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Inuit Nunangat University

## Pathway to 2030

Nuuk, Greenland, October 28, 2025

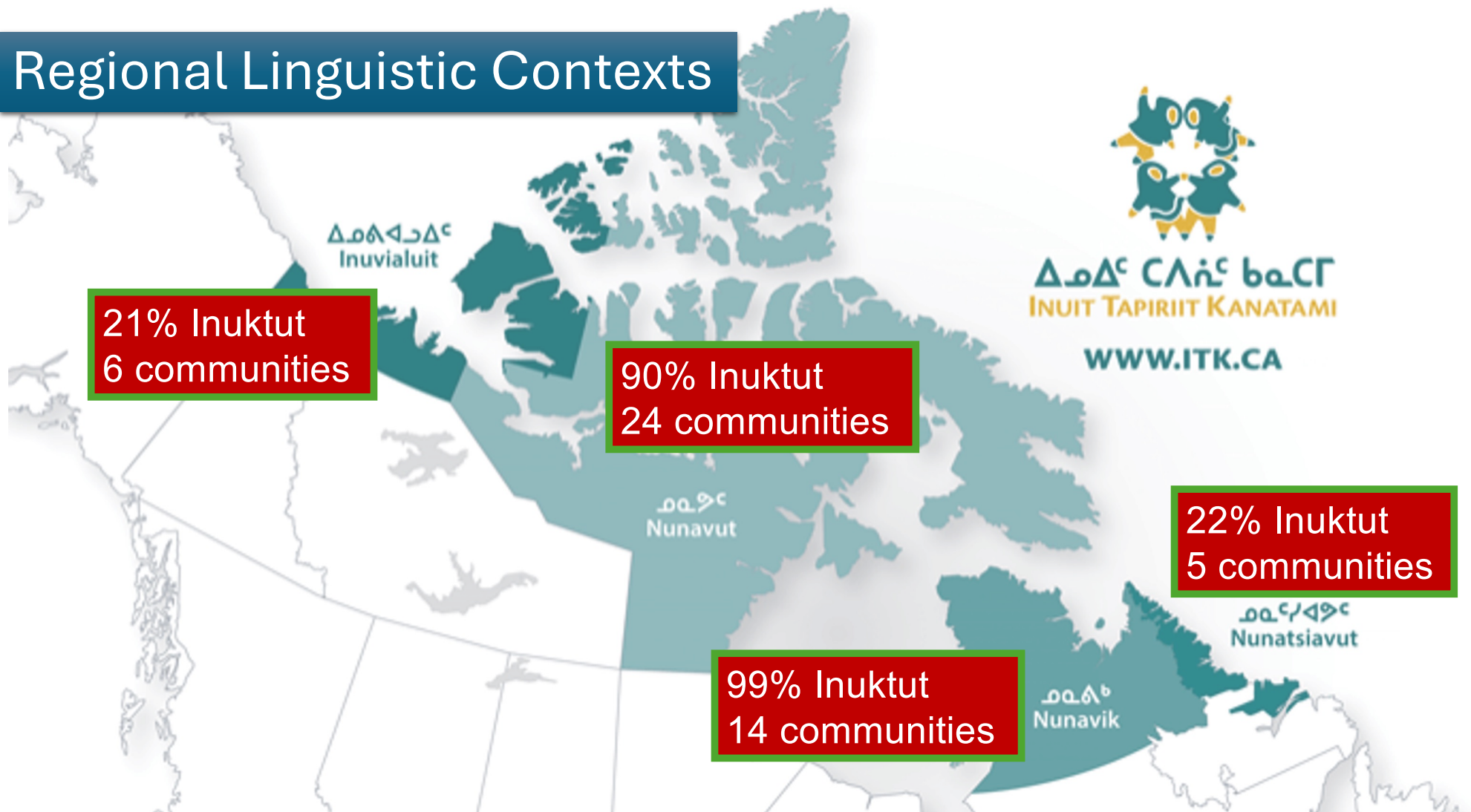


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INUIT TAPIIRIT KANATAMI

# Self-Determination in Post-Secondary Education

**Natasha Ita MacDonald | ᓇᑦᓴ ᐃᑦᓴᑦᓴᑦᓴᑦ**  
Silattusarniq Community Solutions Consulting

# Regional Linguistic Contexts



- *“What I want to see is change, that people realize that we are intelligent and we have so many strengths and not to see us as being less than, or inferior, or in need of having to reformulate our words, because they’re strong. And people, elders and hunters and community members, they should be given a high status for what they know.”*

*So that’s what I feel for postsecondary and what I want to see. Maybe it’s not about recreating something that’s already inherently trying to break us down, but creating new things with the abilities that we already have.”*



# Barriers For Post- Secondary Inuit Students



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**Decolonizing education involves redesigning the system to meet the needs of Inuit...**

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**...rather than forcing Inuit to meet the needs of an education system.**

# The University

## Background



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Inuit Nunangat University

2011

- National Strategy on Inuit Education

2017

- ITK Board resolves to establish university in Inuit Nunangat

2021

- ITK hires first INU team

2022

- INU Task Force
- Legal, Infrastructure, and Financial needs assessment

2023/24

- Vision & Mission
- Charter with Governance structure
- Federal pathway to legislation



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INUIT TAPIIRIT KANATAMI

# Vision



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Inuit Nunangat University

An Inuit-led, world-class university that helps build a healthy, strong, and vibrant society.

## Mission

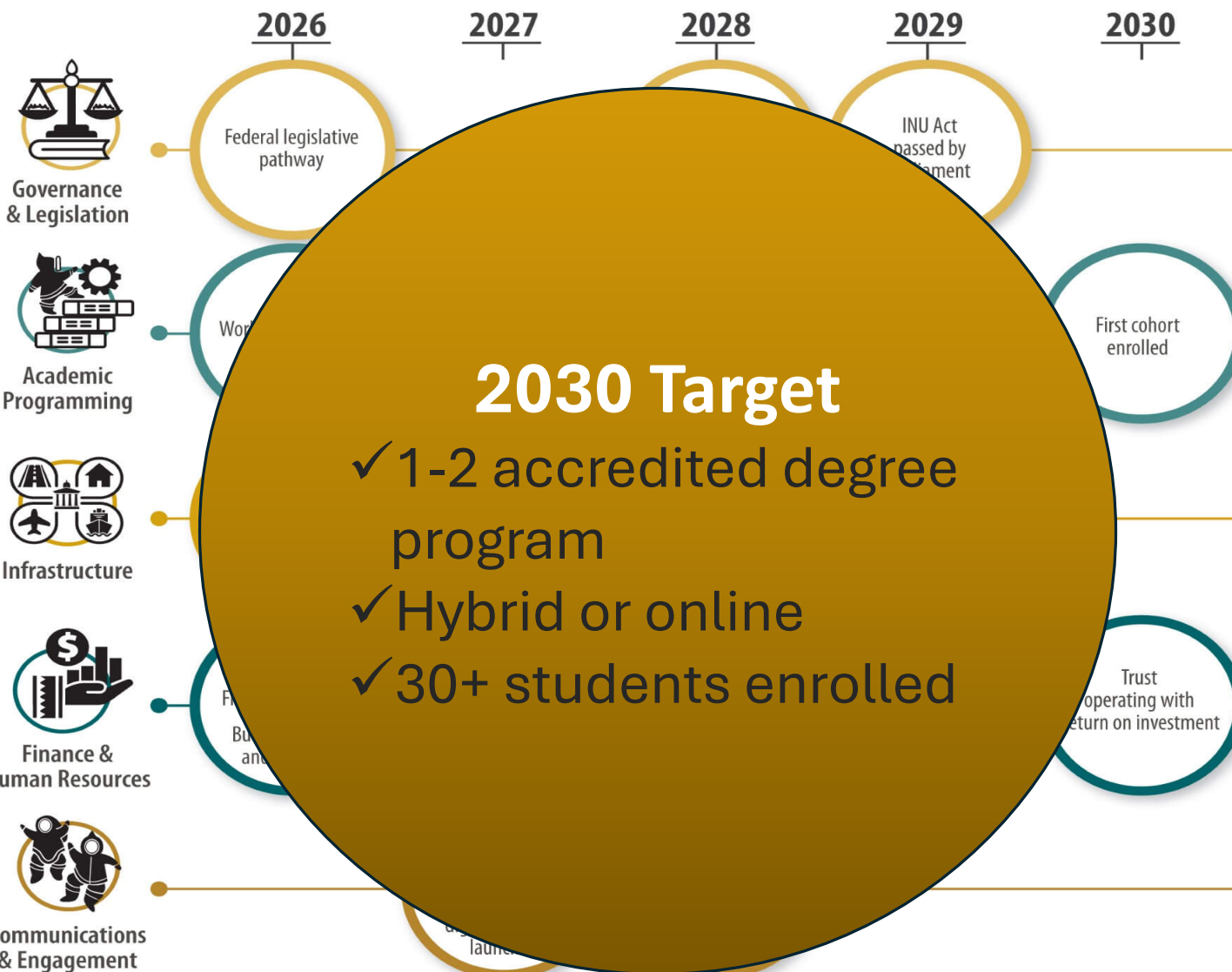
Revitalize, maintain and promote Inuktitut

Deliver exceptional learning opportunities in the Inuit homeland

Promote an equitable, diverse and inclusive university community

Support economic and cultural opportunities that serve the Inuit homeland

Advance research benefiting Inuit, Arctic jurisdictions, and broader society



## Practicalities for INU success

INU reputation &  
identity

Student + Faculty +  
Staff recruitment

Infrastructure  
(+connectivity) &  
Funding Readiness

Degree granting  
authority (Fed vs PTs)

## Academic principles

Centre Inuit Policy &  
Social Determinants of  
Health

Student Mobility

Inuit Knowledge &  
Language at core of  
programming

Inuit-led Research &  
Ethics

## Key Elements of Student Progression

Year 1 & 2: North  
Star Foundations &  
Interconnectedness

Years 3 & 4:  
Specialization

Factors going into 2030

## Academic Focus Areas



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Inuit Nunangat University

Inuktut and  
culture  
integration

Faculty and  
student  
capacity

Research  
priorities

Delivery  
models and  
student  
support



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INUIT TAPIRIIT KANATAMI



## FACULTY OF RESOURCEFULNESS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Concentrating on environmental protection and economic independence; promote Inuit-led research on sustainable practices.

Ex: Economics, Hunting, Engineering, Climate Studies, and Environmental Detection.

## FACULTY OF EXPRESSION

Encouraging students to explore self-expression, reclaim Inuit identity through artistic disciplines, promoting cultural narratives, developing creative voices.

