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The City as a "Space of Opportunity": Urban Indigenous Experiences and Community Safety Partnerships

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Introduction

In the Canadian context, the disparity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations is quite clear.[2] Although Canada is one of the richest countries in the world, studies show that living conditions for First Nations communities rank sixty-third in the world (or are comparable to conditions in the developing world).[3] The gap in well-being between First Nations communities and non-Indigenous communities in the rest of Canada has widened since 1996.[4] Developed by researchers at Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to measure social and economic well-being in Canadian First Nations communities, the Community Well-Being Index (CWB)[5] reinforces the discouraging reality of the trends of poorer outcomes of well-being for rural and urban Indigenous populations. Considering the tremendous efforts to improve the situation[6] and the recommendations from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples,[7] why are we witnessing this growing gap,[8] and why are Indigenous peoples living like "second-class citizens"? What does this imply about the Canadian Charter, notions of citizenship, and rights?

Growing disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are evident in most parts of the world. This is coupled with increasing migration of Indigenous peoples to cities. This has introduced new opportunities, yet discrimination and marginalization of urban Indigenous peoples is an ongoing reality. This is evident in the high rates of urban poverty; high-school drop-out; children in care; victimization; and incarceration in the criminal justice system. There is concern that state responses are inadequate and are not culturally appropriate, perpetuating a complex history of unresolved issues. The positive news is that across the world, cities are building initiatives to address these issues, indicating that the landscape is changing for Indigenous peoples.

This paper, through a brief overview of a selected set of experiences of Indigenous peoples[9] in cities, attempts to demonstrate a dichotomy—that while there are growing disparities faced by urban Indigenous peoples, there are emerging opportunities that aim to improve the standard of living, make cities safer, and

enliven the urban setting for the benefit of Indigenous peoples. The paper will explore the larger phenomenon of increasing urbanization and its effect on the marginalization[10] and victimization of Indigenous populations in cities.[11] Within this discussion, the context of governance of cities, rights, safety, and inclusion will be addressed. The paper will further highlight the increasing opportunities of urban life through national and international practices and partnerships, in an attempt to stimulate exchange and new ideas.

1. The Century of the City: Urbanization Around the World

The twenty-first century can be described as the "century of the city;"[12] half the world's population currently resides in an urban area. As cities grow, their populations will increasingly diversify, posing several challenges in terms of management and governance. The pressure will be felt to provide "harmonious" spaces, and to ensure an integrative, inclusive, and equitable setting.[13]

The majority of cities are already facing the growing problem of accommodating their citizens alongside the continuous flow of new arrivals. While cities offer varied opportunities to newcomers, their expansion and diversification may result in a situation in which services are stretched and demands increase beyond government capabilities. The rise of megacities like Sao Paulo, Brazil; Lagos, Nigeria; and Cairo, Egypt, have resulted in the development of informal settlements. Large proportions of the population are socially and economically excluded, living in poverty, and lacking necessities such as affordable housing, employment, and/or access to health and education.[14]

The composition of cities in terms of the age of citizens is also changing. It is estimated that 60 percent of all urban dwellers will be under the age of eighteen by 2030.[15] In large cities such as Sao Paulo, Lagos, and Cairo, youth unemployment is on the rise, which affects the quality of life of young people and their families, and facilitates their involvement in violent and criminal activities. At the same time, globalization, despite its tremendous opportunities, has contributed to the growth of transnational organized crime including trafficking in small arms, drugs, and persons, which has specifically affected this population.[16]

Increasing disparities in cities has a direct impact on human development, including economic capacity and development, health outcomes, gender equality, and education.[17] Urban inequality can affect social mobility, impinging on participation in the economy and integration into society. UN-Habitat (2008) advocates for cities to develop "'pro-poor' social programmes, equitable distribution of public resources and balanced spatial and territorial development, particularly through investments in urban and inter-urban infrastructure and services," as productive measures for alleviating urban inequality.

Many cities, countries, and international institutions are addressing the growing challenges by promoting equity, sustainability, and safety as essential

components for development, and for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.[18] Safety is an important issue that is often left out of government strategies and urban governance frameworks. The 1995 and 2002 United Nations Guidelines on the Prevention of Crime[19] remind us of the significant role that safety plays in our daily lives, as well as the link between safe cities and recognizing citizens' rights and fundamental freedoms (equality and inclusion). The guidelines' basic principles outline how all levels of government should play a leadership role in developing community safety strategies. These strategies should be integrated into social and economic policies and programmes (education, employment, health, housing, urban planning, poverty, social marginalization, and exclusion), with particular emphasis on communities, families, children, and youth at risk. The guidelines further stress the importance of partnerships between the government, civil society, and the community in the prevention of violence and crime through inclusion, participation, and equality in terms of gender and meeting the needs of different minority groups. Since 1994, the International Centre for the Prevention of Crime, has upheld the guidelines in its work to promote the development of effective crime prevention internationally.[20]

