

MVAEC – ICI, Shared Measurements Information Briefing Note

Issue

Mandate: MVAEC has the mandate to advocate, collaborate, and build capacity with a unified voice for all urban off-reserve Aboriginal people in the Metro Vancouver area.

Mission Statement: “MVAEC is a unified voice of Aboriginal Organizations, who strategically plan, advocate and positively influence outcomes that strengthen the service delivery and policies that impact our Metro Vancouver Urban Aboriginal Community.”

MVAEC has 23 urban Aboriginal organizations on its council, along with partnerships and ally-ships across Metro Vancouver, including municipal, provincial, and federal governments. In addition, MVAEC coordinates efforts through six roundtables; (1) Children, Youth, and Families, (2) Education, Training, and Employment (3) Arts, Language, and Culture, (4) Housing & Homelessness (5) Health & Wellness, and (6) Justice. Furthermore, MVAEC has initiated the Urban Indigenous Opioid Task Force to facilitate a response to the opioid crisis across Metro Vancouver. Task force members consist of non-profit organizations, health authorities, and all three levels of government involved in the response.

Challenge: The challenge for MVAEC is building a unified voice that strategically informs urban Aboriginal policy development, program design, and service delivery for a diversified population that is embedded in multiple public and private sectors.

Background

The Metro Vancouver Aboriginal Executive Council plans to use two frameworks to address the policy needs of the urban Aboriginal population across the Metro Vancouver region. The two frameworks are the MVAEC Indigenous Collective Impact structure and the MVAEC Indigenous Psychology of Poverty.

The MVAEC Indigenous Collective Impact (MVAEC-ICI) structure provides a strategy for MVAEC to address the governance issues involved with policy, program, and service delivery affecting the urban Aboriginal population. The framework is designed to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is an innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organizations, and community members to achieve significant and sustained social change. There are two features crucial to strategizing with a collective impact structure. The first feature involves five conditions that lay the groundwork for partners and allies to work together. They are (1) a common agenda, (2) shared measurement, (3) mutually reinforcing activities, (4) continuous communication, and (5) backbone support. These conditions provide an opportunity for people to identify one or two complex social issues to work together on within and across sectors. In 2017 MVAEC established two common agenda items, first is **Housing and Homelessness** and second is **Education Training and Employment**. MVAEC also tries to integrate **Health and Wellness** into these two common agenda items. The purpose is to integrate a social determinants lens to address life-span and wrap-around-services, as requested by the MVAEC community as a priority issue.

The MVAEC Psychology of Poverty Framework (MVAEC-POP) helps MVAEC ensure that policies, programs, and services contain holistic approaches for individual service users. The MVAEC-PoP

compliments the MVAEC-ICI by focusing on the direct benefits provided to service users of the urban Aboriginal population across Metro Vancouver. The psychology of poverty is concerned with the relationship in poverty environments between; chronic stress; the negative affect of chronic stress on feeling, thinking, and economic decision making. The psychology of poverty asserts that people living in poverty are forced to make decisions that require resources beyond their psychological and material resources in order to secure immediate benefits over long-term larger benefits. The MVAEC-PoP will balance out disparities with concepts of well-being from Aboriginal oral histories. Providing individuals and organizations with goals to strive towards that improve everyone's quality of life.

Current Status

MVAEC – Indigenous Collective Impact: MVAEC is currently working on defining shared measurements. Involved in the process is a literature review of human development. The focus on human development has been selected for promotion of measurements other than gross national product or gross national income. Concentrating instead on understanding how urban Aboriginal service users convert the programs and services available to them into the ability to enhance their quality of life. The first objective is to define shared measurements for collective impact for each round table, to enhance our relationship development with our partners to ensure we are collecting and sharing data together. The deliverable that comes out of this is to design an 'MVAEC Guidelines on Shared Measurement' for the MVAEC Indigenous Collective Impact Framework. Including rationale, implementation strategy, and evaluation process.

MVAEC – Indigenous Psychology of Poverty: MVAEC needs to determine how to narrow its focus in the selection of psychology of poverty avenues to travel down. One avenue provides the option of more in-depth understanding of the role of risk attitudes in the urban Aboriginal population. Risk attitudes include being risk averse or avoiding, risk neutral, or risk loving or seeking. Risk attitudes inform the intertemporal choices of individuals. Meaning, how do individuals assign value in decision-making when it comes to choosing between an option that provides smaller gains, but at a point in time that is sooner. Opposed to a choice with larger gains, but at a point in time further down the line. For example, does an individual want to enter a certificate program that involves one year of study, or a college/university degree that involves four to five years of study, increased time away from children, and more uncertain prospects for employment, but the possibility of increased salary, household income, and long-term benefits?

MVAEC – Potlatch Economy: The potlatch economy contributes a process whereby there is greater room to Indigenize collective impact and psychology of poverty content. For example, does equity of income enhance the five factors of Aboriginal human development? Which can be defined as (1) individual (2) family (3) tribe/clan (4) First Nation(s), and (5) linguistic, cultural, and spiritual aspects.

The MVAEC potlatch economy contributes concepts to the psychology of poverty by identifying traditional methods of human development that demonstrate how individuals were integrated into the community. The MVAEC potlatch economy also contributes to the identification of traditional processes of governance within communities. The argument being that Aboriginal culture was not limited to artistic expression. Artistic expressions were usually embedded in the title, rights, governance, and sovereignty of the individual, family, tribe/clan, and First Nation(s).