Ex: Visual Arts, Inuit Art History, Music, Theatre, Writing, Sculpture, Curating, Archiving, and Technology/IT/AI.

## FACULTY OF SURROUNDINGS & RELATIONALITY

Emphasizing health and well-being; empower students to enter health-related professions grounded in traditional practices.

Ex: Midwifery, Nursing, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Food/Nutrition, Culinary Arts, Well-being, and Recreational Studies.

## FACULTY OF SILATURSARNIQ (becoming a wise person)

Dedicated to cultivating wisdom and skills, this faculty will prepare students for careers in education, social work, and community service, while enhancing their sense of self and agency.

Ex: Education, Social work, Administration, Family/Kinship/Innuguiniq, Well-being and Community health

## FACULTY OF SOVEREIGNTY

Concentrating on Inuit self-determination, this faculty will empower students to engage in governance and advocacy for their communities.

Ex: Governance, Leadership, Land Claims, Finance, Law, History, Policy Development, Political Science, Inuit Self-Determination, and Decolonization.

## FACULTY OF INUKTUT

Focused on revitalizing the Inuktitut language, this faculty will equip students with skills in language analysis, interpretation, and translation, ensuring the language's survival and relevance.

Ex: Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Dialectology, Inuktitut Administration, Pragmatics, and Interpretation and Translation

# Phased Approach: 2030

## Silatusarniq



- Fills labour shortages
- INU's Flagship
- Builds community engagement
- Meets Acad Principles (IN & Knowledge Ped)

## Inuktut



- Meets Academic Principles
- Meets priorities determined by engagements

## Resourcefulness & Sustainability



- Priority faculty as per engagements
- Lends well to a graduate program
- Can establish Research programs
- More flexible learning options

Nakurmiik!

Thank you!

Merci!

# **The role of community-driven culture-based Indigenous wellness initiatives for health system governance: assessing kinship approaches to building local agency**

Ioana Radu, UQAT

Innovative Pathways: Indigenous Research in Canada

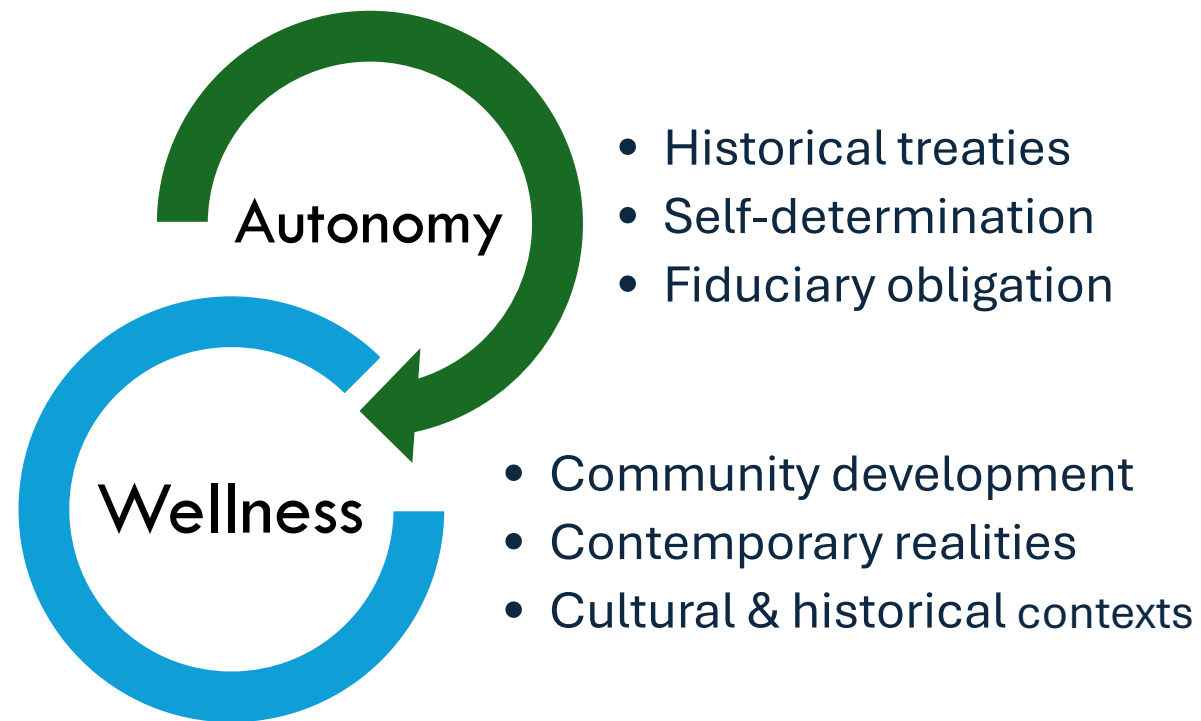
Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland, Nuuk