2. Indigenous Peoples in Cities

Indigenous peoples around the world are increasingly following the trend of migrating to cities. Insufficient demographic and statistical information has made it difficult to reach an overall figure that captures the rate and percentage of indigenous peoples residing in urban areas (temporarily or permanently) and migrating to urban areas.[21] Poor data on this trend is in part attributed to the fact that many Indigenous peoples and groups in the world are not recognized and do not have equal rights, and they tend to migrate to informal areas within the city, which are not captured by the census.[22] Further, the term "Indigenous" often leads to debates on the one hand because is not necessarily used by certain groups. On the other, it is sometimes used within the context of those facing human rights violations in an effort to address their situation, identifying themselves with the Indigenous peoples' movement. Kipuri (2007) adds that the debate is based on the fact that it acknowledges, despite certain communities that migrated from other continents or settlers from Europe, that Indigenous peoples on the African continent, in Latin America, and elsewhere claim to be "Aboriginal" people of the specific continent and nowhere else; "in the African context, Indigenous peoples share a common heritage of aboriginality, however, they have also been migrating from various parts of the continent and there have been wars of conquest, which shaped the character of nationalities."[23]

Available data reveals a growing rural-to-urban shift by most Indigenous groups. Estimates suggest that in Latin America, Guatemala, and Mexico, one in every three Indigenous persons lives in a city, and in Bolivia, Brazil, and Chile over half of the Indigenous population lives in cities.[24] Based on available data on the Sámi population—the Indigenous peoples of northern Europe (which

encompasses parts of northern Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia)—has become more urbanized in Scandinavia and the Russian Federation.[25] According to the United Nations, by 2030 Africa's urban population will be 54 percent; in Tanzania, 90 percent of Maasai men have already migrated to the capital city. In Australia, 30 percent of the Indigenous population now lives in major cities, and over 40 percent live in inner or outer regional areas.[26] The Maori in New Zealand continue to be highly concentrated (84 percent) in urban areas.[27] The 2000 U.S. Census reported that 45 percent of those self-identified as American Indian and Alaska Native resided in urban areas, while 64 percent lived outside of Indian lands.[28]

It is increasingly the case that Indigenous migration to urban areas is voluntary. This migration may take place for several reasons. Some Indigenous peoples are motivated by opportunities for employment, health, housing, education, political participation, social recognition and visibility, or other benefits that they may lack in their territories. Further, in the face of insecurity, urban centres might provide safety. Others are pushed to cities by poverty, militarization of their lands, lack of access to water, deterioration of traditional livelihoods, and environmental degradation. In some cases, "causes are closely related to human rights violations on their territories, physical security [issues] arising from conflicts,…unwanted and damaging development projects,…prevailing and widespread poverty, and the complete absence of services such as health, education, or facilities to support economic development."[29]

2a. The Canadian Context of Indigenous Peoples in Cities

According to Newhouse and Peters, "city life is now an integral component of Indigenous peoples' lives in Canada."[30] Since the 1960s, there have been increasing accounts of the urbanization of Canada's Indigenous population. According to Statistics Canada, almost 28 percent of Indigenous peoples live in ten of the nation's largest cities; the growth has more than doubled in most of these cities, and in some cases, tripled.[31] Although the city is a place of opportunity for many urban Indigenous peoples, it also represents a place of loss: loss of culture and community, exclusion from opportunities for self-determination, discrimination, and difficulty in finding culturally appropriate services.[32]

Urban inequality is a major challenge. It includes persistent systemic problems and underlying issues, such as health inequities, and higher rates of mortality, high-school dropout, and children in care. According to Statistics Canada (2006), 48 percent of Indigenous children under six years old, living off-reserve, were in some kind of child-care arrangement. The high-school dropout rate among Indigenous peoples aged twenty to twenty-four, living off-reserve, was 22.6 percent, compared to 8.5 percent for non-Aboriginal people.[33] Other urban challenges in for the Indigenous population include women's safety, as a large proportion of the Indigenous migrant population are women;[34] the increasing absolute numbers of children and youth;[35] and the high rate of Indigenous persons (especially young

people) involved in crime and the criminal justice system. At the same time, the city offers opportunities to access certain services, jobs, and education, and to set up Indigenous organizations and participatory bodies. These opportunities will be outlined in detail later in this chapter.

Urban Indigenous peoples in Canada face similar challenges—e.g., housing, education, integration in society—to those encountered by other migrants, and also maintain ties to their communities. They do differ from other migrants, however, for several reasons that should be given particular attention. Under the *Indian Act of Canada*, the federal government defined its responsibility to Indigenous peoples as focused only on those residing on reserves. In spite of this, provinces and municipalities tended to see all Indigenous peoples (even those in cities) as a federal responsibility. In recent years, there has been significant progress made towards convincing the federal government of the legitimacy of urban Indigenous peoples;[36] however, regulatory voids and jurisdictional challenges remain, which in turn aggravate problems related to lack of education, training, job capacity, and equity.

