/mvng-twrd-strngr-ftr/mvng-twrd-strngr-ftr-en.pdf, p. 1.