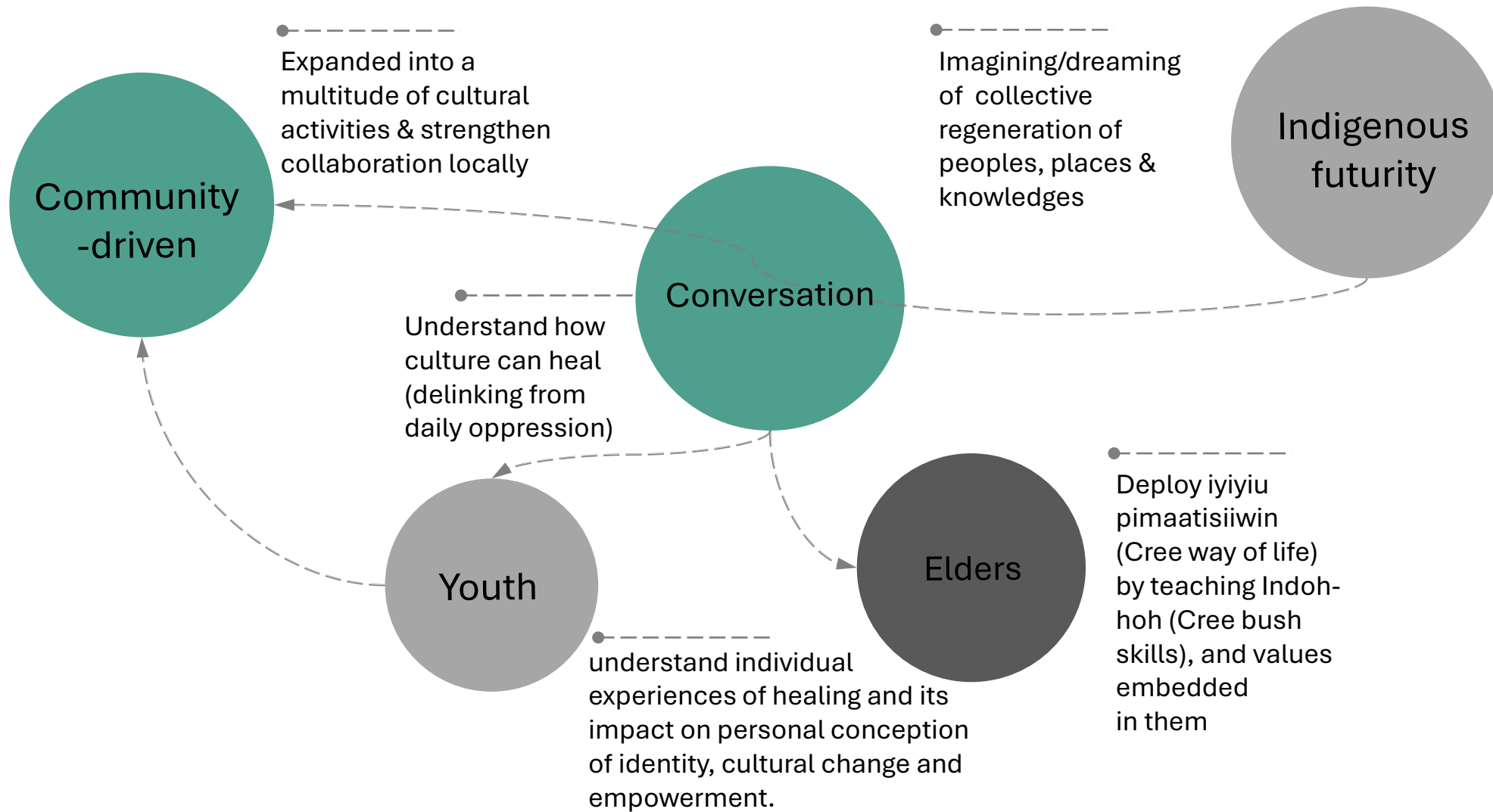
October 28, 2025

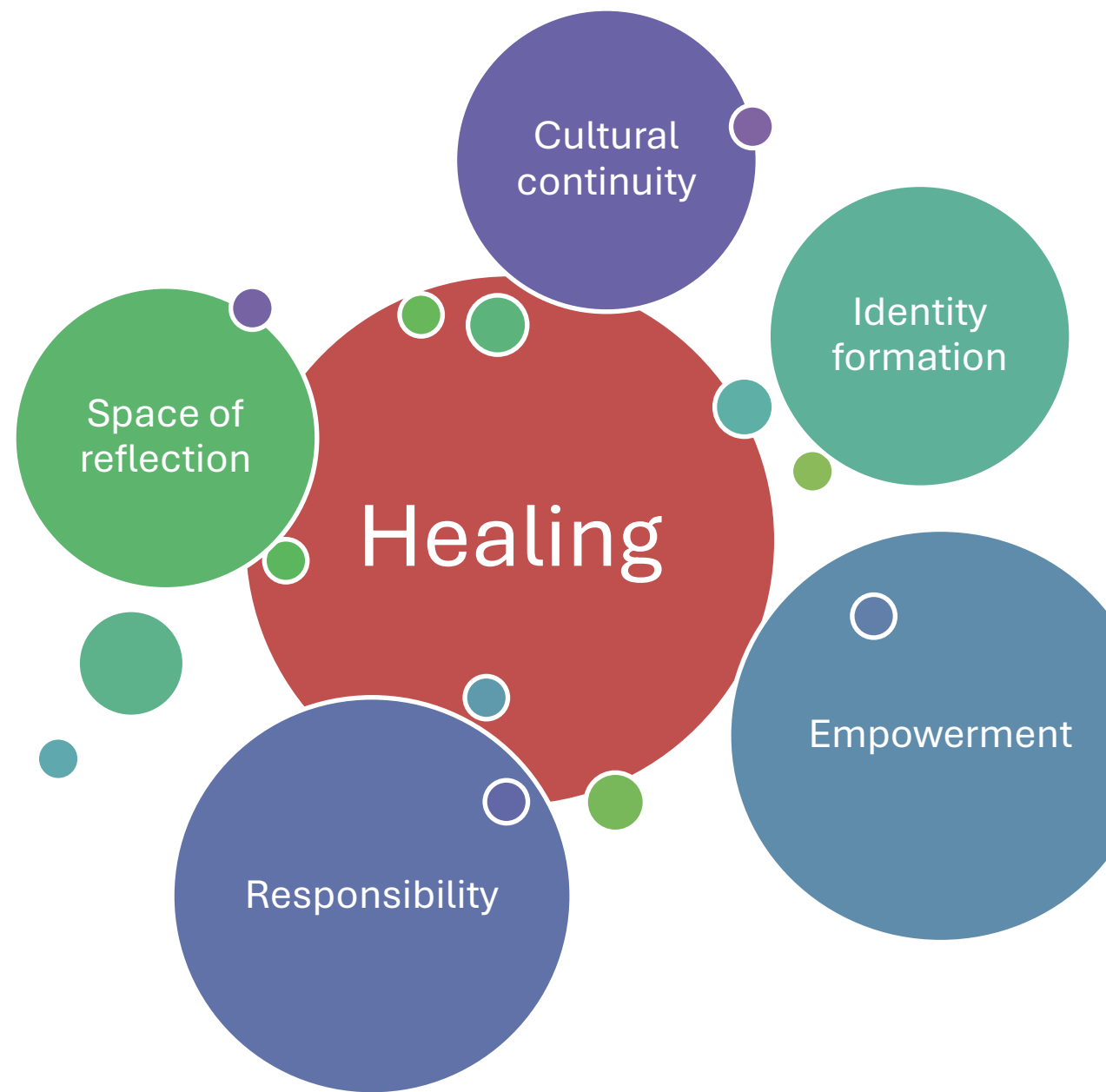


# 2008-2017

Miyupimaatisiun en Eeyou Istchee  
Healing and Decolonization in Chisasibi







Culture integration model for service provision

Local Wellness Action Plan

Land-based healing program



**What can kinship teach us about agency,  
healing, and governance?**

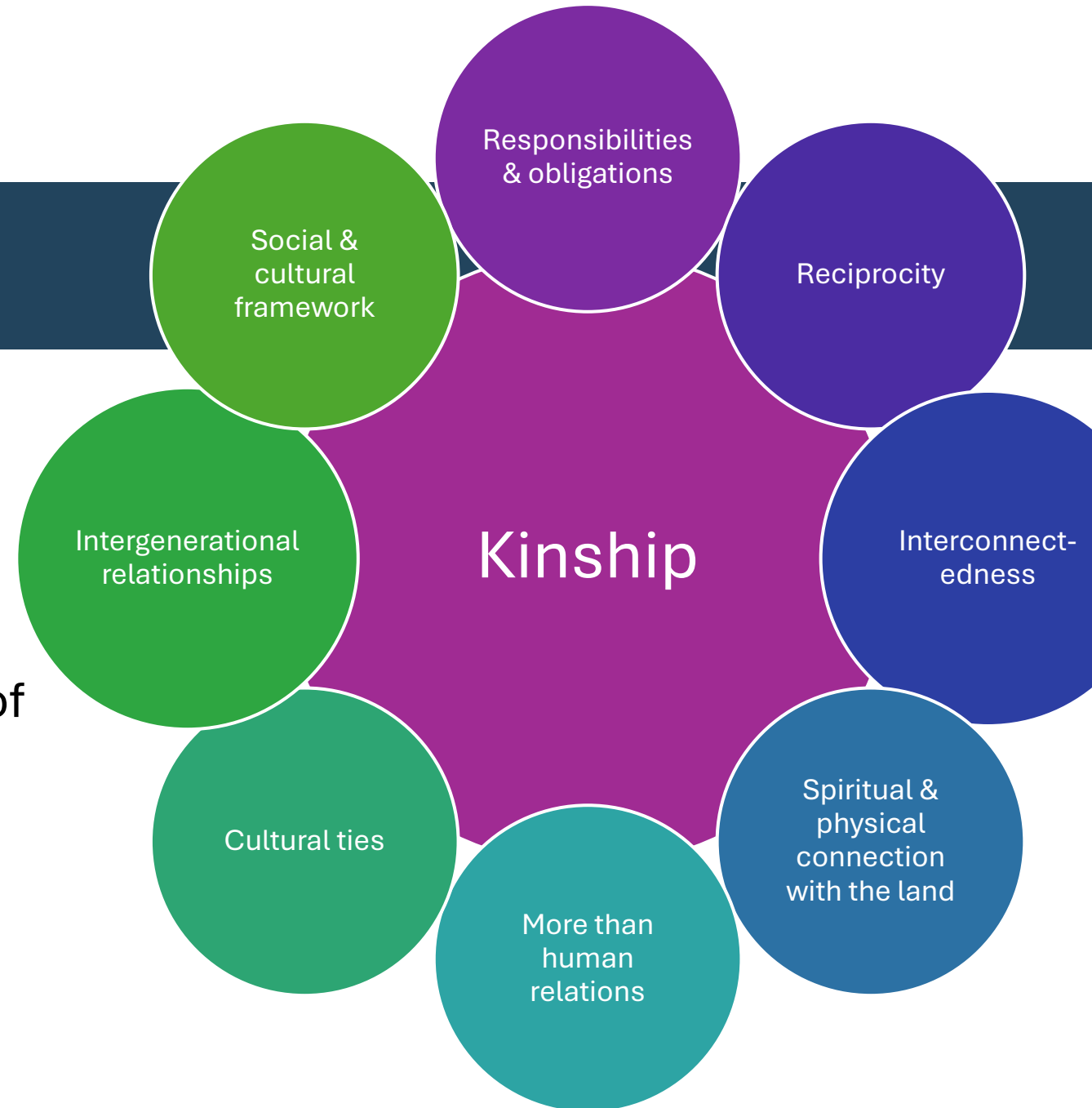
Explore the role of kinship-based intervention approaches in strengthening community-driven, culture-based Indigenous wellness initiatives. Objectives:

- Explore Indigenous kinship-based approaches that support engagement of community members in the design and delivery of wellness initiatives
- Co-develop kinship-based intervention models that support existing wellness initiatives
- Facilitate a better understanding of how Indigenous kinship-based approaches builds local capacity and agency to address health inequities.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## How is kinship defined in the literature?

- An inclusive and complex concept, difficult to translate its meaning into French/English
- Based primarily on interdependent relationships that unite all members of the extended family/community
- Focused on the roles and responsibilities of extended family members towards one another, the community, and the land



# LITERATURE REVIEW

## How is kinship utilized across different sectors of intervention?

- Used in different ways in many sectors of intervention to promote culturally safe services and intervention models
- Calls for a process aimed at creating respectful and safe relationships and connections between service providers and service users
- Ensure kinship approaches are not used in a culturally inappropriate manner by the government or service providers



# LITERATURE REVIEW

## What are the barriers and opportunities of institutionalizing kinship in service provision?



**Financial burden:** The state often provides minimal financial support to caregivers, expecting families to absorb the costs associated with caregiving.



**Limited resources:** Kinship caregivers often find themselves without adequate access to the resources and services available through non-kinship care arrangements.



**Administrative burden:** Families face complex legal and administrative challenges, ex. navigating custody and guardianship processes, which can be overwhelming without state support.



**Emotional and relational impact:** The expectation that families will assume caregiving roles without sufficient support can lead to emotional strain.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## What are the barriers and opportunities of institutionalizing kinship in service provision?



**Framework of Cultural Dispossession:** Government programs often frame Indigenous social issues through the lens of cultural dispossession—obscuring systemic issues.



**Emphasis on Parenting:** The focus on Indigenous parenting practices as the root cause of social problems, often portraying them as inadequate due to the consequences of colonialism—neglects structural inequality (poverty, inadequate housing, and lack of access to services, etc.).



**"Therapeutic Governance":** The use of therapeutic discourse and psychological interventions to address Indigenous issues can act as a form of "benevolent power"—increased surveillance and control over Indigenous families under the guise of support and healing.

**Wakumagen** (Eeyou Istchee)

**Whanau (Ora)** (Māori)

**Wahkotowin** (Plaines Cree)

# **SIGNIFICANCE & APPLICATION**

Indigenous languages as anchors to express and understand cultural and social significance of kinship relations.

Aims to preserve and protect cultural connections throughout life – with an emphasis on the role of kinship in the development of young people/families.

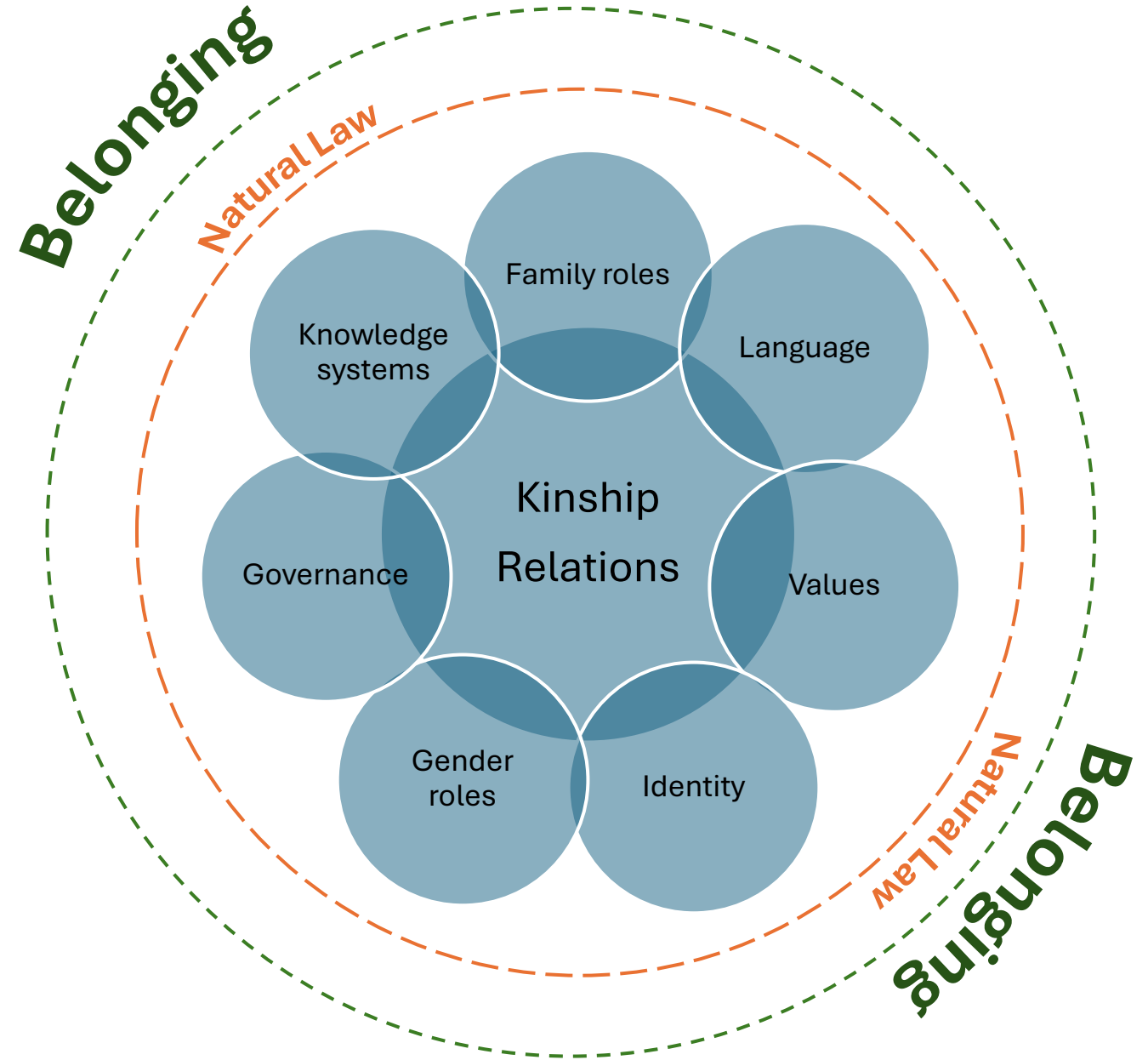
Ceremonies, protocols, and teachings are used to support mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being and to live a good and balanced life (Miyupimaatisiun / Mino-Pimatisiwin).