Another difference relates to the fact that almost all cities were built on sites of pre-existing Indigenous settlements;[37] the growth of Canadian cities displaced Indigenous populations. This situation had, and continues to have, a tremendous effect on the way Indigenous persons define themselves in cities built on sites that were their original homes, or the homes of their relatives. Some cities currently enclose, or are adjacent to, settlements, so the overlap of urban boundaries is quite present in their daily lives. This is reflected in the way that Indigenous urban populations have maintained their diverse identities while living in urban centres, and in the complexity of challenges they face in these settings. Indigenous peoples in Canada tend to see themselves through the prism of their relatedness to others within their tribe, and it is "sense of place" that provides roots to their communities.[38] As a result of the fluidity of boundaries, the population tends to be highly mobile (sometimes referred to as "boundary-spanners").[39]

Their movements to and from the city, on the one hand, mark their self-identification with their birthplaces despite their settlement in urban areas, suggesting that the development in cities is not altogether disconnected from communities in rural areas.[40] On the other, high mobility reflects a push-pull effect or "conflict with the city," whereby movement is due in part to the numerous challenges they face, such as securing their cultural identity, finding culturally appropriate services, facing discrimination and violence, and acquiring stable housing. These issues lead to a constant daily restructuring of their lives that can contribute to their vulnerability. As the challenges perpetuate, so does cultural isolation and economic marginalization, and growing gaps in access to education and continuity of services. However, it seems that urban Indigenous experiences vary significantly and therefore there is no unique pattern that describes the adjustment to urban living.[41] In fact, many thrive in cities and have been able to provide themselves and their families with an improved quality of living.

2b. Urbanization and Inequality

Indigenous peoples in cities face significant challenges in relation to urban inequality and discrimination. The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues reveals that illiteracy rates among the urban Indigenous population are four times as high as rates for non-Indigenous people living in cities, and that Indigenous peoples drop out of school much earlier to look for work: "Indigenous communities nationwide suffer from poverty and exclusion, which represent obstacles to the enjoyment of the right to education."[42]

According to Yanes (2007), equity in diversity for Indigenous peoples in cities has several challenges: rights, policies, and institutions:

> No doubt there has been progress in the right to health care, social protection, housing, and in a smaller manner, education and employment. However, these advances have not been framed in the cultural specificity of Indigenous peoples… the recognition of the right to exercise and develop Indigenous cultures, to their growth and transformation, and to the inclusion of their languages and cultural contents in the national educational models.[43]

Indigenous persons with disabilities are usually forgotten in cities. In Canada, the rate of disability among Indigenous people is 32 percent, which is twice the national average. Many Indigenous peoples with disabilities experience a combination of physical and psychiatric issues. This situation necessitates complex treatment that is also culturally appropriate. It seems that many Indigenous peoples leave reserves to access health and social services. The move to the city, depending on needs and treatment, usually develops into a new life off-reserve.[44] As there is little research and information on urban Indigenous peoples with disabilities, is not clear what the objective of inclusion or integration into the city means to them. According to a 2004 study by the Saskatchewan Institute of Public Policy, inclusion may actually mean inclusion in sub-communities within larger communities. Groups such as the Saskatchewan Institute suggest that Indigenous peoples remain invisible in most cities, living in a "public policy vacuum" without proper access to information, social services, employment, safe spaces, and rights as equal citizens.

2c. Safety of Indigenous Peoples and Communities

With regard to safety and Indigenous peoples, problems of marginalization are exacerbated in cities. The discussion of Indigenous peoples, cities, and urbanization often focuses on inequality and discrimination in the context of rights and access to services, as outlined above, while the issue of safety for urban Indigenous people is often left out in major publications, and national or international strategies and declarations. The reality is that Indigenous peoples are

overrepresented in the criminal justice sector as offenders,[45] and a high proportion are victims of crime and violence. In Canada, Indigenous peoples represent some 3 percent of the population, but 17 percent of the federal and provincial prison population.[46] In New Zealand,[47] the Maori comprise 14 percent of the general population, but 51 percent of the prison population, and in Australia,[48] one-fifth of the prisoner population was identified as Indigenous in 2002. Safety is instrumental in the achievement of an equitable and inclusive city for all. The United Nations Guidelines on the Prevention of Crime[49] point to crime and violence prevention strategies in cities as a foundational component in fostering the well-being of citizens and reinforcing pro-social behaviour through social, economic, health, and educational measures.

Safety is a major issue for Indigenous female and young migrants. Indigenous women[50] face greater risk of victimization, poverty, and oppression than non-Aboriginal women.[51] In 2007, Indigenous women aged twenty-five to forty-four were five times more likely than other Canadian women of the same age to die as a result of violence.[52] According to Statistics Canada (2006), Indigenous women face the highest poverty and violence rates in Canada. When migrating to urban areas, some Indigenous women are able to integrate into the labour force as care-givers, domestic workers, etc.[53] However, without community or family support, and as some women are disempowered during urban migration, they increasingly must find the financial means to support themselves and their families in the city. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many of these women lack urban living skills and access to services that are culturally appropriate. As a result, Indigenous women may become victims of human trafficking, and sexual exploitation and harassment.

Young people are the fastest growing segment of the Indigenous population, and the majority of migrants are youth. Indigenous youth are often subjected to discrimination by the wider community. This demographic shift has resulted in stronger pressures on the education system and job-training initiatives; Indigenous youth are often denied equal opportunities in employment and education. Young girls are often vulnerable to being trafficked into sexual slavery, and young boys may be forced to survive on the streets, where they engage in aggressive and risky behaviour, and illegal activities.[54] In Canada, more than five hundred Indigenous women and girls have gone missing or been murdered over the last thirty years.[55] The majority were under the age of thirty-one at the time of their disappearance. In the end, many Indigenous women and their children remain at risk.[56]

2d. Governance of Cities

The challenges that Indigenous peoples face in the city are part of a larger, underlying issue. Yanes (2007) explains that in the city, legal and political conditions are unable to guarantee the direct representation of Indigenous peoples in the various government bodies. They do not allow Indigenous peoples to legalize their own forms of authority, representation, and administration of justice, for

example, through an autonomous system that is adequate for each particular situation. According to Cornell et al. (2004), quality of governance is important to the success of human societies. Effective governance and cooperation help society achieve its goals in relation to "solving difficult social problems, protecting indigenous cultures, managing lands and resources, building productive economies, [and] constructing mutually beneficial relationships."[57]

Good governance suggests not only cooperation, but also accountability, and even more importantly, legitimacy: "Citizens must be willing, active participants in the effort to build societies that work, empowering them to build those societies in their own ways, and making them feel that the future, to a significant degree, is in their own hands."[58] This idea leads into a discussion on the "right to the city," and James Holston's work on insurgent urban citizenship, whereby citizens of the city desire to be part of city-building and restructuring, and to benefit equally and fully from all of its opportunities and services. According to Holston (2010), the conviction of having a right to the city (and access to all of its services and opportunities) turns residents into active citizens who mobilize their demands through organizations that confront entrenched national regimes of citizen inequality. In thinking about governance and decision-making, rights and identity should also be addressed.

2e. Identity and Rights

The concept of urban Indigenous identity is complex, and has no unique definition. Indigenous peoples' situations differ dramatically across countries and regions, and "that significance of national and regional particularities and various historical and cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration."[59] The diversity of situations is also seen across national governments; some governments do not formally recognize or acknowledge Indigenous peoples in their own societies, often leaving urban Indigenous communities to fend for themselves without equal access to services and resources, while others promote and prioritize the human rights of their Indigenous communities in their country's policies, charters, and legislation.

In response to this uneven treatment of Indigenous peoples, the international community has put forth significant declarations and programs that aim to recognize the rights and fundamental freedoms of Indigenous peoples around the world. These declarations and programs encourage states to take the necessary steps to recognize these rights, and to be more inclusive and egalitarian in their acknowledgement and treatment of Indigenous populations. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that the international community is severely limited in terms of its ability to promote Indigenous rights in urban fields.[60]

One such international program is the Durban Programme of Action,[61] which seeks to improve the economic capacity of Indigenous peoples by recognizing the importance of training, funding, skills, and social networking. Another example is the 1993 Vienna Declaration of the World Conference on Human Rights, which

affirms that "all human rights are universal, indivisible, and interdependent and interrelated. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis." The declaration is based on the notions of equality and non-discrimination, and acknowledges identity, culture, and social organization. It outlines the important role that Indigenous peoples play in the development of society and suggests that states should, in agreement with international law, ensure the respect for the human rights and freedoms of Indigenous peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,[62] adopted in September 2007, commits member states to protect the rights and resources of Indigenous peoples within the state. It provides a stronger push than the Vienna Declaration for states to recognize that "Indigenous peoples have the right to the full enjoyment, as a collective or as individuals, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights law." In 2010, Canada and the United States joined in the signing of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was a significant achievement for Indigenous peoples in North America. One lingering issue is that the declaration is non-binding, which suggests that the government is not necessarily responsible for realizing the recommendations and articles contained within it. Nevertheless, it aims to open the door to rethinking the relationship between the national government and the Indigenous population.

According to Holder and Corntassel (2002), human rights mechanisms do not reflect the nature of rights as envisioned by Indigenous groups. The individualistic nature of existing human rights discourse completely ignores group rights, which are key to the very nature of most Indigenous cultures. Holder and Corntassel (2002) suggest that this results in the "continued exclusion of Indigenous groups from political, economic, and social participation in many parts of the world." Recognizing rights in this manner can be problematic, as such mechanisms fail to incorporate non-Western world views and priorities. This has been identified as a perpetual obstacle that prevents Indigenous peoples from achieving equality, status, and identity in society. The solution to this problem may seem daunting to governments and the international community, as it requires overhauling or extending the mainstream concept of rights.

3. The City as a "Space of Opportunity": Building Equality, Inclusion, and Safety

International organizations and governments are beginning to recognize that cities are not just part of the problem, but are part of the solution.[63] Cities are making significant changes to improve the well-being of citizens, and are becoming "spaces of opportunity." Innovative institutional reforms, urban planning schemes, and new governance and management approaches aim to reduce inequality, and

prevention strategies are gaining an important place in legislative and administrative frameworks. Much of this change is being provoked by marginalized communities striving to claim a space in the city and establish themselves as legitimate actors in urban governance and development. Urban Indigenous peoples' rights are being realized as Indigenous organizations and groups promote a multi-perspective approach that addresses urban migration, and housing and living conditions, in connection to (rather than isolated from) the socio-cultural, political, economic, and spiritual factors that are central to Indigenous peoples. Effective programs are being developed by and with Indigenous persons with the goal of promoting capacity building, good governance, and self-empowerment. These programs adopt a culturally appropriate resilience model that emphasizes well-being and confidence.[64]