# WAKUMAGEN

**Endodam:** a relationship between people ('friendship')

**Wakumagen:** expansive and holistic ("all my relations"): kinship relationship (biological ties) + social connection (marriage, adoption, friendship) + non-humans/territory

How cultural and social values are lived and embodied (harmony, interconnectedness, reciprocity, trust, respect, love, etc.)

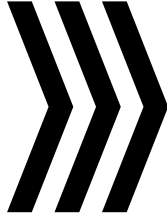




**Residential schools**

**Imposed systems**

**Generational gap**

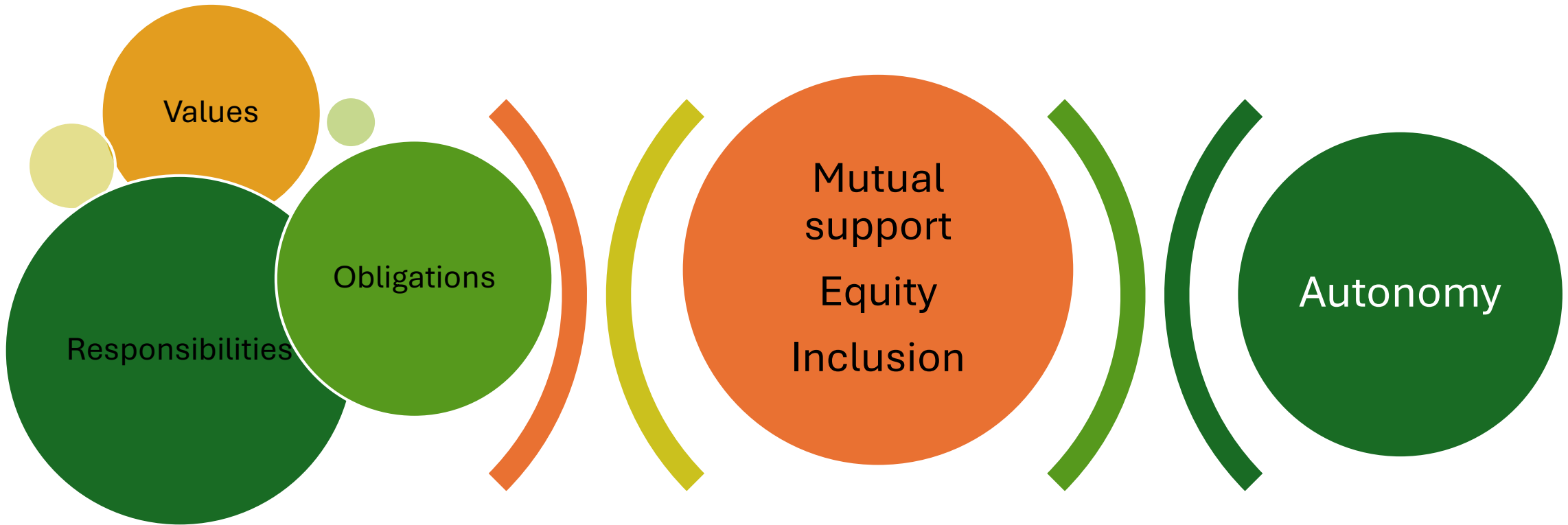


**Cultural continuity**

**Knowledge systems**

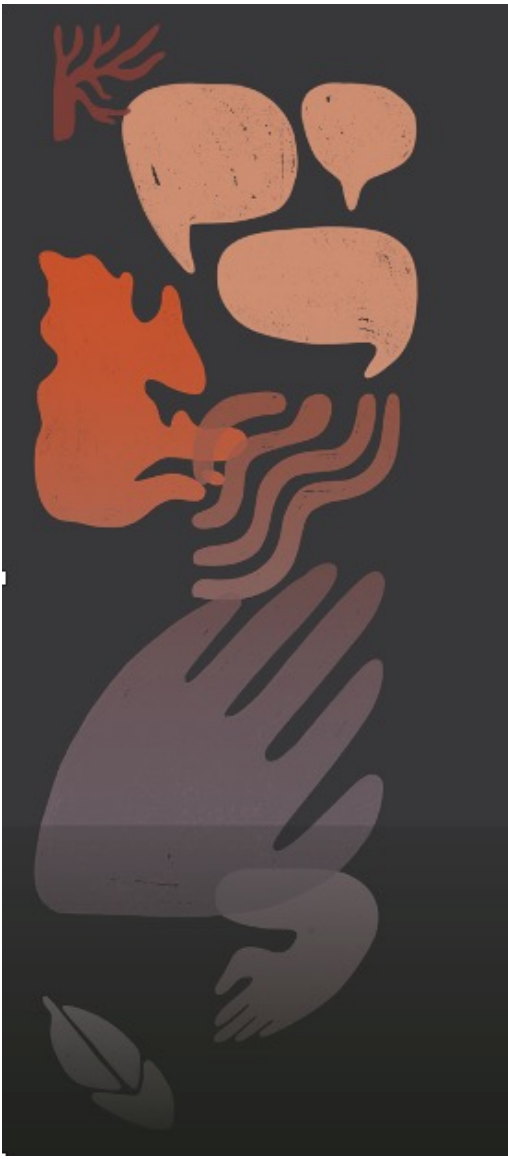
**Knowledge transmission**

**CHALLENGES**



# QUJANAQ

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# Living Languages: Indigenous Language Legislation Across the Circumpolar Region

Innovative Pathways: Indigenous Research in  
Canada

Ilisimatusarfik, University of Greenland, Nuuk

28 October 2025

Sébastien Brodeur-Girard  
School of Indigenous Studies (UQAT)  
[sebastien.brodeur-girard@uqat.ca](mailto:sebastien.brodeur-girard@uqat.ca)



UQAT





# Language, Culture and Power

- **Language** is more than communication
  - « there is an interrelation between language and power. Our languages are more than words – they are about our values, knowledge, and worldviews. »  
(Sara Olsvig, 2025)
- Reclaiming language = Reclaiming self-determination





## UNDRIP, art. 13

- (1) Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, **languages**, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literatures, and to designate and retain their own names for communities, places and persons.
- (2) States shall take effective measures to ensure that this right is protected and also to ensure that indigenous peoples can understand and be understood in political, legal and administrative proceedings, where necessary through the provision of interpretation or by other appropriate means.





# The Arctic as a Linguistic and Political Landscape



- **Indigenous peoples** (Inuit, Sami) across multiple states
- Same peoples, different political and legal frameworks
- Three comparative contexts:
  - **Canada:** Northwest Territories and Nunavut
  - **Greenland**
  - **Nordic countries:** Norway, Sweden and Finland
    - Sami homeland







# Canada: Symbolic Recognition

- **Constitutional framework**
  - Only English & French are official languages
  - Aboriginal rights recognized, but language rights undefined and untested
- Indigenous Languages Act (2019)
- UNDRIP Act (2021)
- Principles expressed, rights not enforced

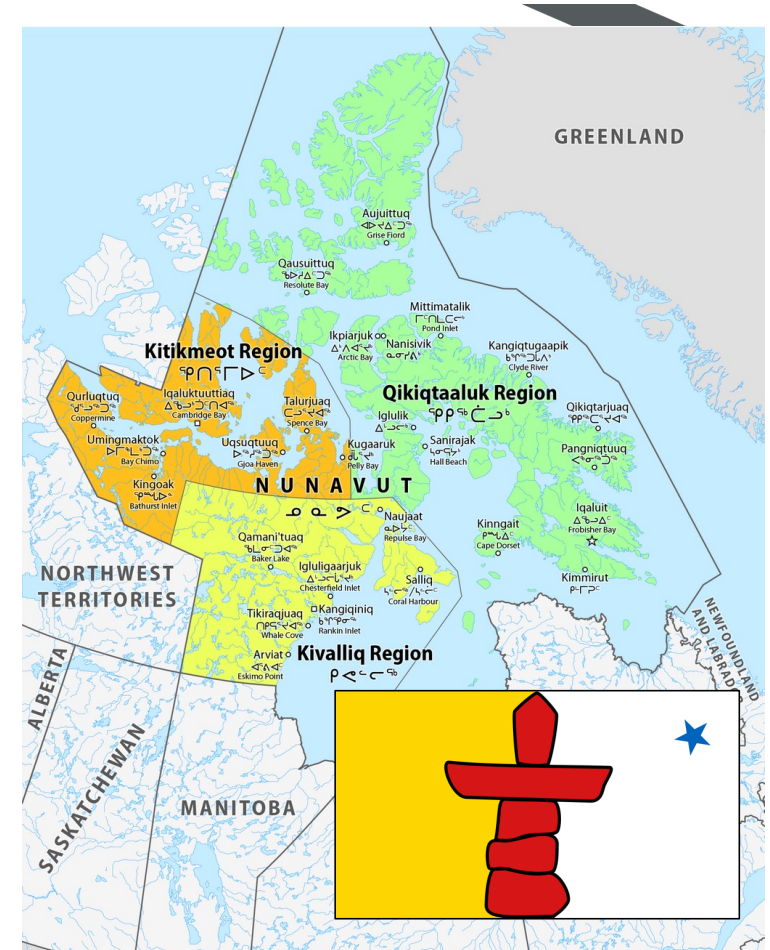






# Northwest Territories and Nunavut

- **NWT:** 11 official languages (English, French + 9 Indigenous Languages)
- **Nunavut**
  - Official Languages Act (2008): 4 official languages (English, French, Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun)
  - Inuktitut Protection Act (2008/2025)
- **Education:** Ambition vs. Reality