3a. Urban Opportunities: Indigenous Peoples are Claiming Their Space in the City

It is important to highlight the difficulties that push Indigenous peoples to urban areas and the challenges they face within city boundaries; however, it can be counterproductive to overstate these negative factors: "Negativities can reinforce deficit stereotypes about Indigenous peoples. They can also perpetuate self-fulfilling prophecies about Indigenous peoples as dependent and helpless rather than creative, innovative, and resilient world citizens."[65] Indigenous peoples have been able to adapt and improve their situations, preserving their Indigenous identities while maximizing the benefits of living in an urban society. The term "edge-walkers" is used to describe Indigenous peoples who are able to adopt situational identities that allow them to move between traditional contexts and the technological and information worlds.[66]

The reality is that the pressing needs of Indigenous peoples in urban areas are in part associated with the growing population and in part with its makeup (which is very young). Indigenous peoples have recognized that there is an urgent demand for new frameworks for governance and have called for negotiations about new structures, programs, projects, and policies.[67] In Canada, this recognition has been reinforced by the recommendations for urban Indigenous governance made by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996) and the Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study (UAPS). The result has been some positive response from the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, such as the setting up and renewal of the Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS) in the attempt to coordinate government to respond to the situation of Indigenous peoples, and the development of community-based semi-autonomous urban organizations and multi-agency systems to initiate meaningful partnership with a range of agencies and address underlying issues. The UAS also demonstrates the government's attempt to provide the structure, framework, and support to facilitate and enable Indigenous people and organizations to make necessary changes with the goal of improving well-being and gaining a stronger voice.

3b. Urban Indigenous Organizations, Government, and Other Partners Working Together to Serve the Needs of Indigenous Peoples Residing in Cities

Urban Indigenous peoples have been working hard to create better lives for themselves and their communities. Indigenous organizations and urban-based political bodies are enhancing access to varied services and supports, as well as providing a unified voice for the urban population. Some examples in Canada include friendship centres,[68] which offer education, training, social and recreational programs, and provide familiarity and a space for exchange. Aboriginal peoples councils are community-based groups that aim to secure a political and advocacy voice to represent the needs and interests of the Indigenous urban community. Aboriginal community councils provide alternatives to the criminal justice system and aim to resolve disputes within Indigenous communities to prevent further offending and victimization, and to facilitate positive reintegration into society. There are also urban Aboriginal affairs committees and urban Aboriginal strategic management teams, among many others.

The Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network[69] is one of the first efforts to coordinate activities to improve the quality of life of Indigenous people in the city. The network brings together municipal government, Indigenous organizations and community groups, and an ombudsman to develop clear visions and strategies that articulate short- and medium-term responses to enhance economic and social conditions in their cities, and to enhance services for and the reception of Indigenous peoples in the urban setting. Further, the network fills a significant gap, acting as an urban Indigenous governance structure that advocates and embodies effective management and development of initiatives, and improved coordination and communication.

Some of the most innovative and fruitful initiatives have been, and continue to be, those that are set up and nurtured by urban Indigenous persons and groups. Partnerships by and with urban Indigenous groups are making waves in the implementation of programs and provision of services. Partnership building with Indigenous peoples is a major focus of the Program of Action of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, adopted by the UN General Assembly, and the 2002 UN Guidelines for the Prevention of Crime. The guidelines state that "strategies should be built on cooperative partnerships between government institutions, community and nongovernmental organizations, the business sector and civil society."

In Canada, partnerships have also been developed in research initiatives. For example, the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) is in the process of seeking partners to conduct high-quality, impartial, and policy-relevant research on urban Indigenous issues, bringing together the perspectives of urban Indigenous communities, academics, and government. In addition, the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN) was set up by NAFC and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada to support community-based policy-relevant research.

Other partnerships that are serving the needs of Indigenous peoples residing in cities include:

Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive Parents of Aboriginal Children, Montreal, Quebec: The cultural manual, which is in the process of being finalized, was first realized by the Social Service Committee of the Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network with Batshaw Youth and Family Centres. This collaboration has helped the network support foster and adoptive parents of Indigenous children in care by informing new parents of the spectrum of services available to this particular group, the distinct traditions of each Indigenous nation, and the socio-cultural effect that the experience may have on the child.

Chiannou/Tiknagin Aboriginal Head Start Programme (AHS), Val D'Or, Quebec: The Val D'Or Native Friendship Centre in Quebec is a non-profit community organization that aims to inform and assist Indigenous peoples living in urban areas. With over thirty years of experience, the friendship centre provides programs that support community, economic, and social development. In particular, the centre sponsors the Chiannou/Tiknagin Aboriginal Head Start Programme (AHS) in collaboration with the Senneterre Native Friendship Centre. AHS is an early intervention strategy funded nationally by Health Canada aimed at meeting the needs of young Aboriginal children living in urban areas or in large northern communities. It is a broad program designed to respond to the child's spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs.

Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto (ALST), Toronto, Ontario: Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto (ALST) was set up in 1990 following a needs assessment by the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, which showed that an agency offering legal-related programs for Indigenous people in the city of Toronto was needed. ALST provides assistance to Indigenous people who require legal resources, as well as information on the justice system and available options. ALST supports alternatives to the justice system as a means of preventing recidivism and dependency. The agency offers court workers, Gladue caseworkers, a legal clinic, information on victims' rights, and, at times, intervenes in cases. Within ALST is the Toronto Aboriginal Community Council, a criminal diversion program for Indigenous offenders, including youth. It removes offenders from the criminal justice system to develop a plan with members of the Indigenous community to address the issue and root causes, and to reintegrate the offender into the community.

Urban Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program, Vancouver, British Columbia: The Urban Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program is a product of the Government of Canada's Urban Aboriginal Strategy (UAS). As part of the program, the Urban Aboriginal Youth Public Awareness Campaign aims to help urban Indigenous youth build their communication and media skills, and to create awareness about urban initiatives in the city. Through the awareness campaign, a collaboration between

the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society (ACCESS) and Numa Communications has been set up to provide training in media relations, public speaking, presentations, and event planning for urban Indigenous youth.

Urban Circle Training Centre, Winnipeg, Manitoba: In collaboration with Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the private sector, the Urban Circle Training Centre offers a new program, Project Makoonsag, for Indigenous children, youth, elders, and adults. The new program will provide an intergenerational approach to educational outcomes, life skills, and crime prevention.

Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY), Calgary, Alberta: The Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth (USAY) is currently working in partnership with YMCA Calgary to deliver the Niipaitapiiyssin Leadership Program. The project consists of Indigenous youth leadership education and training, as well as activities rooted in Indigenous culture. The society also publishes *New Tribe*, a magazine that aims to be the voice of urban Indigenous youth in Calgary and to promote positive lifestyle choices, which includes monthly feature articles on employment and education.

3c. International Initiatives

Increasingly, governments recognize that cities are not just part of the problem; they are, and must be, part of the solution. Many cities are coming up with innovative institutional reforms to promote prosperity while minimizing inequity and the unsustainable use of energy. Enlightened and committed political leadership, combined with effective urban planning, and governance and management that promote equity and sustainability, are critical to building harmonious cities.

National and local governments are making critical choices that support improved Indigenous well-being in urban settings. The governments of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand have all launched National Crime Prevention Strategies, prioritizing Indigenous populations living in both urban and rural and remote areas in recent years. In 2007, the Chilean government initiated a national public consultation on urban Indigenous issues in its major cities. It aimed to define an urban Indigenous policy that would respond to the main issues Indigenous peoples face in urban areas. Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela have undertaken constitutional reforms where a few Indigenous peoples' rights have been recognized, including language, culture, and traditions; the need for prior and informed consultation; regulating access to natural resources and land; or, in some cases, recognition of autonomy and self-governance.[70]

Indigenous peoples are now more involved as partners with government, the private sector, and civil society in project and program development.[71] Such partnerships play an important role in effectively improving the living conditions and housing of Indigenous peoples in urban centres. One example is the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, which provides a series of programs and services for

urban Indigenous people in Whitehorse, Yukon, and is currently involved in the Adaptive Capacity—Homeless Youth Pilot Project. Other examples include Australia's Shared Responsibility Agreements (2004); strategies developed by the Inter-American Development Bank (2006)[72] and the World Bank (2005); and regional consultations organized by the UN Permanent Forum and the Australian government in 2005 on partnerships between Indigenous peoples, governments, and civil society and by the forum and the Canadian government in 2006, on developing indicators for well-being.

In Mexico City, the Council for Indigenous Consult and Participation was set up as a space for dialogue between members of Indigenous groups, academics, community organizations, and government institutions in the city. The council aims to advance the recognition of Indigenous rights and legislative reform, inter-cultural coexistence, and Indigenous social co-responsibility. In Peru, there is a television program produced by an Indigenous group. The program reviews national news in relation Indigenous affairs, and reflects on issues that affect the population. It connects the country's rural and urban populations, and spreads awareness of existing challenges. Other examples of organizations that work on issues affecting both rural and urban Indigenous people include the Centro de Mujeres Indígenas Aymaras Candelaria in Bolivia, and the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs based in South Africa.

Indigenous youth are also working hard to make their voices heard in promoting safer urban communities and improved well-being. The international community is listening and has set up youth development programs to enhance Indigenous youth participation in international agencies such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Such programs focus on the importance of good education, healthy living conditions, risk-free lifestyles, and support through policies that promote human security.[73]

Other examples of international initiatives include:

The United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Washington, United States: The mission of United Indians is to foster and sustain a strong sense of identity, tradition, and well-being among the Indian people in the Puget Sound area by promoting their cultural, economic, and social welfare. This is accomplished through the development and operation of educational, social, economic, and cultural programs and activities benefitting local Native Americans, and by maintaining a strong link with Indian tribes and other urban Indian organizations and their allies throughout the state of Washington. <www.unitedindians.org>

Native American Youth and Family Center, Michigan, United States: The centre serves self-identified American Indian/Alaskan Native (AI/AN) youth and their families by providing education, cultural arts programming, and support to reduce poverty. <www.nayapdx.org>

National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH), United States: The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) offers support in the development of quality, accessible, and culturally sensitive health-care programs for American Indians and Alaska Natives living in urban communities. NCUIH is a resource centre that provides advocacy, education, training, and leadership for urban Indian health-care providers. <www.ncuih.org/index>