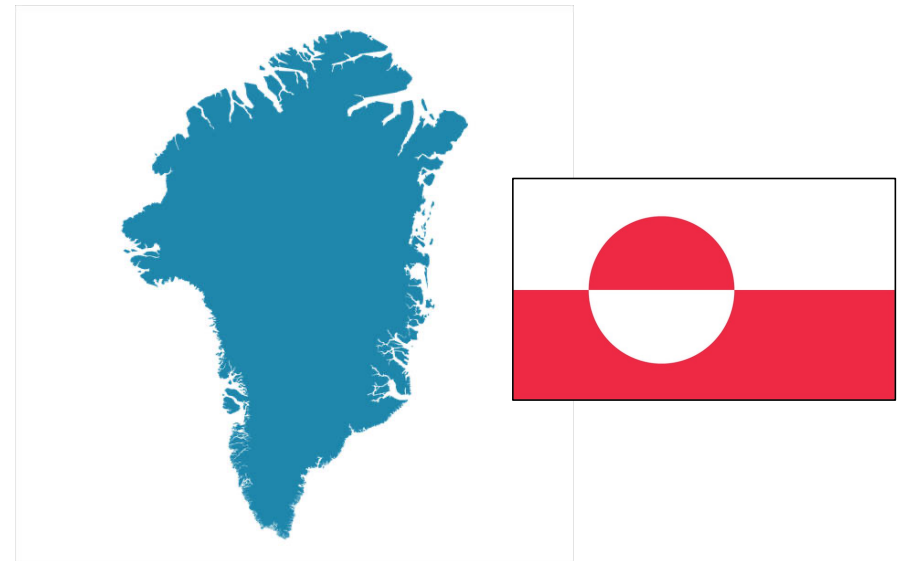
UQAT





# Greenland: Toward Linguistic Sovereignty

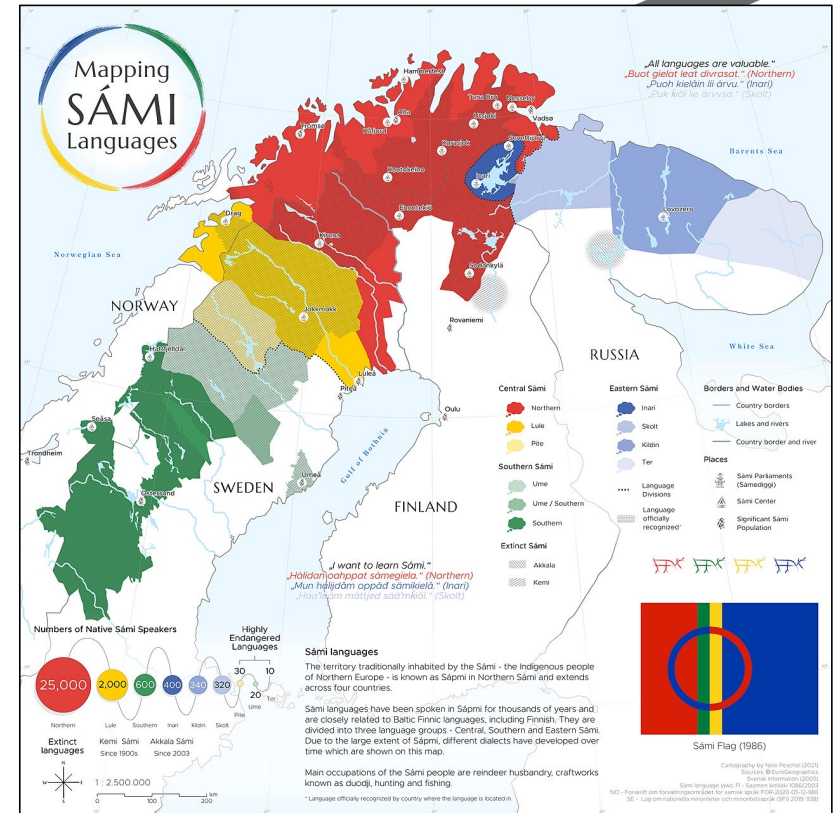
- Demographic strength = linguistic power
- **Legal framework:** Greenlandic = sole official language (Self-Government Act, 2009)
- **Language Policy Act (2010)**
  - Public services in Greenlandic
  - Private sector language policies (10+ employees)
  - Commercial life: ads, signage, warranties
- **The Danish question:** No official status, but still used in administration, justice, higher education





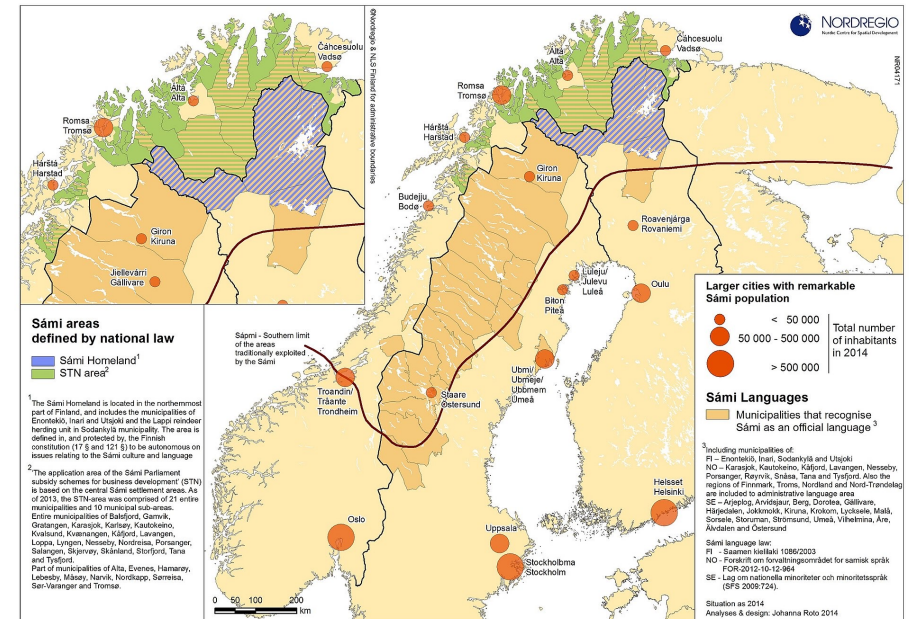
# The Nordic Countries

- **Common feature: Territorial legislation** – Rights apply only in designated administrative regions with Indigenous populations
- **Norway**
  - *Language Act* (2022): Norwegian & Sami on equal footing
  - Constitution recognizes government responsibility for preservation
  - *Sami Act* (1987): Co-official status in designated administrative areas
- **Sweden:**
  - No official languages, but Swedish = "main language"
  - Sami recognized as national minority language (2009)
  - State responsibility to protect and promote
- **Finland**
  - Two national languages: Finnish & Swedish
  - Constitution guarantees Sami right to preserve language and culture
  - *Sami Language Act* (2003) governs use in state services





- **Rights depend on location**
  - Services available only in designated municipalities with Indigenous concentration
- **Norway's graduated approach**
  - Language development municipality
  - Language revitalization municipality
  - Language stimulation municipality
  - County municipality
- **Geographic limitation**
- **Population dispersal** – Many Sami outside ancestral territories = no access







# Persistent Challenges

- **Institutional framework exists** – Language agencies in all countries (Sami Parliaments, Language Councils, Commissioners)
- **Funding crisis**
- **Symbolic > Substantive**
  - Recognition without enforcement
- **Community burden** – Protection depends on communities, not governments
- **Dialect marginalization** – Languages have multiple dialects
- **Strong frameworks, weak implementation**





# Conclusion



- **The legislative spectrum**

DECLARATORY LAWS ← — — — → OBLIGATORY LAWS  
(Tolerance to speak) (Required services)

- **Current reality:** Declaratory laws dominate, but obligations are growing
- **Laws alone ≠ Language survival**
- **Required for effectiveness:**
  - 💰 Adequate funding
  - 🏛️ Political commitment
  - 👥 Community leadership
  - 📚 Resources (materials, personnel)





# Qujanaq!



**Sébastien Brodeur-Girard**

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**Special thanks to Esther Shana Boulanger  
for the help with this presentation**



# UQAT's School of Indigenous Studies: A history of successes and challenges

Innovative Pathways:  
Indigenous Research in Canada  
October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025