National Urban Indian Family Coalition, United States: The coalition promotes advocacy and mobilizes systems to integrate urban Indigenous issues in policy discussion and implementation. It aims to build relationships between tribal governments and other institutions to improve well-being of urban Indigenous families, and to sustain Indigenous values and culture within urban communities. <www.nuifc.org>

The National Centre of Indigenous Excellence, Sydney, Australia: The centre offers programs and facilities for young Indigenous people to help them achieve their dreams and aspirations in the areas of sport, art, education, and culture. <www.ncie.org.au>

Parent Infant Family Australia (PIFA), Sydney, Australia: Parent Infant Family Australia (PIFA) believes that a powerful way to combat the disproportionately high burden of negative health and social outcomes in the Indigenous community is to support Indigenous families during their child's early years. In 2005, PIFA was invited to form a partnership with the Aboriginal Children's Services in Redfern to develop a specialized response to the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in out-of-home care. The project aims to support the safety and development of Indigenous children by preserving family units, and by working to build parenting capacity to prevent entry into the home-care system. <www.pifa.org.au/foundation>

Safe Communities Foundation New Zealand (SCFNZ), New Zealand: SCFNZ advocates for evidence-based community safety and provides information and resources to improve knowledge of proven and promising community-based safety promotion, and injury and crime prevention, initiatives. SCFNZ staff work collaboratively with other agencies to adapt emerging international and New Zealand-based practices to the local environment. <www.safecommunities.org.nz>

The Peruvian Human Rights Ombudsman (Defensoría del Pueblo), Peru: Created in 1996, Defensoría del Pueblo addresses discrimination issues across Peru. The institution's purpose is to defend citizens' fundamental rights. It can respond to citizen complaints, and act on legal and administrative issues. One of the main issues the group focuses on is the discrimination of Indigenous peoples in Peru. It works to strengthen legal protection against discrimination by lobbying for legal modifications, and generates public awareness and support through high-profile media campaigns.

Working Group of Indigenous Minorities in Southern Africa (WIMSA), South Africa: WIMSA is a network of non-governmental organizations that represent the interests of Indigenous San peoples in southern Africa. WIMSA sets up San councils to lobby on behalf of San peoples living in Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, and Angola. It supports litigation when needed, and aims to build the capacity of San councils to use national and international rights protection mechanisms to prevent and reduce human rights abuses and criminalization of San peoples. <www.wimsanet.org>

The Sámi Parliament, Norway: The Sámi Parliament was set up in 1989 to serve the Sámi people of Norway, promoting political initiatives and carrying out administrative tasks. The parliament is an independent body that protects and promotes the Sámi language and culture, develops teaching aids, and protects heritage sites, allocating funds to these activities. It also coordinates relations with local, regional, and national government offices to help draw attention to the needs of the Sámi people.

Conclusion

The departure from rural and remote areas is increasingly becoming part of Indigenous peoples' realities. The growing numbers of Indigenous groups in cities is a worldwide phenomenon and requires further exploration and attention. As we have seen, Indigenous peoples in cities face complex challenges. Safety is a considerable problem, as is gaining equal and appropriate rights and status. The similar difficulties experienced by Indigenous peoples living in urban environments around the world reveal a significant problem that potentially requires further historical and legal understanding, and a significant shift in certain structures and conceptions.

At the same time, there have been positive developments with regards to the rights of Indigenous peoples, including the establishment of Indigenous institutions and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The declaration marked an important step in building international awareness, as well as exchange and dialogue. Such exchange is being promoted through several means: the Internet, regional and local networks, conferences, and visit exchanges. In Canadian cities, Indigenous groups have many positive experiences and unique ideas to share with groups in other countries. Sharing needs to be promoted and developed alongside research and data collection on the growing urban presence of Indigenous peoples; lobbying for appropriate policies; and inclusive and participatory approaches. These points are important for maintaining positive momentum and building on existing opportunities in the city.

The following questions are posed for further consideration and discussion:

- What does an inclusive and safe city look like for an "invisible" urban Indigenous person (e.g., disabled persons)? How do they gain access to the city and its opportunities?

- How can the city be a place that ensures full rights, and active participation and contribution of all Indigenous peoples in all phases of policy and program development?
- Canada recently signed on to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. What are the implications for Indigenous peoples living in urban centres? How can the declaration and its demands for full and equal rights and freedoms be used and applied to improve the lives of the urban Indigenous population?
- What role does the city play—following the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples—in the attempt to eliminate discrimination, inequality, and the violation of the human rights of Indigenous peoples in urban areas?
- Who has the "right to the city"? Who determines this? What does it mean to be an equal citizen?
- In terms of "effective governance" for Indigenous peoples, are society's institutions appropriate for Indigenous peoples?[74]
- In the absence of traditional governance, especially in urban settings, who speaks for the community? Is there, in fact, a need for a unified voice? Is this voice representative of all groups, given the diverse backgrounds of Indigenous persons in cities?
- How can we work together? How should we make decisions?
- Often, Indigenous persons are identified as the problem, or the problem is deemed to be within Indigenous communities. How can this mentality be altered to instead reveal the links between the systemic problems and existing institutional structures that make up our society? How can we reframe this view to analyze how the system has failed Indigenous persons?
- How have Indigenous groups learned to engage with key players; to confront and negotiate; to use technologies; to bargain without compromising on principles; to claim respect as equal citizens?[75]
- How can urban Indigenous groups and organizations better involve and consult with Indigenous youth, especially in areas of education, crime, employment, cultural identity, technology, facilities, and services?

Endnotes

1. Vivien Carli currently works at ICPC as an analyst and project officer (vcarli@crime-prevention-intl.org).

2. McHardy & O'Sullivan (2004)

3. Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (1998)

4. Graham (2010)

5. See Graham (2010). "Well-being" is defined by four components: education, labour force, housing, and income.

6. Self-government initiatives, land claims, establishment of new First Nations institutions, increases in funding of social and economic development programs, etc.

7. Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996)

8. Graham (2010)

9. There are several terms used in relation to Indigenous populations in different countries. For the sake of simplicity and standardization in this paper, the term "Indigenous" will be used, except when programs or national strategies are discussed.

10. In relation to well-being, equality, and inclusion

11. Keeping in mind the diversity of experiences across areas, countries, regions

12. UN-Habitat (2008)

13. UN-Habitat (2008)

14. See ICPC, proceedings of the workshop held at the 12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Salvador, Brazil, April 12–19, 2010, available April 2011.

15. See www.unfpa.org/swp/2007/english/chapter_2/changing_demographics.html

16. See Youth Resource Guide 2010, at www.crime-prevention-intl.org

17. UN-Habitat (2008)

18. See ICPC, proceedings of the workshop held at the 12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Salvador, Brazil, April 12–19, 2010, available April 2011.

19. Adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in its resolution 2002/13 of July 2002.

20. International Centre for the Prevention of Crime <www.crime-prevention-intl.org>

21. UN-Habitat (2010)

22. Newhouse & Peters (2003)

23. Kipuri (2007)

24. Del Popolo et al. (2007)

25. Gáldu (2006)

26. Cooper & Morris (2003)

27. UNPFII (2007), Report of the Sixth Session (May 14–25, 2007), E/2007/43/E/C.19/2007/12, New York.

28. National Urban Indian Family Coalition (2008)

29. Burger (2007)

30. Newhouse & Peters (2003)

31. See "Aboriginal Peoples in Canada's Urban Area—Narrowing the Education Gap," www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2005003/8612-eng.htm

32. Royal Commission Report on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), 520

33. See www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/81-004-x/2010004/article/11339-eng.htm#f

34. See www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016869

35. According to Statistics Canada, the absolute numbers of Aboriginal children have increased several fold in most CMAs, and Aboriginal children aged zero to fourteen years account for about 30 to 40 percent of the Aboriginal population in most Western CMAs.

36. Establishment of the Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program in the 1980s

37. NAFC and LCC (1999)

38. LaFrance & Nichols (2010)

39. Heritz (2010)

40. Heritz (2010); Todd (2003)

41. Jaccoud & Brassard (2003)

42. United Nations—Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (2006)

43. Yanes (2007)

44. Durst et al. (2006)

45. In Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand

46. Statistics Canada (2001), Census 2001, www.statcan.ca

47. Statistics New Zealand (2001). Demographic Trends, 2000. Wellington: Statistics New Zealand.

48. Australia Bureau of Statistics (2001). Australian Demographic Statistics, March 2001 (Cat. no. 3101.0); Experimental Projections of the Indigenous Population, 1996–2006 (Cat. no. 3231.0); Births, Australia, 1999 (Cat no. 3301.0); Deaths, Australia, 1999 (Cat. no. 3302.0). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.

49. Adopted by ECOSOC in its resolution 2002/13 of July 2002.

50. At a recent meeting at the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Indigenous women's rights were outlined. The Permanent Forum recommended that the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) include a focus on the situation and rights of Indigenous women and girls in the compilation and implementation of its first strategic plan, for the period 2011–13, particularly with regard to its efforts to increase women's political leadership and participation, promote women's economic empowerment, and combat violence against women and girls, and that it draw on the expertise and advice of Indigenous experts in the process. <http://www.un.org//esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/session_10_report_EN.pdf>

51. Bourassa, McKay-McNabb, & Hampton (2006)

52. NWAC (2007)

53. UN-Habitat (2010)

54. NWAC (2007)

55. See www.nwac-hq.org/en/documents/nwac-vaaw.pdf

56. UN-Habitat (2010)

57. Cornell et al. (2004), 10

58. Cornell et al. (2002), 17

59. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) <www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf>

60. Yanes (2007)

61. See "Durban Programme of Action" from the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance <www.un-documents.net/durban-p.htm>

62. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2008) <www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf>

63. UN-Habitat (2008)

64. UN-Habitat (2010)

65. Tupuola (2007)

66. See United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA) (2005)

67. Heritz (2010)

68. Aboriginal Friendship Centre Program

69. See reseaumtlnetwork.com/Home.html

70. UN-Habitat (2010)

71. Capobianco (ICPC) (2006)

72. Operational Policy on Indigenous Peoples and Strategy for Indigenous Development IND Policy and Strategy, Operation Policy of Involuntary Resettlement, Operational Guidelines for the Indigenous Peoples Policy

73. UN-Habitat (2010)

74. Cornell et al. (2004)

75. Women in Cities International (2010)

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