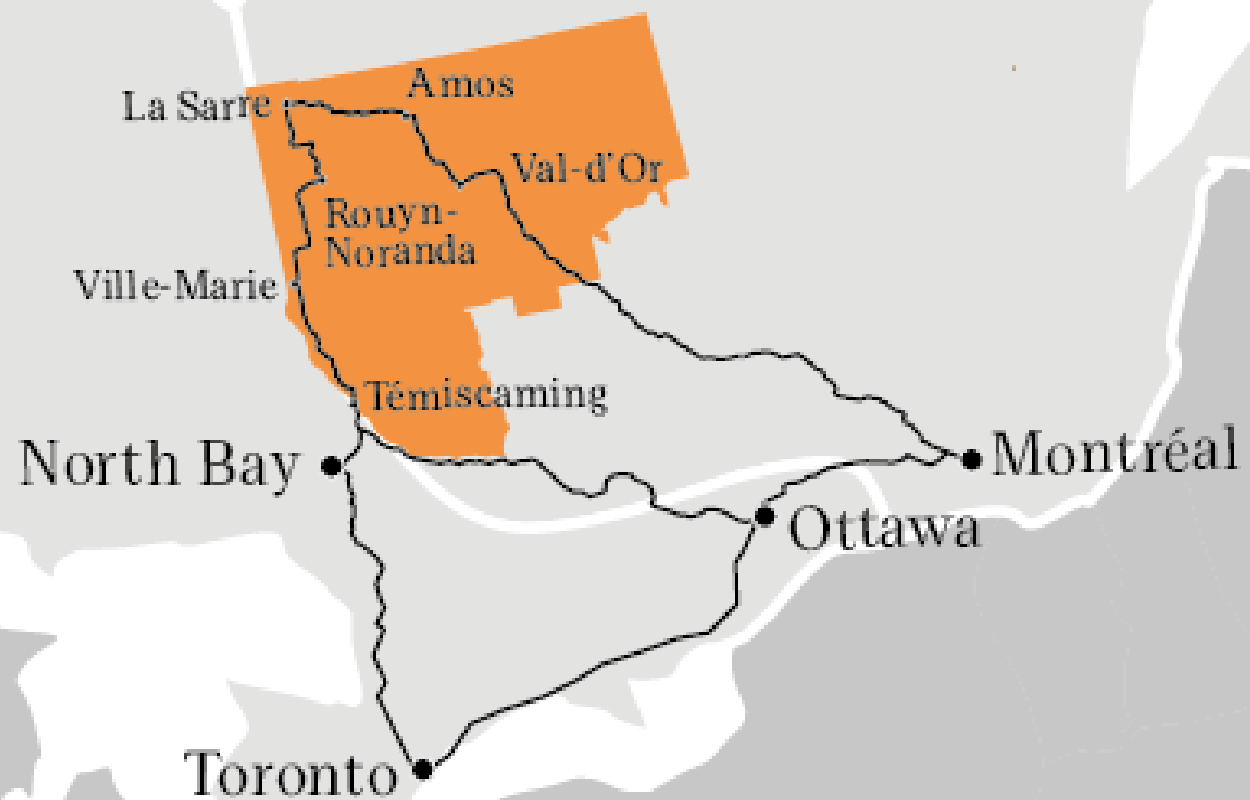
# Objectives

- Presenting Abitibi-Témiscamingue and its peoples
- Presenting UQAT (Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue)
- Presenting the School of Indigenous Studies

# 1. Abitibi-Témiscamingue



# Abitibi-Témiscamingue





# Pow Wow Pikogan





Long Point First Nation,  
Winneway



Centre d'amitié  
autochtone,  
Val-d'Or







## Canadian Malarctic & Odyssey mines Malarctic

Goldex,  
Val-d'Or



## 2. UQAT

(Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue)





Campus, Rouyn-  
Noranda



Campus, Val-d'Or





# 1. UQAT's 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

UQAT supports the full affirmation of Indigenous peoples, by respecting their rights, their cultures, their knowledge and the way they see the world.

1. Increase consultation and representation of Indigenous peoples in UQAT's various spheres of activity.
2. Recognize and promote Indigenous perspectives, knowledge, and languages in teaching and research.
3. Work collaboratively with Indigenous peoples to support their access to higher education.

<https://www.uqat.ca/uqat/plan-strategique/docs/UQAT-Plan-Strategique-2025-2030.pdf>

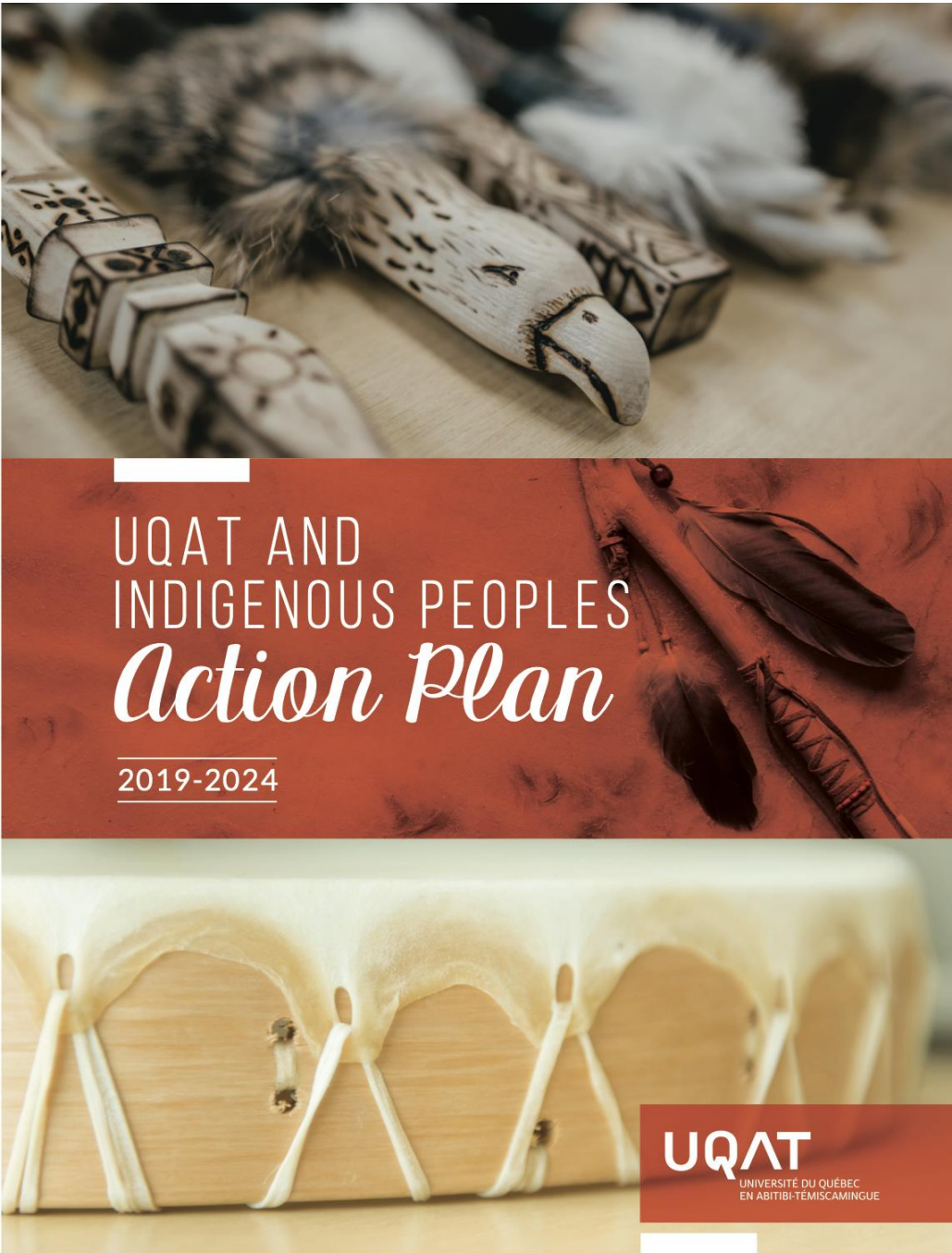
Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue

## Plan stratégique 2025-2030



## 2. UQAT and Indigenous Peoples. Action Plan

Objective: to strengthen the relationship with Indigenous peoples.



UQAT AND  
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES  
*Action Plan*

2019-2024

**UQAT**

UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC  
EN ABITIBI-TÉMISCAMINGUE

<https://www.uqat.ca/en/downloads/action-plan-autochtone-ang.pdf>

### 3. UQAT's territorial acknowledgment

Université du Québec en Abitibi-Témiscamingue acknowledges that it is located within Nitakinan, Anicinape Aki. It acknowledges that Indigenous languages, cultures, and identities are deeply rooted in *Nitakinan* and that this territory is vital to traditions of sharing, healing, and passing down knowledge.



Today, this territory is home of many nations living in both territorial and urban communities. UQAT also recognizes that its educational institutions and activities extend to the territories of other First Peoples.



UQAT is mindful that it is part of a system whose origins go back to colonization. Educational institutions have long been used for the purposeful assimilation of First Peoples, in particular through the imposition of the residential school system. The damaging effects of that system can still be felt today.



In view of this acknowledgement and in support of the full assertion of the First Peoples, UQAT commits to taking concrete action, specifically through education and research.



# 4. First Peoples Services



<https://www.uqat.ca/en/services/firstpeoples/>



## 5. UQAT's Research Ethic's Board



<https://www.uqat.ca/recherche/ethique/etres-humains/>



# 3. School of Indigenous Studies

École d'études autochtones

# School of Indigenous Studies

- Non-disciplinary university department that focusses on teaching disciplines and making research that matter to Indigenous peoples.
- Indigenous students from various nations
- Non-Indigenous students
- Teaching in French and English

# Undergraduate programs

- Indigenous Studies
- Indigenous Governance
- Territorial Management
- Childhood and Family Intervention
- Employability and Career Development

# Research Topics

- Issues relating to indigenous women (access to midwives, forced sterilizations, territorial knowledge, etc.)
- Public policies and governance
- Linguistic rights
- Indigenous legal traditions
- Health and well-being
- Relationship between people and animals
- Colonial history
- Oral and local history
- Ecology
- Forestry
- Mining industry (employment, the consequences of Indigenous communities)
- Employment
- Etc.

# Approaches to Research

- Emphasis on research ethics
- Emphasis on community needs
- Emphasis on community participation
  - Identifying research priorities
  - Developing research tools
  - Collecting data
  - Analyzing data
  - Disseminating results (presentations and publications)



# Challenges

## UQAT

- UQAT is a small institution in the Canadian and North American context
- We are isolated

## School of Indigenous Studies

- Most profs are still non-Indigenous

# QUJANAQ QUJANNAMIIC NAKURMIIC QUANA

Francis Lévesque, professor and director  
Director, School of Indigenous Studies  
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# Rooted in Care: Inuit Economic Practices and the Limits of Colonial Integration

Magalie Quintal-Marineau, professor in Indigenous Studies, INRS, CANADA

Seminar: Innovative pathways: Indigenous Research in Canada

Ilimatusarfik, Nuuk, October 28th, 2025

# Research in the Canadian Arctic

## R-Words: Refusing Research

Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang

12

*This is not a story to pass on.*

—Toni Morrison (1987, p. 275)

*... I knew that there were limits to what  
I could ask—and then what I could say...*

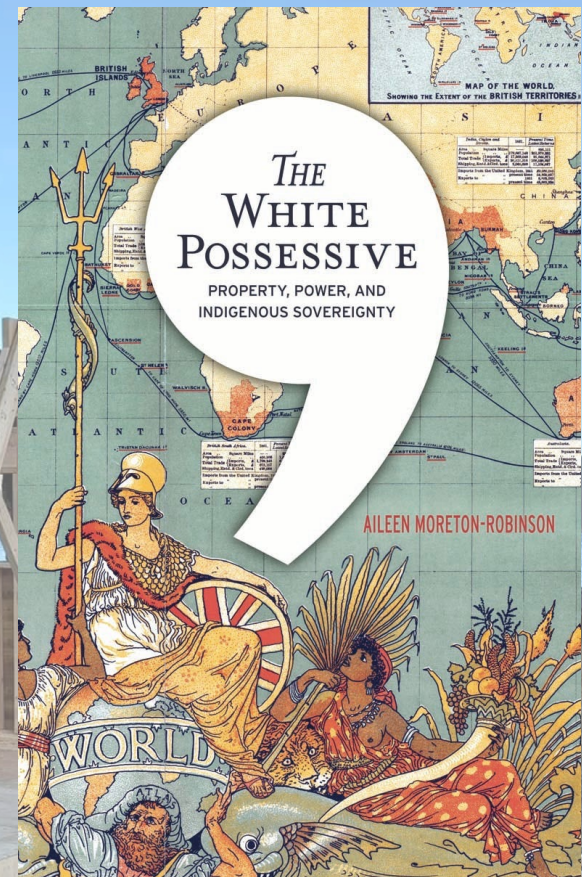
—Audra Simpson (2007, p. 73)

## Humanizing Research

Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry  
With Youth and Communities



Django Paris | Maisha T. Winn  
Editors









14 communities

Inuit (90%)

14 000



## Construction sector in Inuit Nunangat

- Fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workforce model
- Primarily non-Inuit workers (+/- 98%)
- Inuit population (90%)
- Intense work schedule

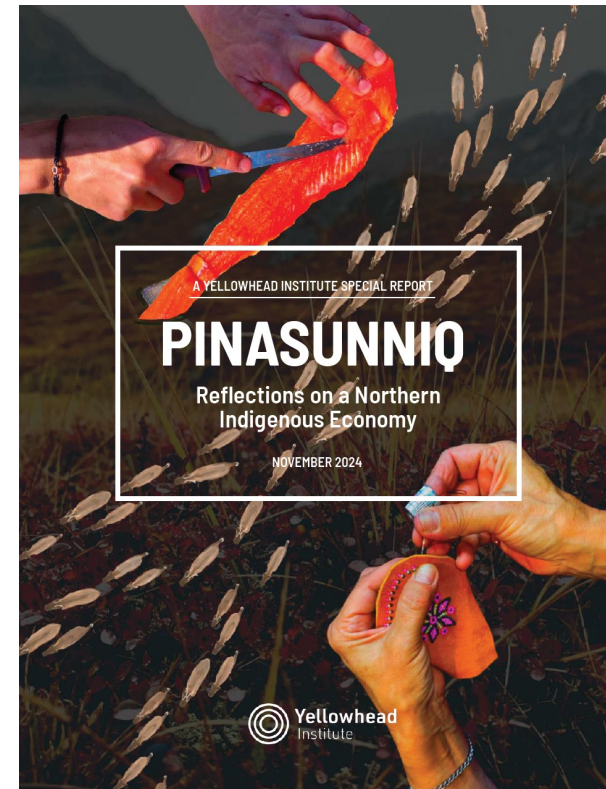
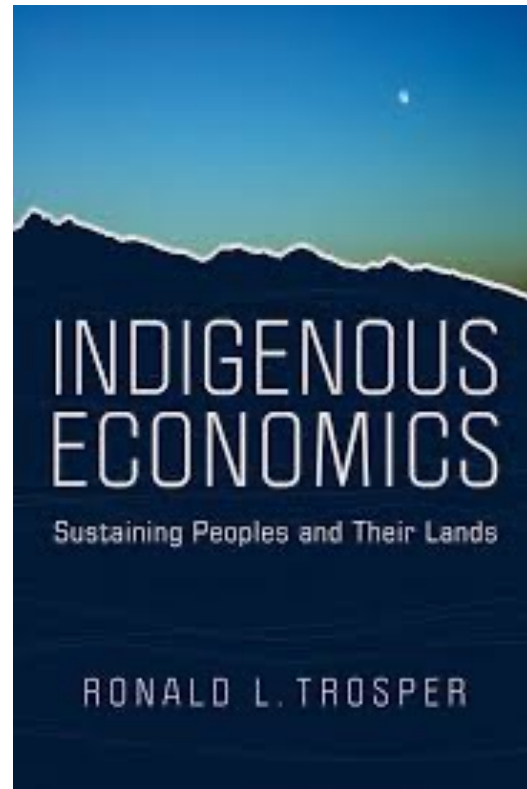
## Construction sector in Inuit Nunangat

- Efficiency for company
- Maximize productivity
- Hundreds of jobs

## Construction sector in Inuit Nunangat

- Political developments:  
Inuit self-determination  
& Inuit-led governance  
structures
- Increased # southern  
workers
- “Lack of qualified Inuit  
workers”
- “Lack of committed  
employees”

# Indigenous Relational Economic Theory





# Indigenous Relational Economic Theory

| Mainstream Economics                   | Indigenous Relational Economic (IRE)                  |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Focuses on individual choice & utility | Focuses on relationships and mutual responsibilities  |
| Private property is central            | Rejects private property; emphasizes collective use   |
| Nature is a resource                   | Nature has agency; humans are in relationship with it |
| Value is often monetary                | Value includes trust & reciprocity                    |
| Governance through contracts/laws      | Governance through relational obligations and balance |

# **Ikajurtigiit community-led construction & training cooperative**

## **Services**

- Renovation & light construction (sheds, porches, camps, cabinets)
- Carpentry & maintenance services
- On-the-job training with experienced mentors
- Support for Inuit apprentices preparing for exam

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 1. Redefining Power Relationships

- Inuit employees as equal business partners
- Model fosters shared ownership, accountability, and collective agency

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 2. A Less Hierarchical Work Model

- Reciprocity & relational obligations among employees
- Decision-making & problem-solving emerge collaboratively

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

### 3. Collective Outcomes Over Individual Gain

- Community benefit
- Projects carried out in members' home communities
- Contribute directly to local development



# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 4. Meaningful, Culturally Grounded Projects

- Projects – youth camps, mental health facilities, housing renovations
- Inuit ways of life & community priorities
- Connecting professional work with cultural purpose

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 5. Re-centering Relationships

- Long-term relationships with local organizations
- Accountability, stewardship, & ongoing presence in the North

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 6. Building Local Capacity

- Developing expertise locally
- Reducing reliance on fly-in/fly-out labor.
- Strengthening regional self-sufficiency
- Nurturing leadership

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 7. Culturally Relevant Workforce Model

- Work schedules – flexible hours, on-the-job training
- Supportive mentoring – Elders and social workers
- Balance professional and personal well-being

# What is innovative about Ikajurtigiit?

## 8. Centering Care and Healing

- Care is a foundational value
- Mutual support, trauma recovery, & professional growth
- Acknowledging employees' life journeys
- Creating compassionate & empowering environment

OCTOBER 28TH, 2025

Ilisimatusarfik

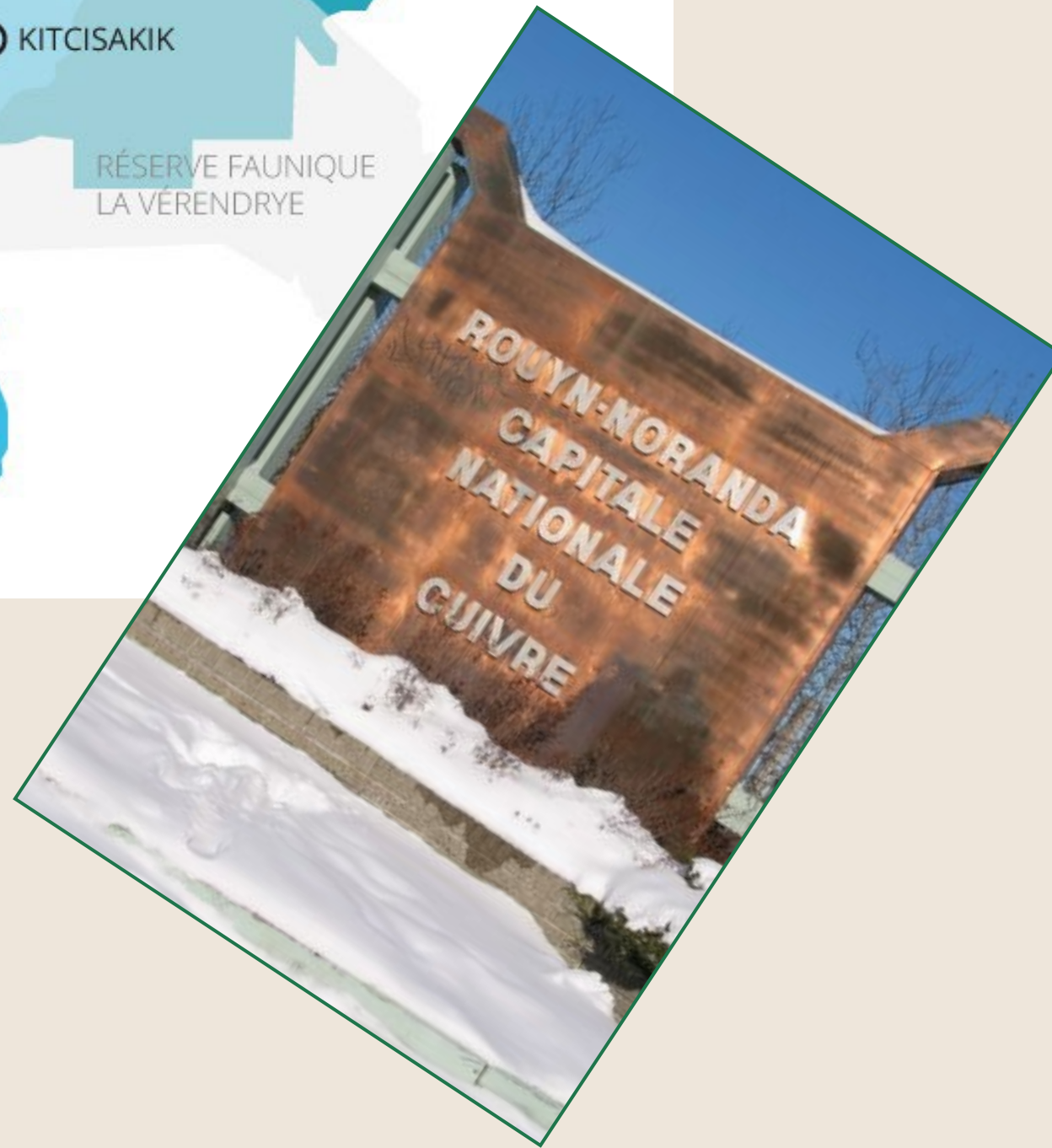
# DRILLING THROUGH the land

TENSIONS BETWEEN RESOURCE EXTRACTION AND INDIGENOUS  
RIGHTS



# INTRODUCTION

- Ph.D. candidate in Indigenous Studies at UQAT
- Lecturer in Indigenous social work & former social worker with survivors of gendered violence in a mining region
- Research: Gendered impacts of mining on Anicinapek communities
- First visit to Greenland → here to learn & share reflections



# PRESENTATION pathway



# EXTRACTIVISM colonial legacies

- ⇒ Extraction as colonial instrument
- ⇒ Reorganized territories
- ⇒ Dependency, inequality and degradation
- ⇒ Canada: “free-entry” mining regime = limited FPIC
- ⇒ Greenland : from Danish colonial extraction, self-rule and then, “green transition” pressures





# UNDRIP

## Analytical lens



- ⇒ Art. 25 Relationship to land & water
- ⇒ Art. 32 free, prior & informed consent
- ⇒ Art. 18, 21, 22 participation & protection from discrimination

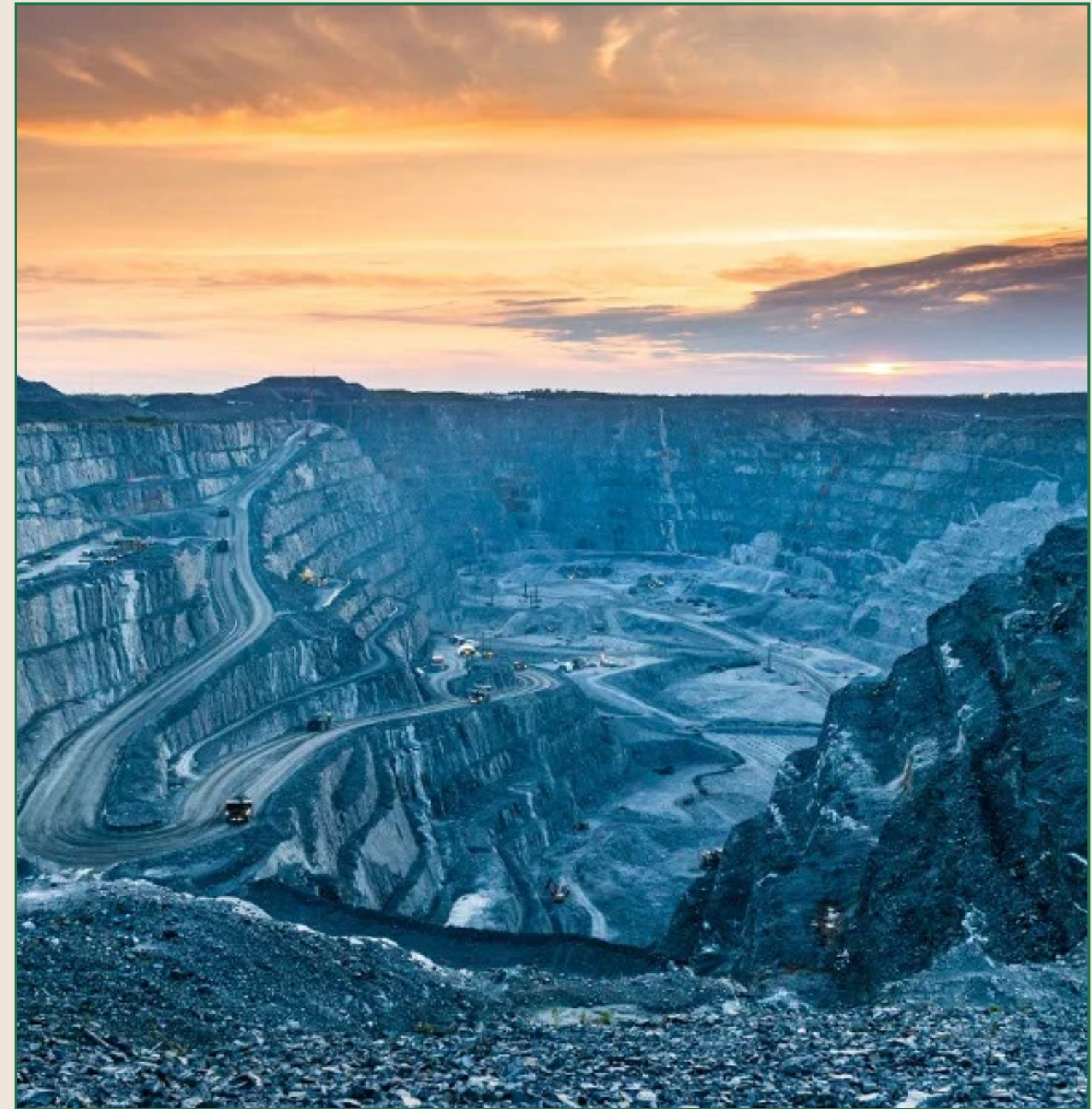
In practice, these principles are systematically undermined.



# COLONIAL LOGIC of control

## Dependency as governenance

- ⇒ Top-down decision structures
- ⇒ Industry exploits community divisions
- ⇒ Resistance framed as “anti-development”





# GEMDERED Impacts

## Extractivism is gendered

- ⇒ Exclusion from decision spaces
- ⇒ Caregivers: first affected by pollution & social impacts
- ⇒ Increase in violence : Fly-in fly-out and men camps
- ⇒ “Empowerment through employment” = neoliberal myth



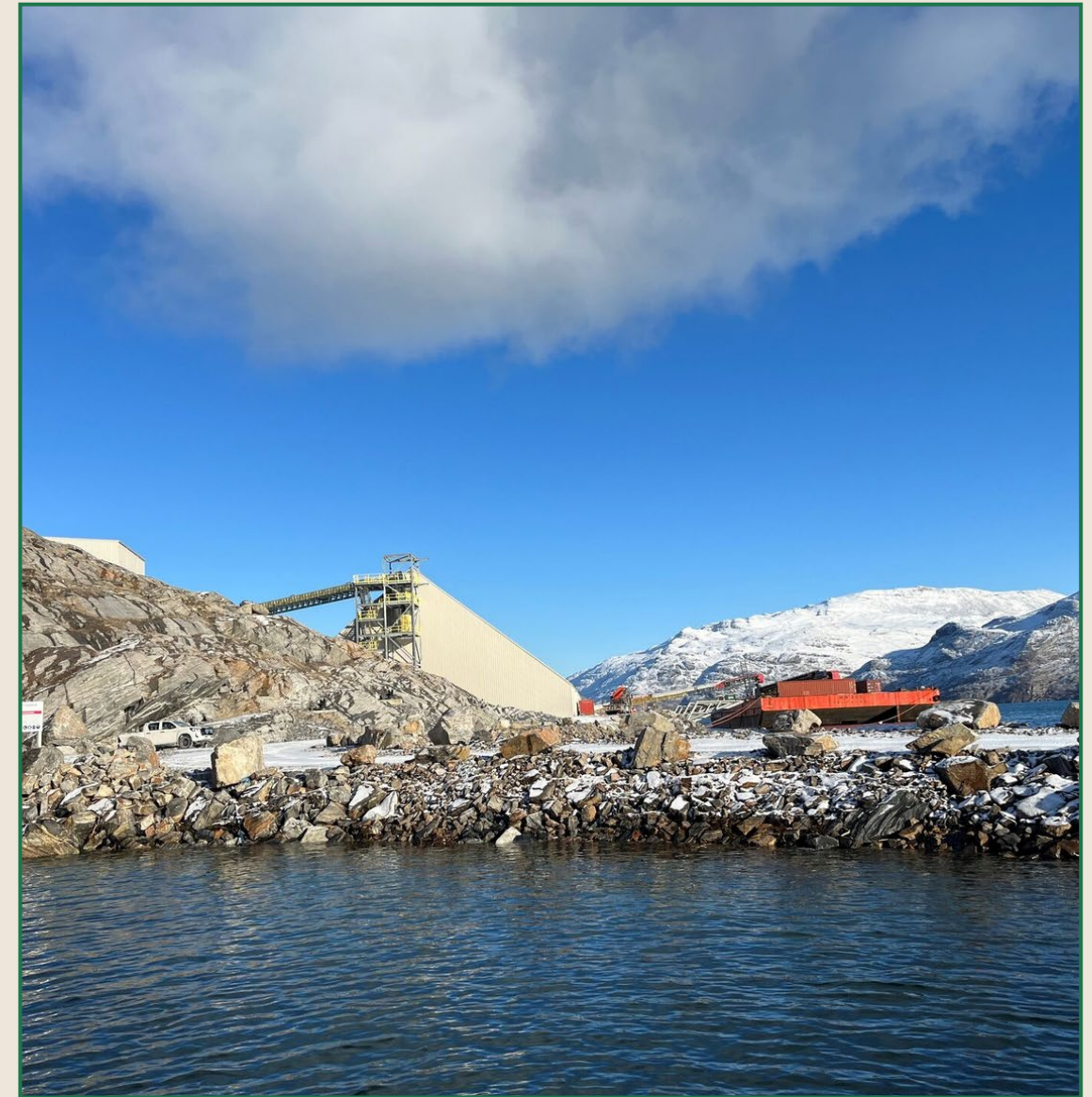


# CONTRADICTIONS with Indigenous rights

## Gendered violence as a breach of rights

- ⇒ Violates art. 18, 21, 22, 25 & 32.
- ⇒ Consultations ignore gendered knowledge
- ⇒ Need for gender-inclusive and FPIC mechanisms
- ⇒ “Empowerment through employment” = neoliberal myth

Extractivism not only drills through the land,  
but also through the fabric of relational life





# INDIGENOUS WOMEN STANDPOINT Agency

- ⇒ Rooted in responsibility, care, and sovereignty
- ⇒ Ontology (ways of being) : land as identity
- ⇒ epistemology (ways of knowing) : relational knowledge
- ⇒ Axiology (ways of doing) : ethics of care & reciprocity



# AGENCY in practice

## From vulnerability to agency

- ⇒ Healing circles, IBAs clauses, legal mobilization
- ⇒ Care as resistance : relational governance
- ⇒ UNDRIP embodied daily through care and teaching



# PARALLELS & lessons

## Canada

- IBAs = privatized consultation
- Gender often treated as “social variable”
- FAQ & NWAC : relational perspective
- Mine-dominated debate

## Greenland

- Self - Rule = economic sovereignty through mining
- Qaammat = spiritual ecology
- Male - dominated debate



# SHARED FUTURE

## Limits and alternatives



- ⇒ Extractivism tests FPIC implementation
- ⇒ Women craft relational governance models
- ⇒ Sovereignty – restoring reciprocal relations, not limited to resource control



# NAKURMIK

## Merci Thank you

